Disrupting Patriarchy Through Critical Literacy: A Textual and Pedagogical Analysis of Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's Writings on Gender Justice in Contemporary Indonesia

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Abstrak

Kata Kunci:
Representasi gender;
Literasi kritis;
Mubadalah;
Transformasi pedagogis;
Pendidikan Indonesia.

Narasi patriarkal dalam teks pendidikan dan keagamaan di Indonesia terus mereproduksi ketidaksetaraan gender, sehingga literasi kritis menjadi pendekatan pedagogis yang mendesak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menelaah bagaimana karya-karya Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir berkontribusi dalam mempromosikan keadilan gender dalam pendidikan bahasa melalui praktik literasi kritis. Dengan menggunakan desain studi kasus kualitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan wawancara, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen dengan guru bahasa dan mahasiswa pendidikan di Cirebon yang terlibat dengan tulisan-tulisan Faqihuddin serta kerangka mubadalah. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru dan mahasiswa mengembangkan kesadaran yang lebih besar terhadap bias gender dalam teks dan menerapkan strategi membaca reflektif untuk menginternalisasi nilai-nilai etis seperti keadilan dan timbal balik. Para guru mulai mengintegrasikan bahasa yang inklusif dan mendorong latihan penulisan ulang dari perspektif perempuan, yang menempatkan mahasiswa sebagai agen perubahan sosial. Selain itu, para pendidik mulai mendefinisikan kembali peran profesional mereka dari sekadar pengajar bahasa menjadi fasilitator keadilan sosial. Hasil ini menunjukkan potensi transformatif pedagogi literasi kritis yang berkeadilan gender dalam konteks pendidikan Islam maupun multibahasa. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi teks yang sadar gender dan praktik reflektif dapat memperkaya pembelajaran bahasa, mendorong kesetaraan gender, serta menawarkan kontribusi progresif Islam terhadap wacana literasi kritis global.

Abstract

Keywords:
Gender representation;
Critical literacy;
Mubadalah;
Pedagogical Transformation;
Indonesia education.

Patriarchal narratives in Indonesian educational and religious texts continue to reproduce gender inequality, making critical literacy an urgent pedagogical approach. This study aims to examine how the works of Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir contribute to promoting gender justice in language education through critical literacy practices. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research involved interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis with language teachers and education students in Cirebon who engaged with Faqihuddin's writings and *mubadalah* framework. The findings reveal that teachers and students developed greater awareness of gender bias in texts and adopted reflective reading strategies to

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internalize ethical values such as justice and reciprocity. Teachers began to integrate inclusive language and encourage rewriting exercises from female perspectives, which positioned students as agents of social change. Furthermore, educators started to redefine their professional roles from mere linguistic instructors to facilitators of social justice. These results demonstrate the transformative potential of gender-just critical literacy pedagogy in both Islamic and multilingual educational contexts. This study concludes that integrating gender-conscious texts and reflective practices can enrich language classrooms, advance gender equality, and offer a progressive Islamic contribution to global critical literacy discourse.

INTRODUCTION

Patriarchal narratives in both educational and religious texts continue to reinforce gender inequalities in Indonesian classrooms. This is problematic because language education is not only about teaching linguistic competence but also about shaping values, identities, and social consciousness (Rymes et al., 2024). When gender bias is embedded in classroom texts and pedagogy, it risks reproducing structural inequalities rather than cultivating awareness (Rohmawati & Putra, 2022). Language, in this sense, is not merely a tool of communication but a hegemonic medium that subtly shapes learners' cognition, attitudes, and value systems.

Over the past few decades, the theory and practice of literacy have undergone a paradigmatic shift. Literacy is no longer defined narrowly as a technical skill of reading and writing but is increasingly recognized as a socially and ideologically embedded practice imbued with values, power relations, and identity construction (Janks, 2012; Howley, 2023). Within the context of language education, critical literacy has become highly relevant (Govender, 2019). It conceptualizes literacy as a practice of reading both the word and the world (Freire, 2020), positioning language as a site of ideological struggle (Luke, 2000). Language carries implicit power dynamics that shape learners' worldview, including gender relations (Weng, 2023). Nevertheless, pedagogical practices in Indonesia have yet to fully embrace critical literacy perspectives, particularly in addressing gender bias and structural injustices embedded within classroom materials.

