

# Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts on Islamic Educational Governance: Uniting Science and Ethics in Leadership Practice

Mokhamad Yaurizqika Hadi<sup>1</sup>, Dhea Queenta Auliya<sup>2</sup>, Su'ud Intan<sup>3</sup>, Masaayu Huril Ain Kuni Afifah<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Institut Agama Islam At Taqwa Bondowoso, Indonesia

Email Korespondensi: [myaurizqikahadi@gmail.com](mailto:myaurizqikahadi@gmail.com)

## Abstract

---

*This study examines Ibn Khaldun's ideas on Islamic educational management, focusing on the integration of knowledge and morality in educational leadership. Employing a qualitative approach through literature review, this research analyzes Ibn Khaldun's monumental work, the Muqaddimah, along with relevant secondary sources. The findings reveal that Ibn Khaldun viewed education as a process of holistic human development, balancing intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. In the context of educational leadership, he emphasized moral exemplars, justice, and ethical responsibility as foundational principles. These ideas remain highly relevant for contemporary Islamic education, particularly in addressing the value crisis and the dichotomy between cognitive achievement and character formation. The integration of knowledge and ethics, as formulated by Ibn Khaldun, serves as an essential foundation for developing a comprehensive and sustainable model of Islamic educational management.*

**Kata kunci:** Ibn Khaldun, Islamic Educational Management, Ethical Leadership, Integration of Knowledge and Morality.

---

## Abstrak

---

*Penelitian ini mengkaji pemikiran Ibn Khaldun tentang manajemen pendidikan Islam, dengan fokus pada integrasi ilmu pengetahuan dan moralitas dalam kepemimpinan pendidikan. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis studi pustaka, penelitian ini menganalisis karya monumental Ibn Khaldun, yaitu Muqaddimah, beserta berbagai sumber sekunder yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Ibn Khaldun memandang pendidikan sebagai proses pembentukan manusia secara holistik, mencakup dimensi intelektual, moral, dan spiritual secara seimbang. Dalam konteks kepemimpinan pendidikan, ia menekankan keteladanan moral, keadilan, dan tanggung jawab etis sebagai prinsip utama. Pemikiran ini tetap relevan dalam menghadapi tantangan pendidikan Islam kontemporer, terutama krisis nilai dan dikotomi antara pencapaian kognitif dengan pembentukan karakter. Integrasi ilmu dan etika yang dirumuskan Ibn Khaldun menjadi landasan penting bagi pengembangan model manajemen pendidikan Islam yang komprehensif dan berkelanjutan.*

**Keywords:** *Ibn Khaldun, Manajemen Pendidikan Islam, Kepemimpinan Etis, Integrasi Ilmu dan Moral.*

## Introduction

Islamic education plays a strategic role in shaping holistic human beings, individuals who excel intellectually while also possessing strong moral and spiritual character. Various studies affirm that Islamic education should not only develop cognitive abilities but also instill ethical values as the foundation of life (Fadli 2018). In reality, the challenges of modern education are increasingly complex: the flow of information globalization, the rapid development of digital technology, and the moral crisis

have pushed educational orientation toward increasing pragmatism, causing spirituality and ethics to be frequently overlooked.

Amid this dynamic, the thoughts of classical figures such as Ibn Khaldun have rediscovered their relevance as a reference in formulating a character-based and sustainable educational direction. Ibn Khaldun is known as a Muslim scholar who made significant contributions to sociology, the philosophy of history, and education. His work, the *Muqaddimah*, is not merely a social theory but also a comprehensive view of education as a pillar of civilization (Alatas 2014). He asserted that knowledge and morality must go hand in hand to produce a civilized generation capable of advancing society.

In the context of educational leadership, Ibn Khaldun emphasized the importance of moral exemplars, social justice, and an awareness of the mandate entrusted to educational leaders. For Ibn Khaldun, leadership is not merely an administrative matter but also touches on spiritual dimensions and the formation of organizational culture (Mahdi 2017). The integration of intellectual strength and moral integrity is increasingly crucial amid the value crisis affecting educational institutions. This study aims to further explore the concept of Islamic educational management from Ibn Khaldun's perspective, and to examine how the integration of knowledge and morality can be implemented in modern educational leadership.

