

## **Islamic Education in the Freedom Learning Era from the Perspective of Paulo Freire**



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**ABSTRACT:** The teacher-centered one-way education system weakly influences the educational output. Teachers are likened to savers and students to accountants, regardless of their problems. This is the "Bank Style" education system being sued by Paulo Freire, who is striving to create a humanistic-dialectical and critical education system. Through Minister Nabel Makarim, Indonesia carried out an educational innovation, namely the "Freedom Learning" policy. This policy emphasizes "Freedom and Independence" by designing education to produce superior human resources as student profiles. Instill the values and attitudes of independence, volunteerism, democracy, tolerance, security, order, and peace that act as agents of change that can provide solutions to various national problems. This research is qualitative technically in collecting data using primary and secondary sources in the works of Paulo Freire and Islamic Education, as well as the Freedom to Learn program. Data processing uses the hermeneutic method. Meanwhile, data analysis uses reductive, display, and triangulation methods. The results of this study are: First, it explains the complex reality of Indonesian Islamic Education in the Freedom to Learn era. Second, explaining, exploring, and criticizing Paulo Freire's significant thoughts on Islamic Education in the Free Learning Era. Third, analyze Paulo Freire's thoughts which are significant for Islamic education in the Era of Freedom Learning. Producing superior and independent human beings cognitively, affectively, and psychomotorically. The role of an agent of change, creating a productive and highly civilized society ready to face the competition in the global world.

**KEYWORDS:** Islamic Religious Education, Freedom Learning, Critical Awareness, Paulo Freire.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This article summarizes the first author's dissertation entitled "Islamic Education in the Era of Freedom Learning from the Perspective of Paulo Freire and Ki Hadjar Dewantara" in the Doctoral program at IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia. This paper describes the condition of education in Indonesia, including Islamic education, which still needs to produce qualified human resources, which has significant implications for Indonesia's position as a producing country with economic and technological strengths to realize the nation's civilization.

Indonesia is a country with a large population (Kholil et al., 2022; Madakir et al., 2022; Pratomo & Kuswati, 2022; Ulfa et al., 2021). The majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim (Pratomo, 2022; Sumarna et al., 2021). In 2030 Indonesia will face a "Demographic Bonus" momentum (Risandini & Silvi, 2021) which will have the following impacts: 1) An increase in the unemployment rate will have implications for an increase in the crime rate. 2) Differences in education lead to the uneven quality of human resources resulting in intense competition for employment opportunities. 3) Increased burden on the State because the old age group dominates the population.

According to H.A.R Tilaar, education has two mutually synergistic platforms, namely: (1) education is a human right to ground human values; (2) education is a process of human maturation through awareness of "freedom from" and awareness of "dependence on." (Isnaini, 2004; Tilaar et al., 2011). According to him, education in the 21st century demands approaches in line with global changes, creating students who are independent of social life and changes in economic life and can respond to revolutionary world politics. According to Wakhid, the significant problems of Islamic Education in this globalization era are: 1) There is still a dichotomous view between Religious Studies and General Sciences, resulting in incomplete mastery of knowledge and clashes between people with general knowledge and religion. 2) Islamic education in Indonesia, epistemologically, is less oriented toward solving problems. 3) Low enthusiasm for research or studies. 4) Learning tends to be textual rather than contextual, emphasizing memorizing systems more than understanding. 5) The pattern of education is more inclined only to obtain a diploma (Primayanti, 2015; Tilaar et al., 2011).

Facing the era of the Industrial Revolution 5.0 and the golden Indonesia momentum in 2045, Indonesia needs superior human resources through the Freedom Learning program policy. The Freedom Learning Program is an innovative effort to design

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education to produce superior human beings, as the Pancasila Student Profile (Zainuri, 2022). Minister Nadiem Anwar Makarim's idea was inspired by President Soekarno, who conceptualized and designed a national education system that empowers people with the values and attitudes of independence, volunteerism, democracy, tolerance, security, order, and peace. That is contained in five core characteristics of Pancasila as the basis of the Indonesian. The two main foundations underlying Freedom Learning are (1) freedom and (2) independence. This foundation is expected to create high-quality education for all Indonesian people with the development of quality human resources to act as agents of change that solve various national problems.