The urgency of gender equality in education is reflected in broader development frameworks. In Indonesia, commitments to gender justice are enshrined in the *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional (RPJPN) 2025–2045* and international agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Gender equality extends beyond enrollment numbers to include fair representation, equitable treatment, and inclusive participation in educational discourse and practice (Psaki et al., 2018). Yet empirical

realities suggest that these ideals remain far from realized. Preliminary document analysis and classroom observations reveal that English language instruction continues to display gender-biased content and pedagogical approaches that lack gender sensitivity, thus perpetuating rather than disrupting inequities. Many teachers, often unconsciously, reproduce gendered inequalities due to limited critical awareness in selecting or producing materials.

Research confirms that gender bias in education is systemic. Studies of English language textbooks at the secondary level consistently show women portrayed in domestic roles while men are represented as leaders and professionals (Tyarakanita et al., 2021; Nandi et al., 2024; Şeker & Dinçer, 2014). Similarly, religious and language curricula perpetuate patriarchal stereotypes that marginalize female voices (Jule, 2016; Alameddine & Chehimi, 2024; Alade, 2012). Other research highlights that gender bias remains embedded in Islamic and language education, requiring more critical approaches to interpretation and pedagogy (Rokhmah, 2022). These studies demonstrate the persistence of patriarchal frameworks across diverse educational contexts. However, few have examined how gender-equitable critical literacy is implemented in practice through the intellectual contributions of local scholars such as Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir.

The works of Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir warrant closer examination for their potential to bridge this gap. Through his *mubadalah* hermeneutic, he consistently reinterprets Islamic texts by emphasizing reciprocity, equality, and justice between men and women (Kodir, 2016; 2017; 2019; 2025). His writings critique patriarchal dominance in religious discourse and propose more ethical visions of gender representation in education (Amber, 2024; Gumiandari & Nafi'a, 2020). By positioning literacy as an ideological and ethical practice, Faqihuddin extends critical literacy into culturally and religiously grounded pedagogical strategies.

This study therefore aims to: (1) analyze the representation of gender in Faqihuddin's works as a counter-narrative to patriarchal discourse; (2) explore how his critical literacy approach functions as an ideological and ethical strategy in language education; and (3) examine its impact on language pedagogy and gender consciousness. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of critical literacy studies, gender studies, and socially responsive pedagogy. Practically, it provides insights for teachers, lecturers, and curriculum developers on integrating gender-conscious texts and reflective practices to build more inclusive, ethical, and emancipatory classrooms. In doing so, the study bridges global debates on patriarchy and literacy with local progressive Islamic thought, offering a novel contribution to both scholarship and practice.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research design with a case study framework combined with textual analysis. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables an in-depth exploration of meanings, practices, and lived experiences, while the case study allows for a holistic engagement with the specific context of language education in Cirebon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Guetterman & Fetters, 2018). Textual analysis was employed to closely examine Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's writings as ideological artifacts that inform critical literacy practices.

The research utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews with purposively selected teachers and language education students, as well as classroom observations focusing on the implementation of gender-conscious literacy practices. Secondary data consisted of Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's writings (2016; 2017; 2019; 2025), teaching materials, essays, articles, and participants' reflective notes. These sources were selected because they reflect both the theoretical foundations and practical enactments of his *mubadalah* framework in education.

Data were gathered through three main techniques: (1) in-depth interviews to capture participants' perspectives and experiences; (2) participant observations to investigate classroom practices and the integration of gender-just literacy strategies; and (3) document analysis of texts and teaching materials, which enabled the tracing of narratives and language use (Owen, 2014).

The study applied thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke in Byrne, 2022) to identify recurring patterns, categories, and themes emerging from the data. This process followed the stages of data reduction, coding, categorization, and interpretation (Mezmir, 2020). To strengthen interpretation, the analysis was informed by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2013), a critical literacy framework (Freire, 2020; Janks, 2012; Luke, 2000), and feminist hermeneutics through the *mubadalah* approach (Gumiandari & Nafi'a, 2020). This combination ensured that textual representations and classroom practices were interrogated not only descriptively but also ideologically, ethically, and politically.