## **Literature Review**

Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) was one of the most influential Muslim thinkers in history. His work, the *Muqaddimah*, is recognized as one of the greatest intellectual works in the Islamic tradition, transcending disciplinary boundaries: sociology, economics, history, and education are all addressed systematically and empirically (Fromherz 2010). In the field of education, Ibn Khaldun laid a strong epistemological foundation by viewing knowledge as a means of achieving life's welfare that cannot be separated from humanitarian and divine purposes.

Contemporary researchers have explored the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thought from various perspectives. Alatas (2014) demonstrated that Ibn Khaldun's theory of civilization contains a rich pedagogical dimension, where education is understood as a mechanism for transmitting cultural values and knowledge from one generation to the next. Halim (2016) further analyzed Ibn Khaldun's theory of knowledge and found parallels with modern constructivist approaches, particularly in its emphasis on experience and active thinking processes.

In the context of Islamic educational management, Muhammad (2019) affirmed that the theoretical and practical foundations of Islamic educational management derive from the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly thought, where Ibn Khaldun occupies an important position as the founder of value-based educational concepts. Mahdi (2017) specifically highlighted the strong relationship between knowledge and morality in Ibn Khaldun's leadership paradigm, where morality serves as the

compass that guides the application of knowledge. These studies collectively affirm that Ibn Khaldun's thought is not merely a historical legacy but a living and relevant source of inspiration for the development of contemporary Islamic education (Satria dan Malik 2021)

## **Methods**

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a library research method. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on exploring, analyzing, and interpreting the thought of a classical figure, namely Ibn Khaldun, as recorded in his written works. The primary source is the *Muqaddimah*, a monumental work containing Ibn Khaldun's ideas on civilization, education, society, and leadership. The research also utilized various secondary sources in the form of books, journal articles, and other scholarly works relevant to the study theme.

The data collection process involved identifying, selecting, and conducting in-depth readings of literature discussing Islamic educational management concepts and the integration of knowledge and morality in Ibn Khaldun's perspective. The collected data was analyzed using content analysis techniques, a systematic procedure for interpreting text content to identify patterns, key concepts, and their implications. The analysis process includes data reduction, presentation of findings, and drawing conclusions in accordance with the characteristics of qualitative research. Theoretical validity was

maintained through a comparison between Ibn Khaldun's thoughts and modern Islamic educational management theories, so that the results can demonstrate the continuity and conceptual contribution of classical thought to the challenges of contemporary education.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### **1. Findings**

#### **a. Views on Education According to Ibn Khaldun**

Ibn Khaldun placed education as the foundation for the formation of a civilized society. For him, educational activities were not only concerned with transmitting knowledge but also with developing human character and morality. Without morality, knowledge will lose its direction and potentially lead to social destruction (Fromherz 2010). Therefore, moral values must become an inseparable goal of the intellectual process.

Ibn Khaldun asserted that the educational process must proceed in stages and be adapted to the development of the student's abilities. He rejected teaching methods that were too harsh or pushed beyond the child's psychological capacity. Approaches that ignored the mental readiness of students were considered to hinder their intellectual growth; therefore, the development of reason and experience must be fostered continuously, following the maturity of the mind and soul (Alatas 2014). This gradual learning model implicitly anticipated modern learning theories such as constructivism, where understanding is built actively and progressively based on real experience.

