





The Thoughts of Ibn Khaldun on Learning Theory in Islamic Education

Ayu Era Wardhani¹, Andi Prastowo²

¹ (Pendidikan Agama Islam/Universitas Darussalam Gontor).
 ² (Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah/Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta).
 * E-mail: ¹ayuerawardhani@unida.gontor.ac.id ²andi.prastowo@uin-suka.ac.id

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Abstract

This study aims to determine Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts on Learning Theory in Islamic Education. The method used in this writing is library research. The method used is library research. The findings reveal that Ibn Khaldun's thoughts on Islamic education fundamentally emphasize and prioritize the development of behavior, ethics, and character. This focus reflects Ibn Khaldun's appreciation for Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. The Qur'an should serve as the source for all lessons in Islamic educational institutions and be practiced in daily life to achieve a comprehensive understanding of Islam. Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts remain relevant today, particularly the idea of an interactive and educational relationship between educators and students in the teaching and learning process to achieve educational objectives.

Keywords: Ibn Khaldun, Learning Theory, Islamic Education

Introduction

Islamic education today still requires efforts to support its growth and development. One such effort is to reflect on the state of Islamic education during the golden age of classical Islam, which produced many great Islamic figures and their monumental works. The various problems currently faced by Islamic education need to be addressed by fostering the growth of Islamic education through a series of research studies involving the works of intellectual Muslim figures from the classical, medieval, and modern periods. Contemporary Islamic education must also undergo changes in line with the advancements of the times without diminishing or deviating from the

prevailing Islamic sharia (Maola & Kuswanto, 2021). One prominent figure in the world of Islamic philosophy is Ibn Khaldun, who has made significant contributions and established his presence in the field of knowledge.

Ibn Khaldun viewed science and education as conclusive phenomena emerging from the formation of society and cultural development, which encourages individuals to acquire knowledge essential for life during the early stages of societal formation (Wakhidah & Syamsul, 2013). Since Ibn Khaldun believed that education aims to create a cultured society and preserve its existence, education should focus on developing quality human resources.

Ibn Khaldun is an Islamic figure who pragmatism. He criticized pioneered educators (teachers) did who not understand proper teaching methods, such as forcing children to overextend their physical and mental capacities. He also suggested not providing material for too long to avoid boredom among students. Additionally, Ibn Khaldun advised against using violent methods in education, as such methods can form bad character traits influenced by the violence itself.

Ibn Khaldun stated that education is not merely an effort to realize one's potential but also provides essential personal skills for living in society. Those who are educated can understand their duties and responsibilities as part of society. Hence, Ibn Khaldun assumed that education significantly contributes to improving living standards in society (Komarudin 2022). Many educational Komarudin, phenomena in Indonesia deviate from the rules of Islamic or National Education, which is why researchers are interested in writing about Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts on Learning Theory in Islamic Education.

Method

The method used in this writing is library research. In this study, the author discusses "Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts on Learning Theory in Islamic Education." Library research is a type of research conducted by reading books or other data sources to gather data from various literatures, whether in libraries or other places. Library research is a type of research used to collect in-depth information and data through various literatures, books, notes, magazines, other references, and relevant previous research to obtain answers and theoretical foundations regarding the problem to be investigated. The library technique involves reading, examining, and recording various literatures or reading materials that are relevant to the

subject matter, then filtering and presenting them in a theoretical framework. Library research is not just about reading and recording collected data, but the researcher must also be able to process the collected data through the stages of library research (Mahmud, 2011).

In this study, the author employs the library research method for several underlying reasons. First, data sources are not always obtainable from the field; sometimes, they can only be acquired from libraries or other written documents, including journals, books, and other literature. Second, library research is necessary as one way to understand new phenomena that were previously not comprehended. This allows the author to formulate concepts to solve emerging problems. The third reason is that library data remains reliable for answering research guestions. Empirical information or data collected by others, whether in the form of books, scientific reports, or research findings, can still be utilized by library researchers (Sugiyono, 2011). Even in certain cases, field data is still insufficient to answer the research questions to be carried out. The steps the author takes in this research include collecting research materials, reading library materials, making research notes, and processing these research notes. The primary and secondary data sources used include books, journals, and literature that support the researcher in discussing "Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts on Learning Theory in Islamic Education."