The trustworthiness of findings was ensured through methodological and source triangulation, cross-verification of data from interviews, observations, and documents, as well as member checking with participants. In addition, theoretical triangulation was employed by comparing empirical findings with established theories of critical literacy,

gender studies, and feminist hermeneutics (Freire, 2020; Janks, 2012; Keddie, 2022). These strategies enhanced the credibility, confirmability, and transferability of the study.

Through this methodological framework, the research aims to unveil how Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's gender-just hermeneutics inform critical literacy pedagogy and contribute to dismantling patriarchal narratives in language education.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The Representation of Gender in Faqihuddin's works as a Counter-Narrative to Patriarchal Discourse

The findings of this study reveal that Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's scholarly works operate as systematic counter-narratives to entrenched patriarchal discourses, reclaiming Islamic texts to promote gender justice. Through his hermeneutical framework of *mubādalah*—a principle of reciprocity and mutual responsibility—Faqihuddin asserts that even when Qur'anic or Hadith texts appear linguistically gendered, the ethical imperatives embedded within them—justice, compassion, and responsibility—are universally applicable to both men and women (Abdul Kodir, 2019). This interpretive strategy directly challenges androcentric readings that have historically privileged male authority and relegated women to marginal positions within Islamic thought and practice.

A prominent example of this reinterpretation can be found in his treatment of the widely cited hadith: "A people who appoint a woman as their leader will never prosper." Traditional exegeses often treat this narration as an eternal prohibition on female leadership. Faqihuddin, however, situates the hadith within its specific socio-historical context, demonstrating that it referred to particular political circumstances rather than a timeless theological principle. By reframing leadership as contingent upon justice, accountability, and competence rather than gender (Faqihuddin, 2019; cited in Katsir et al., 2023), he provides a religiously grounded counter-narrative that validates women's participation in political and religious leadership. This approach resonates with the feminist hermeneutics of Amina Wadud (2006) and Asma Barlas (2002), both of whom emphasize that patriarchal readings obscure the Qur'an's commitment to moral equality. Yet, Faqihuddin's contribution is distinguished by its cultural and contextual resonance with Indonesian Muslim audiences, combining Qur'anic and Prophetic ethics in ways recognized as authentic and locally meaningful.

Marriage represents another domain in which *mubādalah* challenges entrenched patriarchal norms. Traditional interpretations often legitimize male authority within the household. In *Qira'ah Mubadalah* (2019), Faqihuddin conceptualizes marriage as a

reciprocal covenant, wherein mutual rights and responsibilities are shared between spouses. Rather than reinforcing hierarchical structures, this perspective promotes an egalitarian model of family life, reflecting recent scholarship advocating gender-just frameworks within Muslim societies (Handayani & Hadi, 2021). By reconceptualizing marital relations in this way, Faqihuddin disrupts conventional readings that confine women to domestic and dependent roles, offering instead a vision of the family as a space for cooperation, partnership, and shared ethical responsibility (Abdul Kodir, 2025).

A third area addressed in Faqihuddin's work is women's rights in worship, education, and public engagement (2017). Classical jurisprudential interpretations often restricted women's visibility in mosques and other communal spaces, positioning their public presence as exceptional or marginal. Faqihuddin, however, foregrounds Prophetic traditions that affirm women's active participation in religious and social life, citing examples of the Prophet Muhammad encouraging women to seek knowledge and engage in congregational worship. This emphasis illustrates that women's presence in public spheres was not anomalous but rather normative within early Islamic society. By highlighting these sources, Faqihuddin confronts enduring cultural biases that limit women's societal roles and provides a theologically grounded rationale for women's inclusion in contemporary educational and social institutions.

To synthesize these reinterpretations, the following table summarizes how Faqihuddin reframes patriarchal narratives into gender-just perspectives with direct implications for education:

Patriarchal Narrative	Mubādalah Reinterpretation	Implications for Education
Women are unfit for leadership	Leadership is determined by justice and competence, not gender	Encourages inclusive leadership models in schools and broader society
Marriage legitimates male authority	Marriage is reciprocal, based on mutual rights and responsibilities	Promotes gender-just family education and classroom discussions
Women's roles confined to domestic/private sphere	Women's participation in worship, study, and public life affirmed	Supports inclusive curricula and female role models

Table 1. Patriarchal Narratives Into Gender-Just Perspectives with Direct Implications for Education

Recent scholarship further highlights the broader hermeneutical significance of *mubādalah*. Saiful Khair et al. (2023) demonstrate its application in ethical debates regarding family planning, while Handayani and Hadi (2021) describe it as a progressive interpretive framework capable of bridging conservative and liberal readings within

Islamic discourse. These studies confirm that Faqihuddin's counter-patriarchal hermeneutics extend beyond gender issues, offering a methodological tool for addressing diverse ethical and social challenges in Muslim contexts.

