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# A Critical Study of Fiqih Learning in Islamic Boarding Schools from the Perspective of Paulo Freire

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**ABSTRACT**

This study critically examines Fiqih (Islamic jurisprudence) learning practices at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, through the theoretical lens of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy. Guided by a single research question—how do Fiqih learning practices at this institution reflect or diverge from Freire's critical pedagogical concepts, including banking ed ucation, problem posing education, *conscientização*, and dialectical praxis—this research employed a qualitative critical case study design. Data were collected over two months (January–February 2026) through participatory observation of 43 learning sessions, in-depth semi-structured interviews with 13 informants (six teachers and seven students), and document analysis. Findings reveal four interrelated patterns: (1) the dominance of banking education characteristics, with eight of ten Freirean indicators manifested in *bandongan* and *sorogan* methods; (2) the near-complete absence of problem-posing education elements, compounded by the lack of institutionalized *bahtsul masail*; (3) limited development of student *conscientização*, with 85.7% of student informants operating at the magical-to-naïve consciousness levels; and (4) a distortion of praxis toward *verbalism*, wherein textual knowledge of Fiqih remains structurally disconnected from meaningful social action. This study does not seek to discredit the rich tradition of pesantren education; rather, it employs Freire's framework as a constructive reflective lens to identify structural pedagogical gaps and propose organic enrichment strategies. Transformative recommendations include institutionalizing *bahtsul masail*, revitalizing *sorogan* as reflective dialogue, integrating contextual reflection within *bandongan*, introducing *maqashid al-shari'ah* into the formal curriculum, and developing higher-order thinking evaluation components—all within the spirit of the traditional tradition itself.

**Keywords**: Banking Education, Conscientização, Critical Pedagogy, Fiqih Learning, Praxis

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## INTRODUCTION

Traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren tradisional*) occupy a foundational and irreplaceable position within Indonesia's educational and social fabric, having shaped Islamic scholarship, transmitted cultural values, and fostered community development across the archipelago for over six centuries (de Jonge, 2025; Hussin et al., 2017; Isbah & Sakhiyya, 2023). These institutions are not merely schools; they function as comprehensive religious communities that regulate moral conduct, cultivate character, and integrate students into broader networks of Islamic learning (Asror, 2017; Najib et al., 2026). In Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, pesantren occupy a particularly distinctive position, deeply intertwined with the

socio-cultural values of the Sasak ethnic community and the revered authority of *Tuan Guru* (religious scholars) (Murdianto, 2025; Murdianto & Rozi, 2021; Nashuddin, 2020).

Within this tradition, Fiqih—Islamic jurisprudence—constitutes one of the most central disciplines, governing the daily religious and social conduct of Muslim life. In tradisional pesantren, Fiqih instruction is predominantly conducted through classical methods: *bandongan* (collective recitation and teacher led explanation) and *sorogan* (individual student recitation before the teacher), anchored in authoritative *kitab kuning* (classical yellow-bound texts) within the Shafi'i jurisprudential school (Sauri et al., 2016; Suresman et al., 2025). These methods have demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in preserving the authenticity and continuity of Islamic scholarly chains of transmission (*sanad*) across generations (Ritonga et al., 2019; van Bruinessen, 2020).

Yet, despite this deep historical significance, contemporary scholarship has increasingly turned a critical eye toward the pedagogical dimensions of traditional pesantren education. A persistent tension exists between the preservation of classical methods and the demands of a rapidly changing contemporary landscape (Hanif et al., 2024; Nisak et al., 2025; Sofi et al., 2025). Scholars have noted that while pesantren possess remarkable adaptive resilience—having survived colonialism, navigated post-independence modernization, and engaged with recent legislative formalization through the 2019 Pesantren Law (Nurtawab & Wahyudi, 2022)—questions remain about whether traditional pedagogical approaches adequately cultivate critical, contextual, and transformative religious understanding in their students.

It is within this intellectual landscape that Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy offers a provocative and productive analytical lens. Freire (2018) drew a sharp distinction between *banking education*—in which knowledge is "deposited" into passive learners positioned as empty vessels—and *problem-posing education*, which positions learners as critical co-investigators of their lived reality. Central to his educational philosophy are the concepts of *conscientização* (critical consciousness awakening), authentic *praxis* (the dialectical unity of reflection and transformative action), and the primacy of genuine dialogue as the foundation of liberatory education (Freire, 2018, 2021; Macedo, 2022b; Roberts, 2023). As Ninčević (2025) emphasizes, Freire's pedagogical vision is fundamentally about the humanization of education—enabling learners to read not only the word but the world. This resonates with the growing global discourse on education as a transformative practice for social justice (Darder, 2017; Fleuri, 2025; Torres, 2021).

The application of Freirean frameworks to Islamic educational contexts, while still developing, has gained scholarly traction. Radino & Mubarok (2025) have demonstrated that critical pedagogical principles can be productively applied within classical Islamic boarding school discussion practices. Daud (2021) has explored how cross-*mazhab* engagement in pesantren can serve as an antidote to intellectual exclusivism. Hasbiyallah et al. (2024) have argued for the centrality of contextually responsive Fiqih education in Indonesian higher education. However, empirical studies applying Freire's framework specifically to Fiqih learning in traditional pesantren outside Java remain notably scarce, constituting a significant geographical and contextual gap in the literature (Isbah & Sakhiyya, 2023).

Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, a representative traditional institution in West Lombok, provides a rich and underexplored site for this inquiry. Situated within the unique socio-cultural milieu of the Sasak community, where the authority of *Tuan Guru* carries profound religious and social weight (Murdianto, 2025; Nashuddin, 2020), this institution embodies many of the defining characteristics of traditional pesantren while also reflecting the specific regional dynamics of Nusa Tenggara Barat. It is important to establish clearly at the outset that this study does not seek to delegitimize or undermine the pesantren tradition. The *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *kitab kuning* traditions embody deep epistemological and transmissive value that constitutes a genuine contribution to Islamic civilization. Rather, this research employs Freire's framework as a reflective mirror—a constructive analytical tool to examine structural pedagogical patterns and explore possibilities for enrichment from within the tradition itself.

This study is therefore guided by a single, focused research question: How do Fiqih learning practices at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar reflect or diverge from Freire's critical pedagogical concepts, including banking education, problem-posing education, *conscientização*, and dialectical praxis?

## METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), operating within a critical paradigm that understands social reality as shaped by relations of power, history, and ideology (Denzin et al., 2018; Kincheloe et al., 2018). The specific research design was a critical case study (*critical case study*) (Yin, 2018), which combines the in-depth investigative capacity of case study methodology with the analytical orientation of critical theory. Unlike descriptive or explanatory case studies, a critical case study actively interrogates power relations, identifies structural patterns, and articulates transformative possibilities (McLaren & Jandrić, 2020; Steinberg & Down, 2020).