Paulo Freire is a Brazilian education warrior (McLaren, 2001). He is obsessed with building a humanist, democratic and independent education (Avoseh, 2009; Bolin, 2017). He criticizes the unfair education system, is firmly committed to fighting for an ideal education system, and aims to achieve significant societal change. Education is essential and fundamental in a society's life. Paulo Freire offers humanist education, placing students as independent, critical subjects, playing a role in determining the success of education, not like robots. Humanist education breaks the "Bank Style" system, a capitalist style in which teaching teachers are positioned as a symbol of transferring money to students as an account (Freire, 2020). According to Barton (2001), quoting Peter McLaren's opinion, saying that the capitalization of educational institutions will result in three things, namely: (1) the management of educational institutions is more concerned with business values that are controlled by the elite; (2) increasing mastery of science and technology which is materially oriented rather than producing more qualified human resources; (3) education as a commodity leads to corporations by abandoning the values of justice and human dignity. Based on Paulo Freire's thoughts, this can be used as a critical analysis of Islamic Education in the Freedom Learning Era. As the basis of their orientation aims to liberate students to become superior individuals, Pancasila profiles multi-dimensional human beings, able to integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects as individuals ready to face various challenges.

## II. METHOD

This research is qualitative by verifying a finding from various data sources, so that objective findings are produced with the researcher as the vital instrument. Technically to dig up the data contained in the works of Paulo Freire and Islamic Education. Using the Critical Analysis method with Hermeneutics as the instrument, namely using language and interpretation. Data analysis uses reductive, display, and triangulation methods. The aims of this research are: First, to explain the complex reality of Indonesian Islamic Education in the Freedom Learning era. Second, explaining, exploring, and criticizing Paulo Freire's significant thoughts on Islamic Education in the Freedom Learning Era. Third, analyze Paulo Freire's thoughts which are significant for Islamic education in Indonesia regarding the concept of Freedom Learning to produce superior and independent humans. Freedom Learning aims to produce superior and independent humans. Freedom Learning beings cognitively, affectively, and psychomotor, act as agents of change, and create a productive and highly civilized society.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Scope of Islamic Education

Education has an important role in building human intelligence (Agustin, 2022; Huriyah & Hidayat, 2022; Maesaroh & Muzayyin, 2022; Supriatin et al., 2022; Suteja & Setiawan, 2022). Islamic education is an education system that guides and directs people to live their lives according to Islamic teachings (Gumiandari et al., 2022). Education to gain peace and prosperity in life has implications for peace and prosperity in various dimensions. Education is contextual and changes according to time and place and the demands of scientific and technological developments. Islamic education in *Al-Tarbiyah* terms includes four things: 1) maintaining and protecting students' talents to reach maturity, 2) increasing all human talents toward perfection, 3) directing all human potential to achieve perfection, and 4) education takes place gradually and continuously (Ramayulis, 2015). Islamic education is an activity or effort made by educators for students to become perfect Muslim individuals, *Muttaqin*, physically and mentally healthy, intelligent, noble, creative, and able to explore their resources and natural resources as a form of enjoyment of creation. Allah for the benefit of human life, personally and socially, based on the values of Islamic teachings.

According to Hasan Basri, there are several essential elements in Islamic Education: 1) Education is an effort to internalize everything that can benefit human life, both physical and spiritual aspects, thoughts, and morals. 2) Islam is the primary and comprehensive material to be taught, formal, non-formal, and informal, to all students for lifelong learning. 3) Textually the sources of Islamic teachings are contained in the Qur'an and this universe as a manifestation of the verses of Allah *Kauniyah* (unwritten) and As-Sunnah, both in the form of sayings, deeds, and rulings of the Prophet Muhammad *salallahu 'alaihi wa sallam* (Basri, 2017).

In the effort to develop human life, Islamic teachings cover three dimensions: 1) The dimension of worldly life positions humans as servants of Allah with the facilities of science, technology, skills, and Islamic values to develop human existence; 2) The *Ukhrawi* dimension of life, stimulates humans to develop humans in interacting harmoniously with God; (c) The dimension of interaction between worldly life and *Ukhrawi* stimulates humans to become perfect servants of Allah, mastering science, technology, and skills, to implement Islamic teachings (Basri, 2017; Muzayyin, 2003).