The findings underscore that Faqihuddin's writings serve as a systematic and textually grounded counter-narrative to patriarchal interpretations. First, from a theoretical perspective, *mubādalah* reorients Islamic texts toward universal ethical values, transcending gender boundaries and promoting justice, compassion, and responsibility. Second, from a normative standpoint, it demonstrates that textual interpretations which appear to limit women's roles are often historically contingent constructions, rather than immutable theological injunctions. Third, from a sociocultural perspective, Faqihuddin's framework opens avenues for women's active participation in leadership, educational engagement, and communal life.

The implications of these findings are multi-dimensional. In the educational domain, Faqihuddin's counter-narratives provide a foundation for curricula and pedagogical approaches that encourage female leadership and inclusive participation. In Islamic studies, his work represents a localized feminist hermeneutics, bridging global discourses on gender justice with the cultural and religious sensibilities of Indonesian Muslims. For social movements, his approach validates gender equity as a core Islamic value, countering perceptions that gender justice is a Western import or secular innovation.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's writings establish a faith-based, contextually grounded model for countering patriarchy, combining textual reinterpretation, ethical principles, and local cultural resonance. The novelty of his approach lies in its ability to integrate Islamic textual authority with the pursuit of gender justice, offering a framework that is simultaneously theologically sound, culturally authentic, and socially transformative.

The Critical Literacy Approach in the Works of Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir: An Ideological and Ethical Strategy in Language Education

Building on the reinterpretive strategies outlined in the first study, this section examines how Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's mubādalah hermeneutics function as a framework for critical literacy, enabling readers to engage with texts as sites of power, ideology, and ethical reflection. The second aim of this study investigates how *mubādalah* moves beyond reinterpretive theology to become a powerful tool for ideological analysis, ethical reflection, and pedagogical practice within Islamic educational contexts. Unlike the first focus on countering patriarchal narratives at the textual level, this dimension

emphasizes the reader's engagement with texts as sites of power, ideology, and social contestation (Janks, 2010; Luke, 2000). In this sense, *mubādalah* equips learners to interrogate not only gendered language but also broader socio-cultural assumptions embedded in Qur'anic, Hadith, and contemporary educational texts.

At its core, *critical literacy* regards texts as ideological constructions where authority, bias, and power intersect. Faqihuddin's framework guides readers to move beyond literalist and conventionalist interpretations, revealing how language has historically served to uphold dominant structures and marginalize subaltern groups, particularly women. By applying the principle of reciprocity, he reframes ethical imperatives in sacred texts—justice, compassion, and responsibility—so they extend equally across gender, class, and social status (Kodir, 2019; Anggoro, 2019). This approach destabilizes entrenched interpretations, creating space for egalitarian, contextually grounded readings that align spiritual values with social justice.

The ideological dimension of *mubādalah* resonates with foundational theories in critical pedagogy. Paulo Freire (2018) emphasizes the dual process of reading the "word and the world," where textual interpretation must connect to lived realities and systemic inequalities. Henry Giroux (2020) conceptualizes pedagogy as a form of cultural politics, advocating that education should empower learners to challenge inequities and reconstruct social norms. Similarly, bell hooks (1994) envisions classrooms as transformative spaces where theory and lived experiences intersect, fostering agency and resistance to domination. Faqihuddin's hermeneutics operationalize these insights within Islamic discourse, enabling learners to identify patriarchal and hierarchical biases in religious texts while generating interpretations that uphold justice and ethical responsibility. Unlike global theoretical frameworks, however, his approach translates these emancipatory principles into spiritually resonant forms, situating social critique firmly within Qur'anic ethics and Prophetic traditions.

