

HOMESCHOOLING CURRICULUM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF IBN KHALDUN: A PHILOSOPHICAL AND CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS IN INDONESIA

Ina Zainah Nasution¹
Evicenna Yuris²

^{1,2}Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara
inazainah@umsu.ac.id

Abstract: Homeschooling is an alternative form of education that is growing in Indonesia. However, studies on homeschooling curricula are still dominated by Western modern educational perspectives. This study aims to analyze homeschooling curricula from the perspective of Ibn Khaldun through philosophical and contextual analysis in Indonesia. This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method and conceptual analysis of Ibn Khaldun's main work, particularly *Al-Muqaddimah*. The results of the study show that Ibn Khaldun's educational principles are highly relevant to the characteristics of the homeschooling curriculum. In the Indonesian context, these principles are in line with the direction of the Merdeka Curriculum policy, which emphasizes flexibility, differentiation, and character building. This article contributes to the enrichment of studies on the homeschooling curriculum based on Islamic educational thought, which is relevant to the development of alternative Islamic education in Indonesia.

Keywords: Homeschooling, Ibn Khaldun, Islamic Education Curriculum, Family Education

Introduction

Education is a strategic process in shaping the quality of individuals and society. However, the formal education system often faces criticism for being inflexible, overly focused on academic achievement, and unable to fully accommodate the comprehensive developmental needs of students. This situation has led to the emergence of various forms of alternative education, one of which is homeschooling (Kunzman & Gaither, 2020).

Homeschooling is understood as an educational model that places the family at the center of the learning process, with parents playing a direct role as primary educators. A number of studies show that homeschooling provides space for more personalized, contextual learning and allows for the integration of values and character into everyday life (Rothermel, 2015). In the context of Islamic education, homeschooling is often seen as a means of strengthening moral education and Islamic values from an early age (Halstead, 2004).

Homeschooling in the context of regulations in Indonesia has a legal basis through the National Education System Law (Law No. 20 of 2003) and Government Regulation (PP) No. 17 of 2010 concerning the management and implementation of education. These two regulations provide space for the implementation of education outside of formal schools through non-formal and informal education channels, including homeschooling, if they meet the graduate competency standards and coordinate with the local education office (*Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia [Kemendikbud], 2020*). In addition, *Permendikbud* No. 22 of 2016 concerning Content Standards also states that the curriculum can be developed in accordance with the characteristics of students and the needs of the

community. This provision provides opportunities for learning patterns such as homeschooling to develop a curriculum that is relevant to the context of the students and national education goals, without having to be bound by the formal structure of schools. Thus, homeschooling has legitimacy within the framework of national education law.

The Merdeka Belajar policy launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology emphasizes the importance of curriculum flexibility, learner-centered learning, and character building through the Pancasila Student Profile (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum provides space for educational units and educators to tailor learning to the needs, interests, and potential of students, while emphasizing meaningful and contextual learning. These principles show a strong overlap between the Merdeka Curriculum policy and homeschooling practices, particularly in terms of learning autonomy, curriculum differentiation, and family involvement in the educational process. Homeschooling, as a form of non-formal education recognized in the national education system, can be understood as a concrete manifestation of the spirit of Merdeka Belajar, especially in the context of family and community-based education (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

However, studies on homeschooling in Islamic education are generally still practical and descriptive in nature. The philosophical basis of the homeschooling curriculum, which is derived from classical Islamic thought, has not been studied in depth. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldun, as one of the classical Muslim intellectual figures, has offered comprehensive educational ideas, particularly regarding educational goals, learning stages, teaching methods, and the role of the social environment (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). Ibn Khaldun's educational thoughts are more often studied in the context of the history of Islamic education or formal educational institutions such as madrasas. In fact, his views on family-based education, habituation, and role modeling are highly relevant to homeschooling practices. Therefore, a study linking Ibn Khaldun's educational thought to the development of homeschooling curricula from an Islamic education perspective is needed. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the concept of homeschooling curriculum according to Ibn Khaldun's educational thought and its relevance to the development of contemporary Islamic education in Indonesia.