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The scope of Islamic Education includes three fundamental pillars of integral human relations, namely, the human relationship with Allah (*Hablun Minallah*). Humans as servants (*'Abdun*) interact with Allah SWT as a substance that must be worshiped and manifested in worship, namely submission and obedience to all His commands and staying away from all His prohibitions. The human relationship with nature, how humans can enjoy and maintain natural ecosystems. Whereas the relationship between humans is related to *Mu'amalah*, such as the condition of Indonesia with heterogeneity-multiculturalism, the interaction between humans is not limited by the boundaries of social class, race, ethnicity, culture, language, and even religion. Norms and values as legal norms, guidelines, and philosophies, how religious people live in society, nation, and state, both on a micro and macro (global) scale, so that people can comfortably and safely carry out their necessities of life which, according to Maslow consist of: 1) Basic Physiological Needs; 2) The need for security; 3) The need for affection; 4) The need for appreciation; 5) The need for knowledge; 6) Aesthetic needs; and 7) Self-actualization needs (Jaenudin, 2015).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the scope of Islamic Education includes: 1) The substance of educators and students; 2) The substance of the content, methods, models, and instruments used in learning to achieve educational goals; 3) The substance of the institution as the executor of education, whether formal, non-formal, or informal; 4) The substance of the education system; 5) The substance of educational evaluation or assessment, and 6) The substance of educational outcomes.

### B. Islamic Education based on the Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith

Islamic education based on the Al-Qur'an includes faith, character, normative guidelines (Kholil et al., 2022; Rochmat et al., 2022) for human behavior, history of Islamic education, theory of implementation of Islamic education, human awareness of his existence, instructions or solutions to human problems, promises and threats in this world, and the hereafter. Meanwhile, Islamic education based on Al-Hadith is education, as practiced by the Prophet Muhammad, SAW in fostering his people with the characteristics of (a) Islamic education covers the whole world (*Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin*); (b) Universal, covering all dimensions of human life; (c) Islamic Education Material is an absolute and authentic truth (d) Prophet Muhammad SAW as a supervisor, providing supervision and consequence for all activities related to education (e) All actions of Prophet Muhammad SAW as a role model for all his people, his behavior always controlled by Allah SWT, so he never made a mistake; (f) Creative matters relating to strategies, approaches, models, methods and techniques are the duty of the people. The conception of Islamic Education is education based on the teachings of the Al-Qur'an and Al-Hadith, the figure of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. They all become references and guidelines for formulating the theoretical and practical aims for humankind's happiness both in this world and the hereafter (Said & Muhaimin, 2011).

### C. The Purpose and Function of Islamic Education

Education aims to balance the growth of the totality of human personality through training intelligence, rational attitudes, feelings, spirituality, and sensory experience (Abdurakhman et al., 2022; Perdana et al., 2021; Ratnaningsih & Gumindari, 2022). Therefore, education must meet human needs in all dimensions, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, physical, and speech, individually and in groups, motivating all dimensions to achieve the goodness and perfection of life. The ultimate goal of education is the totality of human submission to Allah SAW. Thus, Islamic Education aims to: 1) Individual learning objectives as a process of changing behavior and activities and how to achieve happiness in human life in this world and the hereafter; 2) Social goals regarding social life in totality, namely life changes, growth, enriching experience, to create an advanced society; 3) The professional goals of education and teaching are a scientific, artistic and professional discipline in the form of individual activities in society.

Hasan Langgulong said that Islamic Education has four functions, namely: 1) The function of education aims to provide knowledge to students so that they are free from ignorance; 2) The function of human maturity in thinking, mastering science through the process of transforming knowledge; 3) The function of strengthening belief in the truth that is believed through scientific understanding; and 4) The function of worship as a form of human devotion to *Al-Khalik*, who has created humans perfectly. The task of Islamic Education in the practice of human life throughout life is to guide and direct students' lives so that they grow and develop gradually to achieve perfection. At the same time, the function of education is to provide facilities so that education can run smoothly, structurally, and institutionally. From this description, it is clear that the goals and functions of Islamic Education must be aligned with the purpose of human creation, namely, to worship only Allah (Adzariyyat verse 56). While the purpose of worship is to become a noble person among humans in the sight of Allah is a pious person (Al-Hujurat verse 13).

### D. Problems of Islamic Education in Indonesia

Implementing Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in schools and Public Universities (PTU) is considered unsuccessful enough to shape the nation's personality. The occurrence of promiscuity, theft, vandalism, student brawls, motorcycle gangs, plagiarism, increased rates of teenage pregnancy and abortion, increased criminal cases, drugs, abuse of power, and corruption. The failure of PAI in schools and PTU is not only a factor in the weak role of schools or PTU but also due to other factors that influence it, such as the exemplary role of family moral development and the weakness of the social control system in society. However, PAI is still seen as a scapegoat or the culprit for the failure of schools and PTU to educate students. PAI has yet to