A single-case study design with embedded units of analysis was employed (Yin, 2018). The bounded case was the overall system of Fiqih learning at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, while the embedded analytical units comprised: (a) teaching methods (*bandongan*, *sorogan*, *bahtsul masail*); (b) teacher–student relational dynamics and interaction patterns; (c) student *conscientização* levels; and (d) the dialectics of praxis in student learning experiences. Paulo Freire's key concepts—banking education, problem-posing education, *conscientização*, and praxis—served as the primary deductive analytical codes (*a priori* codes), while space was maintained for inductively emerging themes specific to the pesantren context (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2021).

The study was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, Lembar District, West Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. The site was selected through purposive sampling (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) based on four substantive rationales. First, the institution is a representative traditional pesantren that has consistently maintained classical teaching methods within the Shafi'i jurisprudential tradition. Second, it operates within the distinctive socio-cultural context of the Sasak community, adding a crucial contextual layer to the analysis (Murdianto & Rozi, 2021; Nashuddin, 2020). Third, its selection addresses a geographical gap in the literature; most critical pesantren studies focus on major Javanese institutions, leaving non-Javanese contexts, particularly Lombok, underrepresented (Isbah & Sakhiyya, 2023). Fourth, prior access and established communication with the institution facilitated naturalistic and deep data collection, essential for building the trust (*rapport*) required in qualitative fieldwork (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Founded in 1982, the institution enrolls 152 resident students (89 male, 63 female) across three learning levels *ibtida'iyyah* (elementary), *wustha* (intermediate), and *ulya* (advanced)—with an average duration of six to eight years to complete all levels. Table 1 presents the Fiqih curriculum structure.

**Table 1** *Fiqih Curriculum Structure by Level at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar*

| Level | Primary Texts | Content Focus | Duration | Dominant Method |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Ibtida'iyyah* | *Safinatun Najah*, *Matan Abu Syuja'* | Purification, Prayer, Fasting, Foundational Zakat | ±1–2 years | *Bandongan* & *So rogan* |
| *Wustha* | *Fathul Qarib al-Mujib*, *Fathul Mu'in* | Extended Worship, Basic *Muamalat*, Introductory Marriage Law | ±2–3 years | *Bandongan* & *So rogan* |
| *Ulya* | *I'anatut Thalibin*, *Minhajut Thalibin* (selective) | Advanced Jurisprudence, *Muamalat*, *Jinayat*, Inheritance | ±2–3 years | *Bandongan* & *So rogan* |

*Note.* Curriculum documentation, Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, January 2026.

Thirteen informants participated, selected through purposive sampling (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The first group comprised six key informants (*kiai* and *ustaz*), including the head of the pesantren and senior Fiqih instructors with a minimum of three years of active teaching experience using classical methods across various levels. The second group comprised seven student (*santri*) informants at the *wustha* and *ulya* levels with at least two years of Fiqih study at the institution, selected to represent variation in study duration and educational level. Data saturation was monitored throughout the process to ensure analytical sufficiency (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Three complementary data collection techniques were employed within a framework of methodological triangulation (Denzin et al., 2018):

**Participatory observation** was conducted across 43 learning sessions (January–February 2026). The researcher adopted the role of participant-as-observer (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), with their identity known to participants. Observation focused on: the implementation of teaching methods; teacher–student interaction dynamics and communication patterns; the learning atmosphere and physical arrangements; and the presence or absence of banking education versus problem-posing education indicators. Data were recorded in field notes comprising both descriptive records (what occurred) and reflective annotations (interpretations and emerging questions) (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

**Semi-structured in-depth interviews** were conducted with all 13 informants. An interview guide was developed from Freire's key concepts and the research question, covering distinct themes for each informant group. For teachers: educational philosophy and Fiqih teaching objectives; rationale for method selection; perceptions of student roles and capabilities; views on critical reasoning and contextualization; and perspectives on power relations in learning. For students: subjective experience of Fiqih learning through various methods; frequency and nature of questioning; understanding of *maqashid al-shari'ah* and contextual application of jurisprudence; and perceptions of the teacher–student relationship. All sessions were audio-recorded with informed consent and transcribed verbatim.

**Document analysis** was conducted on available institutional documents including curriculum structures, the classical Fiqih texts in use at each level, pesantren schedules and regulations, institutional profiles and histories, and available visual documentation. Document data served to corroborate, contextualize, and triangulate data from observation and interviews.

Data analysis followed Miles et al. (2014) interactive model, comprising three concurrent and cyclical phases: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Analysis proceeded through verbatim transcription, repeated reading for data immersion, two-stage coding (first deductive coding using Freire's conceptual framework, then inductive coding for emergent themes), categorization of codes into broader thematic categories, and the construction of thematic matrices, analytical narratives, and conceptual networks for data display (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2021). Conclusions were drawn progressively throughout the analytical process, with ongoing verification through cross-referencing of data sources.

Trustworthiness was established through: source triangulation (comparing teacher and student perspectives on the same phenomena) and methodological triangulation (cross-verifying observation, interview, and document data) to ensure credibility; thick description of context to facilitate reader-assessed transferability; a comprehensive audit trail of all raw data, coding decisions, and methodological choices to ensure dependability; and reflexive journaling and peer debriefing to ensure confirmability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Member checking was conducted by presenting preliminary findings to key informants for accuracy verification.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Empirical Description of Fiqih Learning Practices

#### a. Curriculum and Planning

Fiqih learning at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar follows a sequential-textualist approach, without formal lesson plans. The curriculum is organized around

the hierarchical progression of classical texts as encoded in institutional tradition. As the head teacher articulated: "*We do not use RPP like regular schools. Our curriculum is the kitab itself. The sequence has been determined by previous scholars... That is a curriculum refined over centuries*" (Wawancara KU-01, January 2026). A senior teacher reinforced the primary learning objective: "*Our target is for students to be able to read, understand, and memorize the matan of the kitab correctly... The matter of social context, that comes later*" (Wawancara KU-02, January 2026). This orientation is consistent with the broader pattern of traditional pesantren curricula described by Dhofier (2019) as organically emerging from within the scholarly tradition rather than from externally prescribed frameworks.

**b. Teaching Methods and Their Frequency**

Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of observed teaching methods.

**Table 2** *Frequency of Teaching Methods Observed Across 43 Sessions*

| Method | Sessions Observed | Percentage | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Bandongan* (collective) | 32 | 74.4% | Dominant; conducted daily |
| *Sorogan* (individual) | 11 | 25.6% | Conducted 2–3 tmes weekly |
| *Bahtsul masail* (jurisprudential discussion) | 0 | 0% | Not observed during research period |
| **Total** | **43** | **100%** | |

*Note.* Data from participatory observation, January–February 2026.