Literature Review

1. Homeschooling in Contemporary Education Studies

Homeschooling is an alternative education model that places the family at the center of the learning process by emphasizing curriculum flexibility, personalized learning, and active parental involvement. In contemporary education studies, homeschooling is seen as a response to the limitations of the formal education system, which tends to be uniform and less adaptive to the individual needs of students (Kunzman & Gaither, 2020; Rothermel, 2015). A number of studies show that homeschooling can encourage independent learning, strengthen emotional relationships within the family, and provide space for the development of students' potential in a more contextual manner (Guterson, 2017).

In the Indonesian context, several studies show that homeschooling is developing as an alternative form of Islamic education that is relevant to the needs of urban Muslim communities. Syarifah, Ahmadan, and Wafa (2024) emphasize that homeschooling can be positioned as an alternative model of Islamic education that does not conflict with the national education system as long as it continues to refer to graduate competency standards. However, other studies show that homeschooling practices in Indonesia still face challenges, including those related to regulations, social legitimacy, and parents' readiness to manage the curriculum and learning (Hunaida, Halim, & Hadiyansyah, 2025). Media studies also show differences in

public perceptions of homeschooling as an Islamic education model, which is often understood partially and is not yet fully supported by a systematic curriculum framework (Sidqi et al., 2025).

Current national education regulations stipulate the Merdeka Curriculum policy, which provides flexibility for curriculum development oriented towards the needs of students and the local context. Research shows that this policy opens up opportunities for homeschooling practices to develop a contextual curriculum that is in line with Islamic educational values, as long as it remains within the framework of the national education system (Wulandari & Mujahidah, 2024; Sadiyah, Bahruddin, & Sadiyah, 2023). Therefore, this study occupies an important position in filling the research gap by integrating Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking into the analysis of homeschooling curricula through philosophical and contextual studies in Indonesia.

2. Homeschooling from an Islamic Education Perspective

Homeschooling in the perspective of Islamic Education has begun to gain attention as a family-based education model that is considered to be in line with the principles of tarbiyah in Islam. Islamic education places parents as the primary educators responsible for shaping their children's morals, faith, and personality. Therefore, homeschooling is seen as having strategic potential in integrating Islamic values more intensively through role modeling, habituation, and daily interaction (Halstead, 2004; Naimah, 2024). Recent research confirms that homeschooling allows for the development of a more adaptive Islamic education curriculum in terms of material, methods, and learning evaluation (Adlimah, 2024). On the other hand, studies on homeschooling curricula from the perspective of classical Islamic educational thought are still relatively limited. The thoughts of Ibn Khaldun, particularly in *Al-Muqaddimah*, offer educational principles that are relevant to the characteristics of homeschooling, such as gradual learning (*tadarruj*), competency building through habituation (*malakah*), the suitability of material to the psychological readiness of students, and the rejection of repressive educational methods (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). According to Ibn Khaldun, education is not only oriented towards the mastery of knowledge, but also towards the continuous development of intellectual, moral, and social abilities.

A number of studies have examined Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking in the context of pedagogy and Islamic education in general, but these studies are generally limited to historical contexts or formal educational institutions such as madrasas (Al-Attas, 1993; Hasan, 2018). There has not been much research that systematically links Ibn Khaldun's curriculum principles with non-formal and family-based educational practices, especially homeschooling. In fact, the characteristics of homeschooling, which emphasize contextual learning, curriculum flexibility, and the central role of the family environment, are strongly in line with Ibn Khaldun's educational ideas. Ibn Khaldun even specifically exemplified the curriculum studied by crown princes by inviting teachers to the palace.

Family-based education is considered to be in line with the concept of tarbiyah in Islam, which emphasizes the role of parents as primary educators. However, Islamic educational literature on homeschooling is generally normative and practical in nature. These studies tend to focus on strengthening religious values without developing a systematic curriculum framework based on classical Islamic educational theory. The ideas of Islamic educational figures, such as Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun, are rarely used as a conceptual basis for designing or evaluating homeschooling curricula.