Furthermore, *mubādalah* aligns with the broader tradition of Islamic feminist hermeneutics, bridging universal ethical principles with localized interpretation. Amina Wadud (2006) emphasizes rereading the Qur'an through the lens of tawḥīd and justice, foregrounding equality as a theological imperative, while Asma Barlas (2002) illustrates how patriarchal exegesis distorts the Qur'an's core commitment to moral and spiritual equality. Faqihuddin draws upon these frameworks yet indigenizes them within Indonesian discourse, producing what Anggoro (2019) calls a "vernacularized model" of feminist interpretation. This is particularly significant in contexts where Western feminist terminology is often dismissed as foreign or secular. By framing gender justice in Qur'anic

and Prophetic language, *mubādalah* bridges global feminist hermeneutics and local Islamic scholarship, making critical literacy accessible, legitimate, and transformative for Muslim communities.

Empirical research in Indonesian educational settings strengthens the case for *mubādalah* as a pedagogical strategy. Waluyo (2024) report that embedding gender awareness into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Islamic universities significantly enhanced students' ability to detect bias and reflect on fairness. Fajriah et al. (2020) found that when students engaged in critical text-framing, they reconstructed narratives toward gender equity, shifting from passive acceptance of stereotypes to active reinterpretation. Syukri et al. (2024) further demonstrated that a gender-responsive *qirāʾah* module measurably improved learners' comprehension of justice and equality within an Islamic framework. Together, these findings indicate that faith-rooted critical literacy approaches like *mubādalah* are not abstract innovations but empirically validated pedagogical strategies capable of transforming classroom discourse and practice.

Recent scholarship underscores the urgency of integrating gender-just critical pedagogy in Islamic contexts. Waluyo (2024) highlights how gender inequality persists in Islamic education, often remaining at the level of rhetoric rather than classroom practice. Wright (2024) and Winhar et al. (2021) similarly argue that critical pedagogy achieves its transformative potential when localized within indigenous cultural and religious frameworks. By situating Faqihuddin's reinterpretations within these scholarly debates, this study demonstrates that *mubādalah* enriches both global literacy discourse and Islamic feminist scholarship by offering a contextually grounded, spiritually authoritative model of critical literacy.

The findings demonstrate that Faqihuddin's *mubādalah* hermeneutics operate on both ideological and ethical levels. Ideologically, they challenge taken-for-granted hierarchies embedded in religious and educational texts, exposing how power, authority, and bias are reproduced. Ethically, they cultivate a sense of moral responsibility among readers, encouraging learners to actively question assumptions, reconstruct textual meanings, and adopt justice-oriented perspectives. Crucially, this process does not merely foster cognitive awareness but also promotes ethical action, empowering students to enact fairness in classroom interactions, peer engagement, and broader social contexts.

In pedagogical terms, the study illustrates that *mubādalah* provides teachers and learners with tools to critically interrogate texts, encouraging reflection on both linguistic and socio-cultural constructions of knowledge. The approach cultivates conscientização,

or critical consciousness, wherein students recognize the ideological nature of texts and develop agency to challenge inequitable practices (Freire, 2018). Importantly, by grounding these practices in Qur'anic ethics and Prophetic teachings, Faqihuddin mitigates resistance often associated with perceived "Western" feminist concepts, making critical literacy both acceptable and transformative in Islamic classrooms.

Overall, *mubādalah* embodies a dual commitment: it merges critical pedagogy with Islamic ethical hermeneutics, ensuring that literacy is not only about decoding sacred texts but also about engaging with structures of power, justice, and human dignity in culturally resonant ways. This strategy positions learners as active agents capable of reinterpreting texts, questioning authority, and fostering ethical engagement, thus transforming Islamic education into a site where critical reflection and social responsibility intersect.

The Impact of Faqihuddin's Critical Literacy Approach on Language Pedagogy and Gender Consciousness

Building on the establishment of mubādalah as a tool for critical literacy and ethical engagement, this section examines its tangible impact on classroom practices, teacher awareness, and students' gender consciousness in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Cirebon. Whereas the first research focus explored counter-patriarchal narratives within Islamic texts and the second highlighted mubādalah as a framework for ideological and ethical critique, this third study foregrounds the practical translation of these interpretive strategies into pedagogical action. It investigates how teachers and students engage with educational materials, recognize embedded gender biases, and implement classroom practices that foster justice, equality, and critical reflection.