Result and Discussion

Islamic education is the process of transforming and internalizing knowledge and Islamic values in students through the nurturing and development of their inherent potential to achieve balance and perfection in all aspects of life. Ibn Khaldun also agreed that humans are thinking beings because they can produce knowledge and technology. Such attributes are not possessed by other creatures. Through this thinking ability, humans not only shape their lives but also pay attention to various ways to find the meaning of life. These kinds of processes give rise to civilization (Wakhidah & Syamsul, 2013). Since education is a part of culture, and humans are products of culture as stated by Ibn Khaldun, the learning environment must be able to condition students so that they can adapt and adjust to the constantly changing conditions of the times. Students who are unable to undergo this process will be displaced by time and change.

In Ibn Khaldun's concept of education and teaching, he emphasized not only religious aspects but also worldly ones. According to him, both are equally important and should be provided to students. Ibn Khaldun's paradigm of education fundamentally highlights and prioritizes the development of behavior, morals, and ethics. This approach reflects Ibn Khaldun's appreciation for Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an and Hadith (LISNAWATI, 2017). According to Ibn Khaldun, the Qur'an is the initial lesson that should be provided to children once they reach a level of cognitive development appropriate for their ability. This will serve as the foundation for the continuation of the educational and teaching process (Rohmah, 2012). The Qur'an should be regarded as the source of all lessons in Islamic educational institutions and practiced in daily life to achieve a comprehensive understanding of Islam. Ibn Khaldun's educational concept remains relevant to modern education, particularly in the interactive and educational relationship between educators and students, which is essential for achieving educational goals.

Ibn Khaldun's full name is Abd Arrahman Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr Muhammad Ibn Al-Hasan Ibn Khaldun. He was an expert in Islamic science, the father of historiography, a Muslim historian, philosopher, economist, politician, and educator, and is also recognized as an enlightening figure for sociologists. Born on 1 Ramadan 723 AH and passing away in Cairo, Egypt, on 25 Ramadan 808 H, or March 19, 1406 M, Ibn Khaldun was a prolific scholar whose groundbreaking ideas continue to inspire Islamic scholars to this day (Pasiska, 2019).

Ibn Khaldun came from an aristocratic, political, and intellectual family (Nata, 2005). Ibn Khaldun came from an Andalusian family residing in Silvia. His ancestors were from the Banu W-il, which belonged to the Arab-Yemeni tribes that migrated to Andalusia in the 3rd H. His family's background played a dominant role in shaping Ibn Khaldun's life (Pasiska, 2019). The worlds of politics and science were so intertwined within Ibn Khaldun, and his intellectual prowess also contributed significantly to the development of his career.

His first teacher was his own father, who taught him extensively about politics, rhetoric, philosophy, poetry, and logic, with Tunisia serving as a center for literary education. Unfortunately, his father's education was cut short, as he passed away when Ibn Khaldun was 17 years old, in 1349 H, due to an epidemic. Despite no longer studying with his father, Ibn Khaldun continued to learn various religious disciplines from his teachers in Tunisia, which at that time was a gathering place for scholars and literary figures and a refuge for Andalusian scholars during political turmoil (Pasiska, 2019). His family background and the circumstances of his birth seem to have been decisive factors in the development of his thought. His family inherited intellectual traditions that were passed on to him, while the era in which he lived, marked by the rise

and fall of Islamic dynasties, especially the Umayyah and Abbasiyah dynasties, provided the framework for his social theories and philosophy. Like other Islamic thinkers, his early education was traditional, involving the study of the Qur'an, Hadith, literature, and grammar with the intellectual scholars of the time.