3. Ibn Khaldun's Educational Thought

Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) is known as a multidisciplinary thinker who made significant contributions in the fields of sociology, history, and education. In *Al-Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun put forward a number of progressive educational principles that are relevant across time. He emphasized the importance of gradual learning (*tadarruj*), the suitability of material to the psychological readiness of students, and the rejection of repressive and coercive teaching methods (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). The concept of *malakah* (competence or skills embedded through habit) is central to Ibn Khaldun's thinking on education. Education is not understood as a process of knowledge transfer alone, but as the formation of intellectual, moral, and social capacities through repeated experiences in a supportive environment. In addition, Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the balance between naqli (revelation) and aqli (rational) knowledge, which reflects a holistic approach to the educational curriculum.

4. Previous Studies on Ibn Khaldun and Curriculum

Academic studies on Ibn Khaldun's educational thought generally focus on the historical context of Islamic education and formal institutions such as madrasas. Several studies examine the relevance of his ideas to modern pedagogy, such as experiential learning and developmental psychology (Al-Attas, 1993; Hasan, 2018). However, these studies are still limited to the conceptual level and have not explicitly linked Ibn Khaldun's thoughts to alternative education models such as homeschooling. This limitation indicates a significant research gap. Although Ibn Khaldun's educational principles are highly relevant to the characteristics of homeschooling, there has not been much research integrating the two domains into a systematic curriculum framework.

5. Research Gap

Based on the above literature review, it can be concluded that there are three main gaps in previous research. First, studies on homeschooling are still dominated by Western paradigms and lack classical Islamic educational perspectives. Second, the discourse on Islamic education regarding homeschooling is not yet supported by a strong, theory-based curriculum framework. Third, Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking is rarely applied in the context of non-formal, family-based education. Therefore, this study occupies a strategic position by integrating Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking into the analysis of homeschooling curricula, particularly in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia. This study not only expands the body of knowledge on homeschooling, but also actualizes classical Islamic thinking in responding to contemporary educational challenges.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with *library research*. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. The main primary source is the work of Ibn Khaldun, particularly *Al-Muqaddimah*, which contains his philosophical views on education, the learning process, and the formation of competencies (*malakah*). This work is used as the main basis for identifying the principles of the education curriculum according to Ibn Khaldun's perspective (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). Secondary sources include books and scientific journal articles discussing homeschooling, Islamic education, curriculum, and education regulations in Indonesia. The secondary literature includes theoretical studies and recent research (2023–2025) relevant to the topic of homeschooling in the context of Islamic education and national education policy, including the Merdeka Curriculum. In addition, national education policy

documents, such as the National Education System Law and related regulations, are used to strengthen the context of the analysis.

Data collection techniques were carried out through systematic searches of relevant literature. The search was conducted by identifying keywords such as *homeschooling*, *Islamic education curriculum*, *Ibn Khaldun*, *family education*, and *Merdeka Curriculum*. The selected literature was sources that were directly relevant to the focus of the study and came from credible publishers or scientific journals. The literature selection process was carried out by considering novelty, thematic relevance, and theoretical contributions to the study of Islamic education and homeschooling.

Data analysis techniques were carried out using *content* analysis and conceptual analysis. Content analysis is used to identify and categorize the main concepts in Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking related to curriculum, such as gradual learning (*tadarruj*), competency building (*malakah*), balance between naqli and aqli knowledge, and a humanistic approach to education. Furthermore, conceptual analysis is carried out by linking these principles to the characteristics and needs of homeschooling curricula in the context of Indonesian education. The analysis was also conducted contextually, taking into account national education regulations and the Merdeka Curriculum policy. This stage aimed to assess the suitability and relevance of Ibn Khaldun's educational principles to the national education policy framework, without intending to conduct a normative or juridical evaluation of the policy.

The validity of the data in this study was ensured through source triangulation, namely by comparing Ibn Khaldun's ideas with various contemporary scientific literature and relevant policy documents. In addition, the use of authoritative primary sources and secondary literature from reputable scientific journals was expected to increase the credibility and reliability of the analysis results.