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succeed in advancing the character of Indonesian citizens in schools and PTU because it was alleged that it had deviated from the original direction and purpose of learning PAI to strengthen students' faith, piety, and nobility. However, it has shifted only to impart knowledge about faith, piety, and nobility PAI taught has yet to reach a critical and internal awareness of piety and noble character. PAI learning in schools and colleges has not been focused on and maximized to increase awareness of faith in Allah, angels, and the hereafter. Education on faith in God must focus on developing awareness that God is always watching over us at all times and everywhere. Thus, students would be careful and vigilant throughout their lives. Reflective teaching on faith in angels should focus on making students aware that angels always watch in any situation. Therefore, students are always careful in doing what they do. Believing in the Last Days should focus on raising awareness that students' actions are accounted for in the hereafter. This awareness has implications that are not due to the involvement of the role of teachers, supervisors, and friends. However, it is more fundamentally a critical awareness because Allah and His angels exist. Awareness shows that humans must be accountable for their actions in the hereafter.

Based on the problems above, the urgent issues that need attention in Islamic Education are: (1) How can Islamic education systematically plan, aspire to, and answer the challenges of educational needs for the future life of students as the younger generation (millennials) as life needs that are in harmony with human nature, systematically planned, longing for future life and useful. (2) How Islamic education provides a foundation for the lives of students with faith, piety, and knowledge and stimulates their creativity to improve and apply science and technology following the teachings and contents of the Qur'an. (3) How Islamic Education as a scientific field can maintain and promote a moral and ethical culture and culture in social and interpersonal interactions in an increasingly industrial and technological society; (4) How Islamic Education as an educational institution can accommodate all interests, factors/elements can influence the learning process, such as curriculum, media, learning instruments and resources, learning outcomes evaluation tools and other facilities to achieve the ultimate goal of forming individuals as individuals, members community, citizens and even citizens of the world who are qualified and have good morals.

### E. Responding to the Freedom Learning Policy

Facing the era of the Industrial Revolution 5.0 and the momentum of Indonesia Gold in 2045, Indonesia needs superior human resources through the Freedom Learning program policy, which is an innovative effort to design education to produce Pancasila Student Profiles. According to Minister Nadiem Anwar Makarim, the two main foundations underlying Freedom Learning are (1) freedom and (2) independence. It is expected to create high-quality education for all Indonesian people by developing quality human resources to act as subjects of change who can provide solutions to various problems nation.

According to the authors, in response to the Freedom to Learn policy, it needs to be studied through the thoughts of critical education figures such as Paulo Freire. He is a Brazilian education fighter obsessed with building a humane, democratic, accessible, and critical education. He criticized the unjust education system, advocated for an ideal system, and called for significant changes in Brazil. He believes education is a very urgent and fundamental element in social life. The educational concept it offers is humanistic education which sees students not as robots but as independent and essential subjects who help determine the success of their education. Humanistic education breaks the "banking" system. The capitalist style of teaching by teachers who teach is symbolized by sending money to students as an account.

Humanistic education forms the basis of liberal education, which can present an atmosphere of educational independence oriented towards educational goals as a means for humans to exist in the real world. Paulo Freire is here to provide an alternative humanistic educational design. Paulo Freire's critical education is relevant to the Islamic Education condition in Indonesia. As the basis of orientation, students aim to liberate students to become superior individuals as agents of change by referring to the Prophet Muhammad SAW as *Insan Kamil*. Multi-dimensional humans integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects so they are ready to face various challenges. Because the approach is holistic (comprehensive) and does not dichotomize or blacken out between teachers and students, there is no separation between teachers and students.

The role of Islamic Education is vital in creating the civilization of the nation and the world. Each country wishes to advance its nation, such as Turkey by assimilating European culture into the Middle East, China with the economic revolution, and Japan with the Restoration policy of awakening the Japanese cultural ethos. Maximum effort to change the identity of Japanese people by adopting and adapting to American and European progress manifested in the form of scientific and technological competence and economic strength. Indonesia seeks to build the nation and state through education, as stated by Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana (STA). According to STA, Indonesia will progress if it can study the history of Western progress through science, technology, and economics.