*Bandongan* sessions followed a consistent four-phase pattern: (a) teacher recitation of *kitab kuning* text in Arabic without diacritical marks (*gundul*); (b) word-by-word or sentence-by-sentence translation into Indonesian or the local Sasak language; (c) teacher explanation (*syarh*), often referencing higher-level commentary texts; and (d) session closure, with no structured question-and-answer period. Time allocation analysis across 32 observed *bandongan* sessions revealed that teachers occupied an average of 68 minutes of each 75-minute session (90.7%), leaving approximately 7 minutes (9.3%) for student responses—predominantly technical questions about text readings or translations.

*Sorogan* sessions functioned primarily as individual text-mastery verification mechanisms: students recited assigned passages to the teacher, who provided corrective-technical feedback focused on reading accuracy and translation precision, rarely extending to contextual or interpretive interrogation of the material.

A significant empirical finding was the complete absence of institutionalized *bahtsul masail* during the research period. The head teacher confirmed: "*We indeed do not have a formal, scheduled bahtsul masail forum. Discussion exists, but it is incidental, not routine*" (Wawancara KU-01, January 2026). This distinguishes Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar from a number of other traditional pesantren that have maintained *bahtsul masail* as a structured learning practice (Mustofa, Setiawan, et al., 2024; Radino & Mubarok, 2025).

**c. Teacher–Student Interaction Dynamics**

Table 3 summarizes interaction patterns identified across all observed sessions.

**Table 3** *Teacher–Student Interaction Patterns Identified Through Observation*

| Interaction Dimension | Empirical Finding | Frequency in Observations |
|---|---|---|
| Communication direction | Monologic: from teacher to students | Dominant (>90% of session time) |
| Question initiation | Almost exclusively from teacher (verificatory in | High |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | nature) | |
| Student questions to teacher | Very rare; technical in nature (reading/translation) | Low (<5% of sessions) |
| Student opinions or arguments | Not observed in formal sessions | Absent |
| Student critique of material | Never occurred | Absent |
| Emotional-relational character | Deferential-obedient (*ta'dzim*); no dialogic equality | Consistent |

*Note.* Data from participatory observation, January–February 2026.

The relational patterns observed are deeply shaped by the tradition of *ta'dzim*—reverential respect toward the teacher—which in the Sasak socio-cultural context carries additional spiritual and social authority dimensions (Murdianto, 2025; Nashuddin, 2020). One student articulated the psychological barriers experienced: "*I once wanted to ask the teacher about the law of online buying and selling... But I did not end up asking because I was afraid of being seen as demanding. Here, a good santri is one who is obedient and diligent, not one who asks many questions*" (Wawancara ST-06, February 2026). A senior alumni-administrator contextualized this: "*The culture here has always been like that. A student considered good is one who is obedient, diligent in studying, and does not argue much. That has become a deeply rooted culture*" (Wawancara PD-01, February 2026). This is consistent with Humaidi et al. (2024) findings on the centrality of *kyai* authority in establishing particular orientations within traditionaliyyah pesantren, and with Najib et al. (2026) analysis of curriculum management and power relations in traditional pesantren.

**d. Evaluation System**

Assessment practices focused exclusively on *qira'atul kutub*—the ability to read classical texts without diacritical marks and provide accurate translations—conducted through periodic *sorogan* sessions. No instruments measuring higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), *maqashid al-shari'ah* analysis, or contextual application of Fiqih were identified. This positions the evaluation system primarily at the *remembering* and *understanding* levels of Bloom's taxonomy, well below the *analyzing*, *evaluating*, and *creating* levels necessary for critical reasoning development (Abdul Khalil et al., 2024; Hasbiyallah et al., 2024).

**2. Critical Analysis: Fiqih Learning Practices Through Freire's Framework**

The following analysis addresses the research question by systematically applying Freire's four key concepts to the empirical findings presented above.

**a. Pattern 1: Dominant Reflection of Banking Education**

The first and most pervasive finding is that Fiqih learning practices at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar substantially reflect the model of *banking education* as theorized by Freire (2018). In the banking model, the teacher acts as a depositor of knowledge into students positioned as passive receptacles—"empty vessels" (Cowden et al., 2020; Freire, 2018). Education becomes an act of narration: the teacher narrates, and students receive, memorize, and repeat (Macedo, 2022a; Nelson & Chen, 2023).

Table 4 presents the systematic identification of banking education indicators in the empirical data.

**Table 4** *Manifestations of Banking Education in Fiqih Learning Practices at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar*

| No. | Banking Education Characteristic (Freire, 2018) | Empirical Manifestation | Evidence Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The teacher teaches; students are taught | Teachers dominate >90% of *bandongan* session time | Observation: 32 *bandongan* sessions |
| 2 | The teacher knows | The *kiai*/teacher as the sole | Interviews KU-01, KU- |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | everything; students know nothing | epistemological authority; no alternative references consulted | 02 |
| 3 | The teacher talks; students listen | Students listen and annotate meanings; no structured space for dialogue | Field notes; Interviews ST-01, ST-04 |
| 4 | The teacher disciplines; students are disciplined | *Ta'dzim* norm operationalized as: a good student is obedient and does not question frequently | Interviews PD-01, ST-06 |
| 5 | The teacher selects program content; students adapt | Curriculum determined exclusively by the *kiai*; students follow without negotiation | Documentation; Interview KU-01 |
| 6 | The teacher is the subject of learning; students are objects | Students as passive receivers of jurisprudential knowledge in both *bandongan* and *sorogan* | All session observations |
| 7 | Memorization is prioritized over critical understanding | Evaluation based exclusively on *qira'atul kutub*; no HOTS measurement instruments | Interview KU-05; Evaluation documentation |
| 8 | Knowledge is divorced from contextual reality | Fiqih material not systematically connected to contemporary social issues or student lived experiences | Interviews ST-04, ST-06 |

*Note.* Analysis of primary data, January–February 2026; adapted from Freire (2018).

A senior teacher's articulation of the pedagogical philosophy revealed the underlying paradigm directly: "*Knowledge must first be received completely from the teacher, then later thought about by oneself. Do not let students whose knowledge is not yet sufficient dare to question. That is dangerous. Therefore we first emphasize receiving; only when mature may they discuss*" (Wawancara KU-02, January 2026). This statement encapsulates what Freire (2018) identified as the core logic of banking education: reception before reflection, which paradoxically forecloses the very critical consciousness that mature Islamic scholarship demands.

An important qualification is essential here. This finding should not be read as a blanket condemnation of *bandongan* and *sorogan* as methods. Freire (2018) developed the concept of banking education in the context of systematic political oppression in Latin America, a context distinctly different from the epistemological tradition of Islami c learning. The *bandongan* and *sorogan* traditions emerged from a fundamentally different context—as proven, time-tested methods for preserving the authenticity and integrity of Islamic scholarly transmission across generations (Ritonga et al., 2019; Sauri et al., 2016; van Bruinessen, 2020). Within the tradition of Islamic learning, the mastery of foundational texts before engaging in *ijtihad* (independent juridical reasoning) carries its own epistemological legitimacy.