The findings reveal that exposure to Faqihuddin's works prompted a significant shift in teachers' awareness of the ideological nature of textbooks. Prior to engaging with *mubādalah*, teachers largely accepted representations of gender in teaching materials as neutral or natural. For example, men were predominantly depicted as professionals, leaders, and decision-makers, whereas women were shown primarily as housewives or dependents. This pattern reflected longstanding cultural assumptions and implicitly reinforced patriarchal norms within the classroom. After critically engaging with Faqihuddin's reinterpretations, teachers began to perceive these depictions as ideological constructions rather than objective truths, marking a shift from passive content delivery to active ethical engagement with their pedagogical materials.

One teacher articulated this transformation:

"I realized that the examples in our books mostly show men as professionals and women as housewives. After reading Faqihuddin, I feel responsible to question and correct these materials."

This statement highlights a crucial process of conscientização, or critical consciousness (Freire, 2018), where educators recognize that texts are sites of power and bias, and that their own pedagogical decisions can either reproduce or challenge these inequities.

This critical awareness directly influenced classroom practices. Teachers implemented interactive exercises where students were asked to rewrite dialogues or narratives to reverse conventional gender roles—for instance, depicting a male character cooking dinner while a female character led a company. In other exercises, students were tasked with positioning women as central decision-makers in social or organizational contexts. Such activities served multiple purposes: they enhanced language learning, fostered critical reflection on societal norms, and cultivated ethical literacy by making students aware of implicit gendered assumptions embedded in texts.

Student responses during these exercises indicate the emergence of critical literacy dispositions. Some students spontaneously questioned the absence of women in leadership roles or noted the repeated association of fathers with external work:

"Why are there no women leaders in this story?" "Why is the father always the one who works outside?"

These comments reflect an ability to read against the grain (Luke, 2012) and to perceive texts as ideological constructs, echoing Janks' (2010) assertion that texts are sites of ideological contestation. Importantly, this development moves beyond mere intellectual recognition; it demonstrates that students are beginning to internalize critical ethical reasoning, questioning social norms and imagining alternatives that promote justice and equality.

Teachers also emphasized the pedagogical and theological legitimacy provided by *mubādalah*. Rooting gender justice in Qur'anic and Prophetic ethics allowed them to address gender bias confidently without encountering resistance often associated with Western feminist frameworks. One teacher observed:

"Teaching language is not just about grammar; it is also about values. With these texts, I feel more confident to guide students toward fairness and respect."

This dimension underscores a professional transformation, where teachers not only gain practical strategies for classroom implementation but also develop a reflective, morally grounded pedagogical stance.

These empirical findings align with prior research in similar contexts. Studies by Waluyo (2024) indicate that integrating gender awareness into EFL classrooms significantly enhanced students' ability to detect bias and reflect on fairness. Fajriah, et al. (2020) and Główka (2014) demonstrate that students who engaged in critical text-framing reconstructed narratives to reflect more equitable gender representations. Similarly, Syukri et al. (2024) observed measurable improvements in learners' comprehension of justice and equality when gender-responsive modules were applied. Together, these studies confirm that faith-rooted critical literacy practices like *mubādalah* are empirically effective, is not merely a theoretical construct but a pragmatically effective pedagogy capable of transforming both classroom dynamics and learners' consciousness regarding gender equity.

In essence, the third research aim illustrates that mubādalah functions on three interrelated levels in educational practice. First, the ideological dimension of Faqihuddin's *mubādalah* hermeneutics manifests in the way teachers and students come to recognize and critically examine the subtle and often normalized gender biases embedded within textbooks, classroom materials, and broader cultural narratives. Rather than accepting educational content as neutral or given, learners and educators are encouraged to interrogate the assumptions underlying language, examples, and representations. This process enables them to see how texts can perpetuate social hierarchies, particularly those privileging men while marginalizing women. Through guided reflection, students begin to question why certain roles, behaviors, or achievements are consistently associated with a particular gender, transforming what was previously taken for granted into an opportunity for ethical reflection and critical dialogue. Such engagement does not remain at a superficial level of noticing differences; it cultivates a deeper awareness of the ideological forces that shape knowledge production, social expectations, and moral reasoning within educational spaces.