The influential teachers in his understanding of Sharia, language, and philosophy included Muhammad bin Abdullah Muhaimin bin Abdil Al-Hadrami, expert in Nahwu. Abu Abdillah an Muhammad bin al-Hadrami taught him in the fields of astronomy, logic, natural sciences, mathematics, and music. His language teacher was Abdullah Muhammad ibn al-A'rabi al-Husairi. After studying in Tunisia, Ibn Khaldun began serving in various governmental positions in places such as Fez, Granada, Baugie, and Baskara, over a span of 32 years from 1351 to 1383 M. The education he received from his parents had a significant impact on his career, and the knowledge he acquired proved invaluable, enabling him to become a respected and highly dedicated leader (Masduki, 2015).

Many challenges arose that led Ibn Khaldun to experience fatigue and disillusionment. At this stage, he entered a period of his life known as Khalwat, or retreat into the spiritual world. His retreat took place in a small village called Qal'at Ibn Salamah, in the house of the Bani Arif family. It was here that Ibn Khaldun spent his time writing Al-I'bar the Muqaddimah which was heavily influenced by historians, sociologists, philosophers, and educational efforts. His ideas sought to combine conventional religion with rational philosophy. After moving to Tunisia, Ibn Khaldun began applying the knowledge he had acquired by teaching people in Egypt and was also appointed as a peace mediator between the Abbasiyyah Sultanate and

Timur Lenk (Al-muta et al., 2017). Ibn Khaldun was also appointed as a judge of the Maliki school of jurisprudence until his death at the age of 74. He was buried in the Sufi cemetery outside *Bab al-Nashr* in Cairo, Egypt.

After Ibn Khaldun's death, there were ongoing discussions about his legacy, particularly regarding his work l'bar or Tarikh Ibn Khaldun, which covers the origins and events of the Arabs, Persians, Berbers, and the powerful figures of his time. His first major work, Mugaddimah, is considered his magnum opus and focuses on sociology. His second work, Al-Ta'rif, contains a history of his life and related events. His third work, Syifa'al-sani li tahdhib al-masail, discusses the paths of Sufism and Sharia (Fathorrahman, 2019).

Ibnu Khaldun's concept of education connects concepts and reality, which is the result of his various experiences as an expert in philosophy, history, and sociology (Chodry, 2018). Ibnu Khaldun was an Islamic figure who pioneered the emergence of pragmatism. From an educational perspective, Ibnu Khaldun was more pragmatic and oriented towards practical application. He classified knowledge based on its functional purpose, rather than solely its substantial value. Ibnu Khaldun divided knowledge into two categories that should be included in the educational curriculum: 1) Knowledge with intrinsic value, such as religious sciences: Tafsir, Hadist, Figh, Ilmu Kalam, Ontology, and Theology from branches of philosophy. 2) Knowledge with extrinsic-instrumental value, such as: Arabic language, arithmetic, logic, and Ushul-Fiqh (Dewey et al., n.d.).

Ibnu Khaldun also allowed for the indepth study of sciences related to knowledge with intrinsic value. He permitted the detailed and analyticallyrational discussion of issues related to this type of knowledge because it can enhance a person's intellectual and academic capabilities. On the other hand, Ibnu Khaldun did not allow for the rational deepening of knowledge with extrinsicinstrumental value, unless it was placed within the framework of its usefulness for the type of knowledge with intrinsic value (Dewey et al., n.d.).

Based these practical on considerations, Ibnu Khaldun criticized Ahli Nahwu, logicians, and Ahli Fiqh of his time because they had expanded the scope of their studies and increased the topics and arguments within their disciplines, thus deviating from their original purpose as auxiliary sciences and transforming them into intrinsic sciences. According to Ibnu Khaldun, this led to negative consequences for students in general. Students should have focused more on intrinsic knowledge but were instead preoccupied with instrumental knowledge. Teachers should remind students of the educational goals they aim to achieve. This pragmatic classification of knowledge that students should learn is not the only classification pattern proposed by Ibnu Khaldun. He also introduced another classification pattern based on the sources of knowledge. Ibnu Khaldun stated that there are two primary sources of knowledge, 1) Natural: knowledge acquired by humans through reasoning and contemplation. 2) knowledge Sociological: obtained by humans through transmission from one generation to the next via indoctrination and teaching (Aziz et al., 2021).