The analytical concern, therefore, is not the methods themselves but their structural imbalance. When *bandongan* and *sorogan* operate as the exclusive pedagogical modalities—without any complementary space for dialogue, reflection, or contextual investigation—they structurally produce the condition Freire (2018) termed the "domestication of consciousness" (*domesticação da consciência*). This occurs not through

malicious intent, but through the institutional absence of alternative spaces. Sinaee (2025) similarly cautions that overly textualist approaches in Islamic pedagogy risk constraining independent reasoning, while Sofi et al. (2025) note that the challenge for pesantren lies precisely in harmonizing classical roots with the development of analytical capacities. The absence of *bahtsul masail*—the one classical pesantren practice that most approximates a dialogical forum—at this institution thus amplifies the banking education dynamic substantially (Mustofa, Setiawan, et al., 2024; Radino & Mubarok, 2025).

**b. Pattern 2: Near-Complete Absence of Problem-Posing Education**

The second pattern concerns the near-complete divergence from Freire's model of *problem-posing education*. Freire (2018) conceived of problem-posing education as the dialectical antithesis of banking education, characterized by horizontal teacher-student dialogue, the problematization of reality as an object of shared critical investigation, and the collaborative construction of knowledge grounded in lived experience (Fleuri, 2025; Nelson & Chen, 2023; Syamprasad, 2018). In this model, teachers and students become co-investigators (*co-investigadores*) who together interrogate their world (Freire, 2021; Macedo, 2022).

Table 5 presents a systematic comparison of Freire's problem-posing education elements against the empirical findings.

**Table 5** *Comparison of Problem-Posing Education Elements with Empirical Reality at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar*

| **Element of Problem-Posing Education (Freire, 2018)** | **Empirical Finding** | **Status** |
|---|---|---|
| Horizontal dialogue between teacher and student | Not found; vertical one-directional communication dominates | ✗ Absent |
| Students as co-investigators alongside the teacher | Not present; students positioned as receivers | ✗ Absent |
| Learning departing from contextual problems | Not present; learning departs exclusively from classical text sequences | ✗ Absent |
| Critical reflection on social reality | Not found in formal settings | ✗ Absent |
| Knowledge constructed collaboratively | Not present; knowledge transmitted unidirectionally | ✗ Absent |
| Questioning as the primary pedagogical method | Very limited; questions are verificatory rather than generative | ✗ Very Limited |

*Note.* Analysis of observation and interview data, January–February 2026.

The complete absence of institutionalized *bahtsul masail* is particularly significant in this context. This forum, where present in other pesantren, represents the closest organic expression of dialogical inquiry within the classical Islamic scholarly tradition—making it the most natural point of convergence between pesantren practice and Freirean problem-posing pedagogy (Radino & Mubarok, 2025). Its absence at this institution effectively forecloses the most institutionally compatible pathway toward dialogic learning.

When one student attempted to raise a contemporary jurisprudential question, the response was illustrative: "*I once asked the teacher about the law of digital transactions, whether they constitute valid sales according to Fiqih. The teacher said, 'That is not in the kitab, so it cannot be answered now.' The discussion ended there*" (Wawancara ST-05, February 2026). This exchange reveals not merely a missed pedagogical opportunity but the absence of institutional infrastructure for transforming student questions into collaborative investigative processes—what Chen et al. (2025) identify as a structural prerequisite for genuine problem-posing education.

It bears emphasis, however, that this analysis does not advocate for abandoning the pesantren tradition in favor of an entirely different model. As Radino & Mubarok, (2025) demonstrate, the principles of dialogic pedagogy can be productively applied within classical Islamic educational contexts. The *bahtsul masail* tradition itself, as practiced in various pesantren across Indonesia, demonstrates that the Islamic scholarly tradition contains its own dialogical resources (Mustofa, Setiawan, et al., 2024). The question is not whether pesantren can accommodate dialogue, but rather how the specific institutional context of Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar might create space for it—from within, not from without.

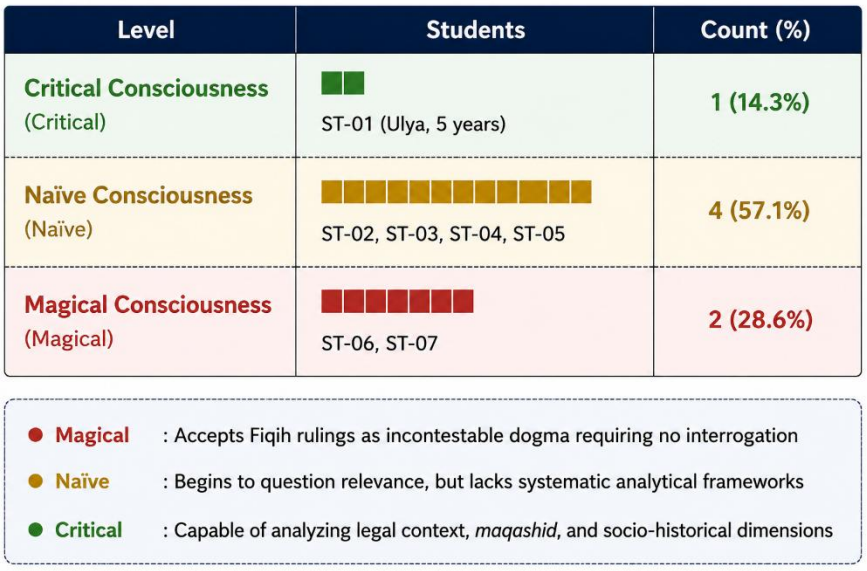
Potential pathways include: revitalizing *sorogan* as reflective dialogue by incorporating contextual questioning ("How does this ruling apply in your daily life?") alongside technical correction; integrating brief contextual reflection periods at the end of *bandongan* sessions; and, most significantly, institutionalizing *bahtsul masail* as a regular, structured forum. These transformations would not require abandoning the traditional identity of the institution but would enrich it with the dialogical spirit that characterized the great *ijtihad*-based scholarship of classical Islam.

**c. Pattern 3: Limited Development of *Conscientização* Among Students**

The third pattern addresses the concept of *conscientização*—the process through which individuals develop critical awareness of their social reality and its power dimensions, enabling them to act upon and transform that reality (Freire, 2021; Macedo, 2022; Torres, 2021). Freire (2020) articulates three levels of consciousness: magical consciousness (*consciência mágica*)—uncritical acceptance of reality as given and unalterable; naïve consciousness (*consciência ingênua*)—awareness of problems but without systematic analytical tools; and critical consciousness (*consciência crítica*)—the capacity to analyze, contextualize, and act upon the structural dimensions of one's reality.

Figure 1 presents the distribution of student consciousness levels identified through interview analysis.

**Figure 1** *Spectrum of Student Conscientização Levels Based on Interview Findings (n = 7, January–February 2026)*




*Note.* Analysis of interview data, adapted from Freire (2020) and Roberts (2023).