Second, the pedagogical dimension of this approach operationalizes critical literacy through concrete classroom strategies that actively engage students in rewriting, reframing, and critically interrogating textual content. Activities such as reversing gender roles in dialogues, reassigning narrative agency to female characters, and facilitating open discussions about fairness, social norms, and power relations offer learners a practical arena in which theory meets lived experience. These exercises extend beyond the acquisition of linguistic competence to the cultivation of ethical reasoning, empathy, and social imagination. Students are invited to step into alternative perspectives, envisioning a world where gendered assumptions do not limit opportunities or constrain

participation. By practicing critical literacy in action, learners develop both cognitive and moral capacities, learning to recognize, challenge, and propose alternatives to inequitable narratives while simultaneously improving their skills in reading, writing, and oral communication.

Third, the professional dimension underscores the transformation that teachers themselves experience as they integrate *mubādalah* into their instructional practices. By grounding their interventions in Qur'anic principles and Prophetic ethics, educators gain a robust theological framework that legitimizes gender-just pedagogical choices and shields them from potential resistance rooted in cultural or religious conservatism. This confidence allows teachers to act not merely as transmitters of content but as ethically responsible facilitators who actively foster critical consciousness and equitable participation in the classroom. Their professional stance extends beyond instructional techniques to encompass reflective practice, moral accountability, and the creation of inclusive learning environments. In doing so, teachers model for students how intellectual engagement, ethical reasoning, and social responsibility intersect, thereby nurturing a transformative educational culture that prioritizes justice, equality, and empowerment for all learners (Bazerman, 2019).

In sum, the third research aim demonstrates that *mubādalah* is not solely a hermeneutical or theoretical innovation but a practical, transformative pedagogical intervention. By fostering teachers' critical reflection and enabling students' active resistance to gender bias, it illustrates how critical literacy can be faith-rooted, contextually grounded, and socially transformative (Gee, 1989). Classrooms become sites where power, ideology, and ethics intersect, producing learners who not only decode texts but also critically engage with social realities, challenge injustice, and envision a more equitable society. In this sense, Faqihuddin's approach exemplifies the integration of Islamic ethical principles with contemporary pedagogical theory, bridging textual interpretation, moral reflection, and classroom praxis into a coherent model of transformative education.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that literacy in Islamic educational contexts is never a neutral act but an ideologically charged practice that shapes consciousness, identity, and power relations. By examining Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir's *mubādalah* hermeneutics, the research highlights how progressive Islamic critical literacy can serve as a liberatory tool against patriarchal domination. The significance of this contribution lies in its ability to

vernacularize global feminist and critical pedagogy theories within a culturally resonant Islamic framework, thus offering both theological legitimacy and pedagogical innovation in Indonesia.

The findings underscore three key interpretive insights. First, the rereading of women's roles in religious texts through *mubādalah* disrupts long-standing androcentric interpretations and affirms women as active subjects of justice and faith. Second, literacy framed through reciprocity transforms language from a neutral medium into a site of ethical contestation, enabling educators and students alike to challenge structures of domination and rewrite knowledge on egalitarian grounds. Third, the application of *mubādalah* in classrooms reveals its practical strength—not only cultivating critical awareness among teachers and students but also generating pedagogical transformations that normalize inclusivity and gender justice.

The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating how *mubādalah* bridges Islamic hermeneutics, critical literacy, and classroom practice, thereby establishing a uniquely Indonesian model of progressive pedagogy. Unlike approaches that import external frameworks, *mubādalah* derives authority from Qur'anic and Prophetic ethics, enabling it to function both as a theological discourse and as an educational praxis with social impact.

Looking ahead, future research should explore how *mubādalah* can be systematically integrated into curriculum design, teacher training programs, and broader gender education initiatives. There is also scope for examining its role in activism and community-based literacy movements, where faith-based legitimacy is critical to advancing social justice. By extending its reach into these domains, *mubādalah* may evolve into a comprehensive paradigm that not only resists patriarchy but also redefines Islamic education as a space of freedom, justice, and human dignity.

In this way, the study contributes to a growing body of scholarship that positions literacy as a practice of emancipation. It offers a model that is contextually grounded, spiritually resonant, and socially transformative—affirming that progressive Islamic critical literacy is not only possible but urgently needed in contemporary educational landscapes.

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