Ibn Khaldun also criticized teaching models that solely emphasized memorization, arguing that such practices weaken students' analytical abilities and creativity. Furthermore, he distinguished between religious knowledge that is obligatory (*fardhu 'ain*) and worldly knowledge that is also obligatory (*fardhu kifayah*); both must be studied proportionally to maintain a balance between personal and social life. This integrative principle is highly relevant in addressing the knowledge dichotomy that remains a problem in contemporary Islamic education (Alatas 2014; Khaldun 2015). Thus, his educational concept provides both a philosophical and practical foundation for building a holistic Islamic education system, encompassing the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions harmoniously.

b. Educational Leadership Based on Ethics and Moral Exemplars

From Ibn Khaldun's perspective, a leader in the field of education is not sufficient merely to master managerial or administrative skills. Educational leadership demands moral integrity because this position is directly related to the formation of human beings and the direction of civilization. The principle of exemplary behavior is the primary foundation of educational leadership, namely a leader who is able to demonstrate noble behavior as the basis for the legitimacy of his leadership (Hassan 2022). Moral values such as trustworthiness, honesty, justice, and patience must be reflected in the leader's concrete actions,

because a leader who fails to set an example will undermine the effectiveness of education and weaken public trust.

Ibn Khaldun also emphasized that educational leadership is closely linked to social responsibility. Leaders must be sensitive to the needs of society and possess the ability to design policies relevant to the context of their students. This view aligns with the principles of ethical and transformative leadership recognized in contemporary theories, such as servant leadership, where leaders are understood as servants of moral values (Rahman dan Ahmad 2020). Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun asserted that educational leaders must be adaptive to social change without abandoning Islamic moral values, possessing foresight and the ability to make strategic decisions relevant to current developments, while remaining steadfast in scientific ethics and morality (Yusof 2019).

## **2. Discussion**

### **a. The Relevance of Ibn Khaldun's Thought to Contemporary Islamic Education**

One of the most pressing issues in contemporary Islamic education is the decline in value orientation. The development of digital technology and the rapid flow of information provide significant opportunities for the modernization of learning, but at the same time trigger increased individualism, materialistic tendencies, and a weakening of students' moral qualities. A system of educational management that relies solely on technical-bureaucratic procedures and quantitative achievements

is no longer adequate to meet the needs of the times. Ibn Khaldun's thinking offers an alternative by placing spiritual dimensions, ethics, and human values as the foundation of the entire educational process (Hasyim 2020).

Ibn Khaldun reminded that a civilization will decline if it is not supported by strong moral values and a sound scientific tradition (Ridwan 2018). Within the framework of educational management, his ideas invite a comprehensive restructuring of Islamic education, from the formulation of objectives, curriculum, and learning methods, to institutional leadership, so that knowledge and morality proceed in harmony. The ideal curriculum not only teaches cognitive competencies but also instills character values, while learning methods are directed toward developing a holistic personality rather than merely meeting administrative standards (Mahfudz 2022).

Another contribution of his thought is the push to create an inclusive education system. Ibn Khaldun believed that access to knowledge should not be reserved for a select group but should be accessible to all levels of society. This perspective is highly relevant to the contemporary reality, which is still marked by disparities in access to education in many Muslim countries. In the context of Islamic educational management, this thinking provides the foundation for developing a more comprehensive evaluation system: one oriented not only toward academic grades but also considering students' moral development, character, and ability to contribute to society (Soleh 2019).

b. The Concept of Asabiyyah as a Foundation for  
Solidarity in Educational Institutions

Ibn Khaldun emphasized the importance of social solidarity, or asabiyyah, as a factor that strengthens cohesion within an educational community. This value teaches the meaning of togetherness, caring, and collective responsibility as part of the learning process. Amid an increasingly individualistic global culture, the spirit of asabiyyah is highly relevant in ensuring that schools or educational institutions remain spaces that foster togetherness and healthy community character (Azmi 2018). This idea also serves as a critique of the tendency toward commercialization of education, which increasingly reduces the noble values of education to mere commodities; Ibn Khaldun reminded that the pursuit of knowledge should not shift to merely a means of attaining economic status.

The relevance of the asabiyyah concept for modern Islamic educational institutions lies in its ability to build an organizational culture oriented toward values rather than mere achievement. School principals and institutional leaders who understand the importance of solidarity will be able to create an institutional climate that is supportive, collaborative, and oriented toward the common good. Thus, Ibn Khaldun's thinking presents a model of educational management that combines intellectual rationality, moral sensitivity, and social awareness within a unified framework, a model that is essential for building a sustainable and civilized Islamic education system (Siddiq dan Haron 2021).