Students demonstrating magical consciousness (ST-06, ST-07) tended to receive Fiqih rulings as final, unquestionable truths: "*If the teacher says this is the ruling, then that is indeed so. There is no need to question it further. It already has its dalil (proof) from a long time ago*" (Wawancara ST-06, February 2026). This represents the most complete correspondence with what Freire (2018) described as a "domesticated" consciousness—

knowledge internalized as static truth rather than as a dynamic engagement with reality.

Students at the naïve consciousness level (ST-02, ST-03, ST-04, ST-05) were beginning to sense tensions between classical jurisprudence and contemporary realities, but lacked the analytical frameworks to pursue these tensions systematically. ST-03 expressed: "*Sometimes I wonder whether the ruling on slave trading is still relevant today? Or the ruling on two-qulah water—what are the current standards? But I do not know how to answer these questions myself, and no one teaches how to think this way*" (Wawancara ST-03, January 2026). This intuitive questioning without conceptual tools reflects what Macedo (2022) describes as an emerging but as-yet-unformed critical awareness.

The single student demonstrating indicators of critical consciousness (ST-01, *ulya* level, five years of study) had developed this capacity through autodidactic engagement outside the formal learning system: "*I came to think that Fiqih is not only about what is written in the kitab. There is its historical context, its causes, its larger purposes that scholars call maqashid al-shari'ah. But I studied that myself from books outside the pesantren. It is not taught here*" (Wawancara ST-01, January 2026).

This finding is analytically significant on multiple levels. The one student who developed critical consciousness did so not because of but despite the formal learning system. This confirms that the existing pedagogical structure does not systematically facilitate the development of *conscientização* as Freire (2018) envisioned. Kholiq et al. (2025) and Daud (2021) have both warned that exclusive *mazhab* orientation without openness to scholarly diversity (*ikhtilaf*) can produce rigid understanding; the data here provide empirical confirmation of this concern in the specific context of West Lombok's traditional pesantren. Furthermore, ST-01's spontaneous engagement with *maqashid al-shari'ah* literature points toward an important convergence: the internal resources of the Islamic intellectual tradition itself—ijtihad, maqashid, and the spirit of scholarly debate—already contain the seeds of what Freire would recognize as critical consciousness.

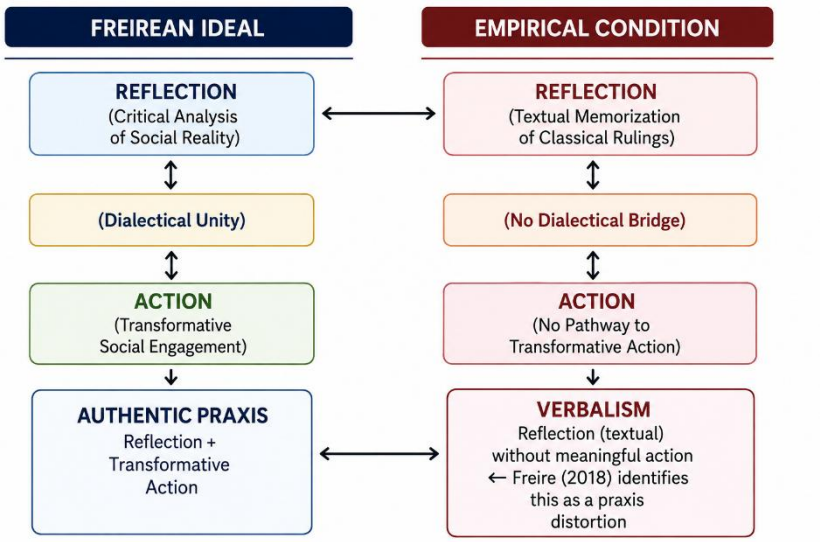
As Hasbiyallah et al. (2024) argue, Fiqih education in contemporary Indonesia must move beyond doctrinal reproduction toward cultivating the capacity to engage with complex contemporary realities. The *conscientização* data from this study suggest that this shift has not yet been systematically achieved at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, but that the aspiration exists within the student body, awaiting structural support.

**d. Pattern 4: Distortion of Praxis Toward Verbalism**

The fourth and final pattern addresses Freire's concept of dialectical *praxis*—defined as the inseparable unity of reflection and action (Freire, 2018; Glass, 2020; Roberts, 2023). Authentic praxis occurs when critical reflection on reality generates transformative action, which in turn becomes the object of further reflection in an ongoing dialectical spiral. Freire (2018) identified two distortions of praxis: *verbalism* (or "blah-blah-blah")—reflection without meaningful action; and *activism*—action without reflective grounding. The dominant distortion identified in this study is verbalism.

Figure 2 illustrates the contrast between the Freirean praxis ideal and the empirical condition at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar.

**Figure 2** *Freirean Praxis Model Contrasted with Empirical Condition at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar*




*Note.* Adapted from Freire (2018), Glass (2020), and Roberts (2023).

Students at this institution possess rich textual knowledge of Fiqih rulings (the reflective dimension), but this knowledge exists without systematic pedagogical bridges to contextually meaningful social engagement (the action dimension). One student's testimony captures this gap with striking concreteness: "*I have memorized many Fiqih rulings from the kitab. But if asked 'what is your opinion on the law of Islamic insurance?' or 'how does Fiqih respond to the waste problem in our community?', I do not know where to begin. No one taught us how to think from the law to a real problem*" (Wawancara ST-02, January 2026).

Another student's account connects this directly to practical community engagement: "*During Eid, a neighbor asked me about the law of paying zakat fitrah in money. I had studied Fiqih for more than two years, but I was confused about how to answer. Not because I did not know the dalil, but because I did not know how to explain it in a way relevant to a layperson. There is a gap between what I study in the kitab and what is needed in the field*" (Wawancara ST-05, February 2026).

A teacher's statement clarified the institutional philosophy underlying this gap: "*We focus on mastery of knowledge first. For its application in society, that will come when the students have graduated and ventured out on their own. The pesantren's task is to fill knowledge, not to teach how to use that knowledge outside the pesantren*" (Wawancara KU-02, January 2026). From a Freirean perspective, this deliberate deferral of contextual application precisely produces the verbalism distortion: knowledge accumulates without the dialectical engine of reflective action to animate it.

Freire (2018) argued that the separation of knowledge acquisition from transformative engagement is among the most fundamental features of banking education, producing individuals who know much but remain unable or unmoved to transform the realities around them. Hasbiyallah et al. (2024) and Fanani & Pohl (2024) similarly contend that contemporary Fiqih education must equip students to respond to complex issues—from digital economics to environmental ethics—rather than remaining confined to textual reproduction. The verbalism distortion identified here represents not merely a technical pedagogical deficit but a paradigmatic gap: the difference between understanding education as transmission (*transmisi*) and understanding it as transformation (*transformasi*).