Discussion

1. The Concept of Education in Ibn Khaldun's Thought

Ibn Khaldun viewed education as a process of human development that takes place gradually and continuously. The principle of *tadarruj* emphasizes that learning must be adapted to the level of development and readiness of students so that knowledge can be understood optimally (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). In addition, Ibn Khaldun rejected the use of violence in education because it can damage character and hinder the development of children's potential. Education, according to him, must take place in a humane atmosphere and encourage the growth of intrinsic motivation.

2. The Structure of the Homeschooling Curriculum from Ibn Khaldun's Perspective

Ibn Khaldun divides knowledge into naqli knowledge and aqli knowledge. Both must be taught in a balanced manner so that education is not skewed between intellectual and moral aspects (Ibn Khaldun, 2005; Al-Attas, 1993). In the context of homeschooling, this division is relevant for designing a curriculum that integrates religious education, general knowledge, and life skills. According to Ibn Khaldun's perspective, the homeschooling curriculum is not oriented towards mastery of material alone, but towards the formation of *malakah*, namely the abilities and skills embedded in the students.

Ibn Khaldun provides a direct example of the homeschooling curriculum for princes in the palace. "The education of the sons of rulers consists in teaching them the Qur'an, writing, Arabic language, poetry, and history. They are instructed in religious matters and trained in the rules of good behavior and court etiquette. They also learn the art of administration and the

ways of government, so that they may be prepared for royal authority." (Khalidun 20005) Mereka diajarkan perkara-perkara agama dan dilatih dalam aturan-aturan perilaku yang baik serta etiket istana. Mereka juga mempelajari seni administrasi dan tata cara pemerintahan, agar dipersiapkan untuk memegang kekuasaan kerajaan.”)

3. The Role of the Family in Homeschooling Education

For Ibn Khaldun, the family is the primary educational environment that shapes children's habits and character. The methods of role modeling and habituation play an important role in the educational process (Ibn Khaldun, 2005). This principle is in line with homeschooling, which places parents as the primary educators in everyday life.

4. Homeschooling Regulations and Their Implications in Indonesia

Education regulations in Indonesia provide a legal basis for homeschooling, particularly through Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System and its derivative regulations. The National Education System Law stipulates that education can be provided through formal, non-formal, and informal channels (*Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020*). Homeschooling, as a non-formal or informal educational practice, is recognized as long as students achieve the competency standards set by the government and education agencies in their respective regions.

More specifically, Permendikbud No. 22 of 2016 concerning Content Standards provides space for educational units to develop curricula according to the needs of students and the local context as long as they still refer to national learning outcomes. This provision provides legal legitimacy for families to develop a flexible and contextual homeschooling curriculum that can combine Islamic education principles, the Merdeka Curriculum, and the context of student needs (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). The presence of this regulation provides practical power for parents and educators to implement homeschooling as part of the national education system, while still considering their responsibility for competency standards and the obligation to coordinate with the education office. Thus, homeschooling in Indonesia is not only a social phenomenon, but also part of the implementation of a legally valid national education policy.

5. Homeschooling Curriculum, Ibn Khaldun's Thoughts, and Independent Curriculum in Indonesia

The Merdeka Curriculum places students as the main subjects of learning by emphasizing the principles of differentiation, project-based learning, and character building through the Pancasila Student Profile. This approach is in line with Ibnu Khaldun's educational thinking, which emphasizes gradual learning (*tadarruj*), suitability to the psychological readiness of students, and the importance of direct experience in the learning process (Ibnu Khaldun, 2005). In the context of homeschooling in Indonesia, the principles of Merdeka Belajar can be implemented more optimally because the flexibility of time, place, and learning methods allows parents to tailor the curriculum to the individual needs of their children. Ibn Khaldun's thinking on education based on habit formation and role modeling reinforces the character dimension in the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes not only academic achievement but also the development of attitudes, values, and social competencies.

In addition, the concept of *malakah* in Ibn Khaldun's thinking is consistent with the orientation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes long-term competencies and learning outcomes, rather than merely mastery of material. The formative and reflective assessments recommended in the Merdeka Curriculum are in line with Ibn Khaldun's view that the success of education is measured by the ability of students to apply knowledge in real life.