Regarding the goals of education, Ibnu Khaldun believed that education should shape students into mature individuals with high moral character and noble personalities through the values found in the Qur'an. Developing noble character in students is the primary goal of Ibnu Khaldun's educational concept because character is the benchmark for human excellence in both this world and the hereafter. When children reach adolescence, the goal of education should be expanded to include skills and expertise for life. necessary worldly During adolescence and adulthood, individuals should be given the freedom to think and independently develop their knowledge. Openness to knowledge will lead to a prosperous life and serve as a means to live a cultured and dignified life (Prastowo et al., 2020).

The curriculum during Ibnu Khaldun's time was still limited to the scope of material or information delivered by teachers in the form of studies of specific traditional books or a limited number of lessons studied by students at each educational stage. Ibnu Khaldun himself stated that the Qur'an serves as the foundation of education and the basis for all expertise acquired later in life (Ana Nur Wakhidah & Hidayat, 2013).

Teaching children through the study of the Qur'an is a symbol and practice of Islam, aimed at forming strong faith and reinforcing belief in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Based on the sources of knowledge mentioned above, Ibnu Khaldun divided the educational curriculum into two levels: 1) Basic Level: In-depth study of the Qur'an as the foundation of religion and source of knowledge. The content of the Qur'an will provide students with a strong foundation in faith and character. 2) Advanced Level: Divided into two parts: First Knowledge related to its own essence, such as Sharia and religious sciences. Second Knowledge aimed at other sciences and not related to the essence of Allah, or general knowledge (Rohmah, 2012).

In his *Muqaddimah* Ibnu Khaldun wrote several ideas about learning, some of which can be viewed as learning theories

(Ana Nur Wakhidah & Hidayat, 2013). Here are some of the concepts:

- 1. Theory of Malakah
- 2. Theory of General Recognition
- 3. Theory of Tadarruj
- 4. Principle of Continuity
- 5. Educational Evaluation

In terms of educators, Ibnu Khaldun stated that a teacher will succeed in their duties if they possess qualities that support professionalism. These qualities their include being gentle, always avoiding harshness, and refraining from physical and punishment, psychological especially towards young children. The educator should also serve as an Uswah Al-Hasanah for the students. Exemplary behavior is essential in education because, according to Ibnu Khaldun, children are more likely to imitate what the teacher does rather than merely follow advice or commands (Wajdi, 2015). In terms of teaching methods according to Ibn Khaldun, an educator must be able to teach effectively. The educator provides instruction on general and simple knowledge, particularly concerning the main topics being studied. This knowledge should be tailored to the intellectual level of the students so that it is within their capacity to understand. The educator is also expected to present knowledge at a higher level, allowing students to gain more specific lessons, explanations, and insights. (Wajdi, 2015). Thus, educators can guide students to a higher level of understanding. They teach the main topics in more detail within a comprehensive context, while deepening aspects and refining the discussion.

According to Ibn Khaldun's perspective, there are 4 types of learning methods: the gradual and repetitive method, the discussion and dialogue method, the exploratory method, and the Arabic language teaching method. These methods are described as follows:

- 1. Gradual and Repetitive Method: Ibn Khaldun explains that learning will be more effective (AI-Ta'lim AI-Mufidz) if conducted through a gradual or stepby-step method (tadrij). In this approach, the material is presented incrementally until students master the entire content. When related to Islamic education in Indonesia, it also takes into account individual mental differences, acknowledging that each student has unique readiness, abilities, and inclinations. To foster effective reciprocal relationships, interactions, and cooperation between students and educators. the educational method should consider individual mental differences. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the importance assessing students' learning of maturity, starting with simpler lessons. This approach aligns with Islamic educational principles, which stress the need to match educational content with students' maturity and the level of difficulty (Kini, n.d.). In Islamic education, the term for education, according to Baidhowi, conveying something refers to completely, bit by bit. An According to Al-Asyfahani, education means nurturing something gradually until it reaches its goal.
- Dialogue and Discussion Method: This method is crucial in education because it plays a significant role in enhancing critical thinking among students, particularly adult learners. Ibn Khaldun believed that the easiest way to develop scholarly habits is through the ability to clearly articulate and discuss scientific issues in dialogue and discussion (Usman, 2018). This method serves to clarify or