**3. Synthesis: Points of Convergence and Divergence Between Freirean Pedagogy and Pesantren Tradition**

The analysis acknowledges that legitimate points of tension exist between Freire's critical pedagogy and the pesantren educational tradition. Table 6 presents a balanced mapping of both convergences and divergences.

**Table 6** *Points of Convergence and Divergence Between Paulo Freire's Pedagogy and Pesantren Tradition*

| **Dimension** | **Freire's Pedagogy** | **Pesantren Tradition** | **Convergence/ Divergence** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Epistemology | Knowledge dialogically and collaboratively constructed | Knowledge transmitted through authenticated *sanad* chains | Divergence |
| Educational Purpose | Liberation (*liberación*) from oppressive structures | Formation of *insan kamil* (*tafaqquh fi al-din*) | Partial convergence: both reject meaningless "empty knowledge" |
| Teacher–Student Relations | Horizontal; dialogic equality between co-investigators | Vertical; *ta'dzim* as spiritual and ethical obligation | Divergence |
| Primary Method | Dialogue, problem-investigation, critical reflection | *Bandongan*, *sorogan*, textual memorization | Divergence, with *bahtsul masail* as potential convergence point |
| Social Justice Orientation | Core purpose of education | *Maqashid al-shari'ah* (*hifzh al-nafs*, *al-'aql*, *al-mal*, etc.) | Strong convergence |
| Role of Text | Text as tool for analyzing and transforming reality | Text as primary authoritative source of religious truth | Divergence |
| Humanization | Inalienable core of critical pedagogy | Parallel with concept of *fitrah* (innate human nature) in Islam | Strong convergence |
| Critical Tradition | Conscientization as educational goal | *Ijtihad*, *bahtsul masail* as historical scholarly practices | Convergence in spirit, divergence in current institutional practice |

*Note.* Theoretical analysis, adapted from Freire (2018), Radino & Mubarok (2025), Madani (2025), and Islamic scholarly tradition.

This mapping reveals that the relationship between Freirean critical pedagogy and the pesantren tradition is neither one of simple compatibility nor of irreconcilable opposition. There are real epistemological tensions—particularly around the transmission versus construction of knowledge—but also genuine convergences, especially around humanization, social justice, and the spirit of critical inquiry that has historically characterized Islamic scholarship at its best. As Jubba et al. (2021) note, pesantren have historically been agents of social transformation; and as Ma'arif (2018) argues, pesantren pedagogy at its best embodies an education grounded in humanity. The challenge is to revive and institutionalize these transformative dimensions within the current pedagogical structure.

**4. Transformative Recommendations: Enrichment from Within**

Based on the findings above, Table 7 presents organic transformative recommendations that can be integrated into the pesantren tradition without sacrificing its traditional scholarly identity—what this study terms *enrichment from within*.

**Table 7** *Transformative Recommendations for Fiqih Learning at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar*

| **Area of Transformation** | **Current Condition** | **Recommendation** | **Theoretical Basis** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teaching Method | Monologic *bandong an* dominant (74.4%) | Integrate 10–15 minute contextual reflection sessions at the conclusion of *bandongan*, allowing dialogue on material relevance | Freire (2018); Chen et al. (2025) |
| *Sorogan* Practice | Technical reading verification only | Develop into reflective dialogue: teachers pose contextual application questions alongside technical correction | Radino & Mubarok (2025); Suhendi (2021) |
| Discussion Forum | No *bahtsul masail* found | Institutionalize periodic *bahtsul masail* (minimum monthly) with contemporary thematic issues drawn from student community realities | Mustofa et al. (2024); Radino & Mubarok (2025) |
| Curriculum Objectives | Text-based without HOTS objectives | Add explicit learning objectives encompassing *maqashi d al-shari'ah* analysis and contextual jurisprudential reasoning | Auda (2021); Hasbiyallah et al. (2024) |
| Evaluation | Exclusively textualist (*qira'atul kutub*) | Add case-based evaluation components requiring students to analyze contemporary Fiqih scenarios | Abdul Khalil et al. (2024); Daud (2021) |
| Teacher–Student Relations | Absolute hierarchy; cultural barriers to questioning | Create psychologically safe space for student questioning, framed explicitly within the *ta'dzim* tradition rather than in opposition to it | Freire (2018); Madkur et al. (2024) |
| *Conscientização* Dev elopment | Majority at magical-naïve | Formally incorporate *maqashid* | Norman & Ruhullah (2024); Kholiq et al. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | levels (85.7%) | *al-shari'ah* and contextual Fiqih as required curriculum components at *wustha* and *ulya* lev els | (2025) |

*Note.* Synthesis of research recommendations, February 2026.

Imam Shafi'i's willingness to revise his legal opinions when confronted with the new social realities of Egypt, and the centuries-long tradition of rigorous scholarly debate in *bahtsul masail* forums, are themselves living demonstrations of what Freire would recognize as authentic praxis: reflection made manifest in transformative intellectual action. The challenge before Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, and potentially many similar institutions, is not to become something fundamentally other than what they are, but to more fully actualize the critical scholarly spirit that lies at the heart of the Islamic jurisprudential tradition itself.

**DISCUSSION**

This study offers a novel contribution to the intersection of critical pedagogy and Islamic educational studies by applying Paulo Freire's framework—specifically the concepts of banking education, problem-posing education, *conscientização*, and dialectical praxis—empirically to Fiqih learning in a traditional pesantren context outside Java. While Freirean analysis has been applied to various educational settings globally, its rigorous empirical application to the specific pedagogical dynamics of *kitab kuning*-based Fiqih instruction in a Sasak cultural context in West Lombok represents a distinctive scholarly contribution that addresses a clear geographical and contextual gap in the literature (Isbah & Sakhiyya, 2023).

The principal findings of this study reveal four interrelated patterns: the substantial dominance of banking education characteristics (eight of ten Freirean indicators manifested); the near-complete absence of problem-posing education elements across all 43 observed sessions; the limited development of student *conscientização*, with 85.7% of student informants operating at the magical-to-naïve consciousness levels; and a structural distortion of praxis toward verbalism, wherein rich textual knowledge of Fiqih remains disconnected from contextually meaningful social action. These findings are significant not only for their descriptive clarity but for what they reveal about structural pedagogical patterns that extend beyond the individual institution.

The novelty of this study lies in three interconnected dimensions. First, it is the first study to apply a systematic Freirean critical analysis—operationalizing all four core concepts simultaneously—to Fiqih learning practices in a traditional pesantren located in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, a region that remains significantly underrepresented in critical Islamic educational scholarship. Second, it moves beyond conceptual or philosophical engagement with Freire's framework by grounding the analysis in 43 observed learning sessions, in-depth interviews with 13 informants, and document analysis, producing empirically verifiable findings rather than theoretical propositions alone. Third, it generates a contextually sensitive convergence-divergence map (Table 6) that articulates the precise epistemological tensions and genuine compatibilities between Freirean critical pedagogy and the pesantren tradition—a theoretical contribution with implications beyond the single case studied.