### F. Islamic Education in the Freedom Learning Era

The Indonesian government must be able to design a national education curriculum, including the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum. The Freedom Learning Curriculum as a development and refinement of the 2013 Curriculum, PAI as a subject or courses must adapt to some of the characteristics of Freedom Learning. 1) from individual learning patterns to learning together; 2) from learning to memorize to learning to know; 3) from learning as a transfer of changing knowledge to interactive learning, process skills, and problem-solving; (4) from the teacher's paradigm as a learning center to students as a learning center;

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and (5) from the traditional manual assessment system, such as doing questions, to an objective assessment in the form of portfolios, projects, and reports. The Merdeka Learning curriculum is implemented with several fundamental principles, namely scientific-based, creating student creativity (students as learning centers) to explore knowledge, and activity-oriented, not material. Islamic Education Curriculum Design in the Free Learning Era is to guide students to develop academic traditions. 1) Manage student-self: choose the most suitable learning model, monitor learning abilities' improvement, and use a varied learning environment. 2) developing a culture of positive thinking by showing self-confidence and self-esteem, identifying goals, and enjoying learning activities. 3) Fostering a culture of structured thinking in setting and solving problems. Integrating and making connections and innovations; 4) Developing discussion from theories and supporting documents to generate interest and motivation.

### G. The Significance of Paulo Freire's Critical Awareness in the Freedom Learning Era

Critical awareness (concentration) is the core of Paulo Freire's humanistic pedagogical thinking with a problem-facing approach (Freire, 2021). With this awareness, Paulo Freire succeeded in transforming Brazilian society without oppression (Freire, 2020). The rise of critical awareness of society from adversity. Initially, in a magical and dogmatic awareness (surrender to fate-consciousness fatalist / *Jabariyah*), they rose to become an optimistic society and determine their destiny through the struggle for literacy (free from illiteracy and literacy). Critical awareness has positive implications for the life of human independence, free from intimidation by any party. Humans can express themselves by exploring their full potential through real work as their identity. According to the author, this Concentration Theory is very significant and relevant to Islamic Education in Indonesia which is faced with the Ministry of Education and Culture's policy on Freedom to Learn, as an effort to create superior human resources to act as subjects of social change.

Generating Critical Awareness in Islamic Education aims to build a nation's civilization that has broader implications for the State and the world. Japan, South Korea, and China have become modern and developed countries, with their critical awareness of being able to master technological and economic power just like the powers of Western countries. However, the process of adaptation and accommodation does not make them (Japan, South Korea, and China) trapped in a westernized culture like people in Western countries, but they still maintain their identity. This theory of critical awareness needs to be a fundamental analysis in implementing Islamic Education in the Era of Freedom of Learning. Through learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI) which contains six subjects: Al-Qur'an, Al-Hadith, Faith, Worship-Fiqh, Morals, and History of Islamic Culture (SKI) oriented students. Students are not only able to master extensive knowledge about the six subjects, but students' critical awareness is awakened to internalize and practice this knowledge. Students become individuals who have integrity, commitment, honesty, and good character and maintain scientific and professional ethical codes. Students are always in thought, feeling, and deed that is right, good, and beautiful as their identity.

### CONCLUSIONS

The results of the analysis of the theme "Islamic Education in the Freedom Learning Era from the Perspective of Paulo Freire's Thoughts", can be concluded as follows:

First, Islamic Education in the Freedom of Learning Era is a holistic delivery and internalization of Islamic teachings through Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, including the Al-Qur'an, Al-Hadith, Faith, Fiqh-Worship, Morals, and Islamic Cultural History (SKI). Aims to form a superior Muslim person with the Pancasila character. Humans who have critical awareness and freedom to master the Islamic Religion sciences. Humans who practice the teachings of Islam have belief and devotion to Allah SWT. It has implications for Muslim individuals who have good morals, are physically and mentally healthy, capable, creative, independent, honest, democratic, and responsible. Humans who are personality qualities, both seen from the elements of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. A complete Muslim individual his entire life is only intended to serve God.

Second, Paulo Freire through critical awareness (concentration) through dialectics with a problem-facing approach. They are aiming at liberating humans from oppression and oppressive actions. It means that both parties have the same awareness to change their self-awareness from dogmatic and fatalist awareness to critical awareness so that there is no control over other existences, both of them have the same position. Paulo Freire designed education to free students from becoming critical, independent human beings, able to play a role and function in a conducive and harmonious society, to create civilization and peace in global life.

Third, the output of a holistic Islamic education system is an independent human figure who can carry out all basic, social and integrative needs. Humans, as subjects of development, become drivers of social and cultural change, which have implications for a condition of a society and nation that is highly civilized, has a work ethic, is productive, open, skilled, democratic and responsible, tolerant, cultured, and fosters multicultural values. The human figure of Pancasila is a professional leader, has high integrity, is consistent with the unity of thoughts, feelings, and actions, and human behavior, which is directly proportional to intelligence and morality.

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