elucidate scientific issues so that they can be understood. It helps students logical thinking, critical develop analysis, persuasion, independent thought, and respect for others' opinions. Ibn Khaldun aimed to position educators as democratic, producing dynamic and independent graduates who excel in both religious and general knowledge and possess various skills. Islamic education emphasizes the importance of this method in teaching, as effective instruction requires ample time for open discussions. Questions during the learning process are necessary as facilitate communication thev between educators and students. Ibn Khaldun's perspective on the Dialogue and Discussion Method remains highly relevant to the current state of Islamic education in Indonesia and can be applied in modern educational settings.

3. Exploratory Method: Ibn Khaldun advocated for undertaking journeys to seek knowledge, as this approach allows students to access numerous sources of information suited to their exploratory nature. Direct observation significantly enhances their understanding of knowledge through sensory experiences. This provides students with method practical and beneficial experiences. Islamic education in Indonesia supports Ibn Khaldun's view on the importance of exploratory travel as a valuable means of acquiring direct knowledge in the field, which has a profound impact on students. Ibn Khaldun also encouraged students to visit scholars and experts to obtain a wealth of knowledge and deepen their understanding, as knowledge gained through direct observation

greatly clarifies comprehension (Kini, n.d.). Ibn Khaldun's views align with the concept of teaching methods in Islamic education in Indonesia and remain relevant to contemporary education.

4. Arabic Language Teaching Method: According to Ibn Khaldun, language is a tool for expressing the intentions held deep within one's heart through speech. In other words, it is a means of communication with others. He believed that mastering Arabic is essential for scholars engaged in religious sciences because all sources of law in the Qur'an and Hadith are in Arabic. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun emphasized the need for practical methods in teaching Arabic. According to Azra'ie Zakaria, Ibn Khaldun's approach to teaching Arabic remains relevant today, with considerations such as: 1) Motivating students to visit Arab countries with periodically, allowing them to interact directly with native speakers, as this immersive experience naturally enhances language learning. 2) Establishing special dormitories for students with strict requirements, such as using Arabic and English as the primary languages of instruction, and having instructors who have been sent to Arab countries (Thalib, 2020). This is closely related to the practice of language use. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Ibn Khaldun's views on teaching Arabic align with contemporary education and remain relevant today. Many pesantren in Indonesia, such as Modern Islamic Boarding School Darussalam Gontor, use Arabic and English as their primary languages. They require students to master both languages and apply them in daily conversations, both in class and in extracurricular activities. This is because proficiency in foreign languages can also support strong academic performance.

Conclusion

Ibn Khaldun was an expert in Islamic science, the father of historiography, a Muslim historian, philosopher, economist, politician, and educator. Known as a significant influence on sociologists, he was born on 1 Ramadan 723 H and died in Cairo, Egypt on 25 Ramadan 808 H, or March 19, 1406 M. His first major work is the *Muqaddimah*, which is his magnum opus focusing on sociology. His second work is *Al-Ta'rif*, which contains a history of his life and related events. His third work is *Shifa'alsani li tahdhib al-masail*, which discusses the paths of Sufism and Sharia.

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Author Profile

Ayu Era Wardhani was born in Pacitan on March 31, 1998. She completed her undergraduate studies in 2017 in the Islamic Education Program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah, graduating in 2020 from Darussalam Gontor University. In 2021, she continued her education at the master's level in the same field, enrolling in the Islamic Education Program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teaching Sciences at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University in Yogyakarta. And She completed her studies in 2024.