These findings resonate with, while also extending and differentiating from, a substantial body of prior scholarship engaging the intersections of critical pedagogy, Fiqih education, and pesantren learning. At the broadest theoretical level, several prior studies have established productive conceptual bridges between Freirean thought and Islamic educational philosophy. Madani (2025) specifically analyzed the relevance of Freire's learning concepts to Islamic education, finding strong convergences between Freire's humanization concept and the Islamic concept of *fitrah*—a finding that this study's convergence-divergence synthesis (Table 6) empirically corroborates and extends by demonstrating how these convergences remain structurally unrealized within the institutional practices of a specific traditional pesantren.

Similarly, Abdilah (2025), whose study examined the reinterpretation of Freire's thought in strengthening community participation, argued that critical consciousness (*conscientização*) can drive macro-level quality improvements in Islamic education. This study's finding that 85.7% of student informants operate at the magical-to-naïve consciousness levels provides a micro-level empirical counterpart to Abdilah's macro-level argument, demonstrating precisely what the structural underdevelopment of *conscientização* looks like within an actual institutional learning environment. At the philosophical level, Norvaizi (2025) mapped the epistemology of Freire's liberatory education as a critique of oppressive educational systems, providing a philosophical foundation that informs this study's analytical orientation, while Rasyiddin (2025), comparing Freire's thought with Ahmad Tafsir's Islamic educational philosophy, emphasized that Islamic education must possess an emancipatory dimension without abandoning its traditional roots—a conclusion that resonates directly with this study's central argument for *enrichment from within* rather than wholesale pedagogical replacement.

Moving closer to the specific domain of Islamic education practice, Amrullah et al. (2025) examined the ethics of Freire's education as aligned with *akhlaqul karimah* values, providing theological justification for the application of critical theory within Islamic religious education—a justification that this study operationalizes empirically. Muslih (2024) proposed the integration of Freire's critical values into formal Islamic religious education (*PAI*) curricula to minimize banking education practices, while Falahiyah (2022), comparing Freire with Imam Al-Ghazali, concluded that Islamic education contains critical potential if dialectical methods are revived. This study's findings confirm Muslih's concern about banking education dominance and provide empirical support for Falahiyah's conclusion: the *bahtsul masail* tradition and *maqashid al-shari'ah* framework constitute precisely the internal dialectical resources whose revitalization this study recommends. Furthermore, Amir (2023), examining educational readiness toward modernization through critical pedagogy—particularly in the context of post-digital transformation in Islamic institutions—identified structural inertia as a central challenge, a dynamic directly observable in this study's finding that the institution maintains exclusively classical methods without any complementary dialogical infrastructure.

Within the pesantren and Fiqih education literature more specifically, the most directly relevant prior work is Suhendi (2021), who examined the *sorogan* and *bandongan* methods in pesantren through Freire's problem-posing framework and identified their dialogical potential. This study builds directly on Suhendi's analysis while moving beyond it: where Suhendi identified *potential*, this study's systematic observational data demonstrate that this potential is structurally unrealized in the specific institutional context of Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, with teachers occupying 90.7% of *bandongan* session time and *sorogan* functioning exclusively as technical verification rather than reflective dialogue. Radino & Mubarok (2025) demonstrated that critical pedagogical principles can be applied productively within classical Islamic boarding school discussion practices—specifically through *bahtsul masail* at Madrasah Diniyyah Al-Munawwir Krapyak. Their findings stand in sharp contrast to this study's documentation of complete *bahtsul masail* absence at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, reinforcing the argument that this absence—rather than the *bandongan* and *sorogan* methods themselves—is the most consequential structural gap amplifying banking education dynamics.

Regarding Fiqih instruction specifically, Rahma (2025), focusing on *Ushul Fiqih* learning using the classical text *Al-Asybah Wa Al-Nadhair*, demonstrated that classical texts can be taught contextually—a possibility that this study's recommendations seek to operationalize through the integration of *maqashid al-shari'ah* analysis and case-based evaluation into the existing *kitab kuning* curriculum. Priani (2025), analyzing the influence of *Fathul Qarib* literacy on the quality of student worship practice, emphasized cognitive mastery of Shafi'i Fiqih texts—a finding that contextualizes this study's observation that the institution's evaluation system prioritizes precisely this form of mastery, while leaving higher-order competencies unmeasured. Hidayat (2021), describing the Fiqih learning model in a *salafiyah* pesantren in Banjarmasin with characteristics similar to Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar, identified parallel patterns of method dominance and limited critical engagement, suggesting that the patterns documented in this study are not idiosyncratic to a single institution but reflect broader structural tendencies

within *salafiyah* pesantren pedagogy. Mahrum (2023), examining Fiqih *ibadah* learning implementation in the broader NTB (West Nusa Tenggara) region, provided an initial empirical portrait of Fiqih learning challenges in the area surrounding Lombok, establishing a regional baseline against which this study's more focused institutional analysis can be situated.

From a broader contextual perspective, Nasution (2021) examined the historical dominance of the Shafi'i *mazhab* in Indonesia, providing the historical explanation for why Shafi'i texts constitute the primary curriculum content at this institution—a curricular uniformity that, this study argues, is not itself problematic but becomes educationally limiting when not accompanied by contextual and critical engagement with those texts. Jailani (2023) emphasized that pesantren are fortresses of cultural consistency amid globalization but require methodological renewal—a conclusion precisely aligned with this study's recommendation for organic *enrichment from within*. Ulfah (2021), experimenting with project-based Fiqih learning in East Lombok, provided an alternative model to monotonous lecture methods—an experiment whose contrast with the exclusively classical approach at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar underscores the methodological diversity available within the regional pesantren landscape. Finally, Iqbal (2023), in a dissertation exploring popular education for building critical consciousness among *santri* conducted at UIN Mataram with direct relevance to the local Lombok context, established important groundwork regarding the structural conditions inhibiting *conscientização* development in NTB pesantren settings—groundwork that this study's *conscientização* distribution findings (Figure 1) empirically substantiate and refine.

Where this study's findings align with prior research—notably in confirming the dominance of transmission-oriented pedagogy and the structural tendency toward banking education in *salafiyah* pesantren (Hidayat, 2021; Suhendi, 2021)—these consistencies are best explained by the shared structural logic of traditional pesantren education: the primacy of *sanad* preservation, the epistemological authority of *kiai*, and the organizational absence of institutionalized dialogical forums. The *ta'dzim* culture documented in this study as a barrier to student questioning reflects not merely pedagogical convention but a deeply embedded theological and socio-cultural framework that intensifies in the Sasak context, where the authority of *Tuan Guru* carries spiritual and communal dimensions beyond what is typically observed in Javanese pesantren contexts (Murdianto & Rozi, 2021; Nashuddin, 2020).