## **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun's intellectual legacy provides a substantial conceptual foundation for strengthening Islamic educational management in the contemporary era. His holistic perspective, integrating knowledge, morality, and social responsibility, offers an alternative framework to address the ongoing crises of values, leadership integrity, and the dichotomy between cognitive achievement and character formation in modern educational institutions.

Ibn Khaldun's emphasis on gradual learning, ethical leadership, and the necessity of harmonizing religious and worldly knowledge remains highly relevant for designing educational systems that are not only academically sound but also morally grounded. In an era when technological advancement and globalization increasingly pressure educational institutions to abandon their moral roots, Ibn Khaldun's ideas provide an essential compass to realign Islamic education with its civilizational mission. The integration of knowledge and ethics in leadership, central to his philosophy, serves as an enduring guide for constructing a sustainable, humanistic, and value-driven Islamic education system.

### **Daftar Pustaka**

- Alatas. 2014. *Applying Ibn Khaldun: The Recovery of a Lost Tradition in Sociology*. Routledge.
- Azmi. 2018. "Asabiyyah and Social Solidarity in Education Context." *Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 6(2): 45–58.
- Fadli, Muhammad. 2018. "Nilai Moral dalam Pendidikan Islam Kontemporer." *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 15(1): 12–25.
- Fromherz, A. J. 2010. *Ibn Khaldun: An Intellectual Biography*. Scotland: Edinburgh University Press.
- Halim, A. 2016. "Ibn Khaldun's Theory of Knowledge and Its Relevance to Modern Education." *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 9: 12–20.
- Hashim, R. 2005. *Educational Dualism in Malaysia: Implications for Theory and Practice*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Hassan, N. A. 2022. "Ethical Foundations of Islamic Educational Leadership: Classical Insights for Contemporary Practice." *Journal of Islamic Education Studies* 14(2): 115–129.
- Hasyim, M. 2020. "Ethical Foundations in Islamic Education: A Classical Perspective for Modern Challenges." *Journal of Islamic Educational Thought* 12(1): 45–60.
- Khaldun, Ibn. 2015. *The Muqaddimah*. Princeton University Press.
- Mahdi. 2017. "Moral Leadership in Ibn Khaldun's Perspective." *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 10(1): 55–64.
- Mahfudz, A. 2022. "Revisiting Islamic Education Management through Classical Scholarship." *Journal of Educational Management and Islamic Values* 9(3): 210–225.

- Mahmoud, R., dan S. Ismail. 2021. "Moral Leadership in Islamic Educational Institutions: A Conceptual Analysis." *International Journal of Islamic Pedagogy* 6(1): 45–60.
- Muhammad, Yusuf. 2019. *Manajemen Pendidikan Islam: Konsep dan Implementasi*. Jakarta: Prenadamedia.
- Rahman. 2020. "Ibn Khaldun's Theory of Learning: A Contemporary Analysis." *Islamic Education Review* 8(1): 33–47.
- Rahman, A., dan F. Ahmad. 2020. "Transformational and Servant Leadership in Islamic Educational Management." *Journal of Educational Thought* 12(3): 201–218.
- Ridwan, A. 2018. "Civilization and Moral Decline in Ibn Khaldun's Theory." *International Journal of Islamic Civilization Studies* 6(2): 120–134.
- Satria dan Malik. 2021. "Human Development and Education in Ibn Khaldun's Framework." *Journal of Islamic Pedagogy* 4(2): 66–80.
- Siddiq, M., dan Z. Haron. 2021. "Integrating Akhlaq and Intellectual Leadership in Islamic Schooling: A Revisit to Classical Theories." *Malaysian Journal of Islamic Management* 5(2): 55–72.
- Soleh, F. 2019. "The Crisis of Commercialization in Muslim Education: Lessons from Ibn Khaldun." *Contemporary Islamic Studies Review* 7(1): 77–92.