Thus, the integration of Ibn Khaldun's thinking and the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum provides a strong conceptual framework for the development of an Islamic education-based homeschooling curriculum in Indonesia. Homeschooling is not only an alternative to the education system (), but also part of the Merdeka Belajar ecosystem that emphasizes independence, flexibility, and character building of students.

Conclusion

This study shows that Ibn Khaldun's educational thinking has strong relevance to the development of homeschooling curricula from an Islamic education perspective. The principles of gradual learning, balance between naqli and aqli knowledge, a humanistic approach to education, and a focus on competency and character building are philosophical foundations that are in line with homeschooling practices. Thus, homeschooling can be understood as an alternative education model that is in harmony with the values of Islamic education and the classical thinking of Ibn Khaldun. The context of national education regulations in Indonesia, through the National Education System Law and derivative regulations such as the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation on Content Standards, strengthens the legitimacy of homeschooling as part of the national education system. This shows that homeschooling is not only an alternative education model but also a legally valid option and relevant to national education policy, particularly within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum and family-based education.

In the Indonesian context, the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thinking has grown stronger with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes freedom of learning, differentiated learning, and character building. Homeschooling can be positioned as a form of Merdeka Belajar implementation based on the family, with a flexible curriculum that is still based on Islamic educational values. Therefore, the integration of Ibn Khaldun's thinking and the Merdeka Curriculum policy has the potential to enrich the development of an alternative educational curriculum that is contextual, humanistic, and relevant to the needs of Indonesian society.

References

- Adlimah, A. M. (2024). *The Islamic religious education in homeschooling: Examining the curriculum, interaction patterns, and learning evaluation*. *Kodifikasia: Jurnal Penelitian Islam*, 18(2). <https://doi.org/10.21154/kodifikasia.v18i2.9824>
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1993). *Islam and secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC).
- Guterson, D. (2017). *Family matters: Why homeschooling makes sense*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Halstead, J. M. (2004). An Islamic concept of education. *Comparative Education*, 40(4), 517–529. doi:10.1080/0305006042000284510
- Hasan, A. (2018). Educational thought of Ibn Khaldun and its relevance to modern education. *Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, 6(2), 145–158.
- Hunaida, W. L., Halim, A., & Hadiyansyah, D. (2025). *Harmony of homeschooling and Islamic education: Exploring opportunities and challenges in the Indonesian context*. *Jurnal Tarbiyatuna*, 15(2). <https://doi.org/10.31603/tarbiyatuna.v15i2.12365>
- Ibn Khaldun. (2005). *The Muqaddimah: An introduction to history* (F. Rosenthal, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1377)

- Kunzman, R., & Gaither, M. (2020). Homeschooling: A comprehensive survey of the research. *Other Education: The Journal of Educational Alternatives*, 9(1), 1–59.
- Naimah, T. (2024). *Konsep dan aplikasi homeschooling dalam pendidikan keluarga Islam*. *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*.
- Rothermel, P. (2015). International perspectives on homeschooling: Do we still need schools? *Educational Review*, 67(1), 1–18. doi:10.1080/00131911.2013.842173
- Sadiyah, S., Bahruddin, H. E., & Sadiyah, M. (2023). *Implementasi manajemen pembelajaran dalam meningkatkan efektivitas pembelajaran di homeschooling Islami*. *Islamic Management: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6(02). <https://doi.org/10.30868/im.v6i02.4879>
- Sidqi, A., Dalimunthe, R. M., Haryani, D., & Ajahari, A. (2025). *Fenomena home schooling pendidikan Islam: Analisis komparatif perspektif dalam media massa*. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.31004/jptam.v9i2.27378>
- Syarifah, S., Ahmadan, M., & Wafa, M. T. (2024). *Homeschooling model as an alternative for Islamic education*. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan*, 41(1). <https://doi.org/10.15294/snz12414>
- Wulandari, M. A., & Mujahidah, Z. (2024). *Homeschooling policy and its relevance to strengthening Islamic education in Indonesia in the digital era*. *TARLIM: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.32528/tarlim.v7i1.1562>