Where findings diverge from prior studies—particularly in the complete absence of *bahtsul masail*, which contrasts with its active presence in institutions studied by Radino & Mubarok (2025) and Mustofa et al. (2024)—the differences are most plausibly attributed to institutional history, leadership philosophy, and regional cultural dynamics rather than to any principled rejection of dialogical scholarship. The single student exhibiting critical consciousness (ST-01) having developed it autodidactically rather than through the formal learning system constitutes a particularly striking divergence from the aspirational outcomes of Islamic education as described by Hasbiyallah et al. (2024) and Muslih (2024), and underscores the structural rather than individual nature of the *conscientização* deficit identified. Daud (2021) has warned that exclusive *mazhab* orientation without openness to scholarly diversity (*ikhtilaf*) can produce intellectually rigid understanding; the *conscientização* distribution data of this study provide direct empirical confirmation of this concern in the West Lombok context.

The contribution of this study to the field is therefore threefold. Theoretically, it advances the application of Freirean critical pedagogy to non-Western, non-Latin American educational contexts by demonstrating both the analytical productivity and the necessary contextual qualification of this framework when applied to Islamic educational traditions. Empirically, it provides the first systematic Freirean analysis of Fiqih learning in a traditional pesantren in West Lombok, addressing a significant geographical gap while generating rich qualitative data on consciousness levels, interaction dynamics, and the praxis distortion in a specific Sasak cultural setting. Practically, the transformative recommendations developed in this study—particularly the institutionalization of *bahtsul masail*, the revitalization of *sorogan* as reflective dialogue, and the integration of *maqashid al-shari'ah* into formal curriculum objectives—offer concrete, tradition-respecting pathways for pedagogical enrichment that speak directly to institutional practitioners.

The contribution of this study to the field is threefold. **Theoretically**, it advances the application of Freirean critical pedagogy to non-Western, non-Latin American educational contexts by demonstrating both the analytical productivity and the necessary contextual qualification of this framework when applied to Islamic educational traditions—particularly the need to distinguish between the methods themselves (*bandongan*, *sorogan*) and the structural imbalances in their implementation. **Empirically**, it provides the first systematic multi-indicator Freirean analysis of Fiqih learning in a traditional pesantren in West Lombok, generating rich qualitative data on consciousness distribution, interaction dynamics, and the verbalism distortion in a specific Sasak cultural setting. **Practically**, the transformative recommendations developed—particularly the institutionalization of *bahtsul masail*, the revitalization of *sorogan* as reflective dialogue, the integration of *maqashid al-shari'ah* into formal curriculum objectives, and the development of HOTS-oriented evaluation components—offer concrete, tradition-respecting pathways for pedagogical enrichment that speak directly to institutional practitioners, regional educational policymakers, and pesantren curriculum designers.

For pesantren practitioners, the findings suggest that creating structured, institutionalized space for dialogue does not require compromising traditional identity but rather activating dormant dialogical resources already present within the Islamic scholarly tradition itself—resources whose revitalization Imam Shafi'i's own history of juridical revision and the centuries-long *bahtsul masail* tradition already exemplify. For educational policymakers, the findings underscore the limitations of evaluation systems that measure only textual mastery and highlight the need for assessment frameworks incorporating HOTS competencies, consistent with the direction of the 2019 Pesantren Law. For future researchers, this study points toward productive directions: comparative designs across pesantren with varying degrees of dialogical integration, as suggested by contrasts with Radino & Mubarok (2025); longitudinal fieldwork spanning at least one full academic cycle; gender-inclusive sampling given that all student informants in this study were male due to institutional structure; critical action research collaboratively implementing and evaluating specific pedagogical innovations; and the development of contextually grounded *conscientização* measurement instruments specifically calibrated to Indonesian pesantren settings, building on Iqbal (2023) foundational work in the NTB regional context.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined Fiqih learning practices at Pondok Pesantren Darul Hadis Lembar through Paulo Freire's critical pedagogical framework, addressing the central question of how these practices reflect or diverge from the concepts of banking education, problem-posing education, *conscientização*, and dialectical praxis.

The analysis reveals four interrelated and mutually reinforcing patterns. First, the learning practices at this institution substantially reflect the banking education model, with eight of ten Freirean indicators manifested in the dominance of monologic *bandongan* (74.4% of observed sessions), the verificatory rather than dialogical use of *sorogan*, and the complete absence of institutionalized *bahtsul masail*. This does not reflect pedagogical malice but the structural absence of dialogic alternatives within the current institutional design. Second, the practices diverge sharply from problem-posing education: none of the six core elements of this approach were consistently and institutionally present in any of the 43 observed sessions. Third, the majority of student informants (85.7%) demonstrated *conscientização* levels ranging from magical to naïve consciousness, with the single student exhibiting critical consciousness having developed it autodidactically outside the formal learning system—a finding that underscores the structural gap in facilitating critical awareness development. Fourth, a dominant distortion of praxis toward verbalism was identified: students possess rich textual knowledge of Fiqih but lack systematic pedagogical bridges to contextually meaningful social engagement.

Crucially, this study affirms that the transformative response to these findings is not the abandonment of the pesantren tradition. The *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and *kitab kuning* traditions carry genuine epistemological and transmissive value that constitutes an irreplaceable contribution to Islamic civilization. The Islamic scholarly tradition itself contains powerful

resources for critical engagement—*ijtihad*, *maqashid al-shari'ah*, *bahtsul masail*—that represent organic convergence points between classical Islamic pedagogy and Freirean dialogical principles. What is needed is enrichment from within: creating deliberate institutional spaces for dialogue, contextual reflection, and *praxis* that honor rather than undermine the traditional identity of the institution.

As Freire (2018) wrote, authentic education is not done by one person for another, but by persons together, mediated by the world they inhabit. The most meaningful Fiqih learning is that which occurs when *kiai* and *santri* engage the classical texts together as a shared resource for understanding and responding to their world—preserving the authenticity of the scholarly tradition while opening that tradition to the living questions of contemporary Muslim life.

Limitations: This study's findings are bounded by a two-month field research period and single-case design, limiting statistical generalizability. All student informants were male, given the institution's structure during the research period, leaving gender dimensions of learning experience unexplored. The critical paradigmatic framework carries epistemological commitments that shape interpretive choices, and researchers from traditionalist-traditional perspectives might generate different interpretations of the same data.

Directions for Future Research: Subsequent studies may benefit from: comparative designs across pesantren with varying degrees of dialogical integration, including institutions that have institutionalized *bahtsul masail*; extended longitudinal fieldwork spanning at least one full academic cycle; gender-inclusive sampling in institutions with female students; critical action research collaboratively implementing and evaluating specific pedagogical innovations; and the development of contextually grounded *conscientização* measurement instruments for Indonesian pesantren settings.

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