

Reinterpreting Fiqh for Gender Equality: Educational Practices in Indonesian Ma'had Aly

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Abstract

This study examines how fiqh is reinterpreted to promote gender equality within the educational practices of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain, Indonesia. Positioned within the broader discourse on Islamic education and gender justice, the study addresses the tension between classical jurisprudential texts and contemporary demands for equality. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed using an interactive model of data condensation, display, and verification. The findings reveal that gender equality is progressively constructed through three interconnected dimensions: access, participation, and control. While equal access to learning opportunities has largely been achieved, participation demonstrates varying levels of engagement influenced by internalized norms. Control over classroom discourse remains uneven, indicating the persistence of subtle gendered power relations. Importantly, the study shows that the reinterpretation of classical fiqh texts plays a central role in mediating these dynamics by enabling a contextual and inclusive understanding of Islamic jurisprudence. Furthermore, the benefits of this reinterpretative approach extend beyond classroom interaction, fostering intellectual empowerment and active knowledge engagement among female students. This study contributes to the field of Islamic education by demonstrating that gender equality can be advanced through pedagogical transformation and contextual reinterpretation without undermining the authority of classical texts. It highlights the potential of fiqh education as a transformative space for promoting inclusive and equitable learning practices.

Keywords

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Introduction

The discourse on gender equality has become a central concern in contemporary educational studies, particularly within religious education systems that are often perceived as conservative and resistant to change. Globally, the demand for inclusive and equitable education has been reinforced by international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 4 on quality education and Goal 5 on gender equality (UNESCO 2024). Within this global trajectory, Islamic education institutions, including pesantren and Ma'had Aly in Indonesia, are increasingly challenged to respond to issues of gender justice while maintaining their epistemological and theological foundations (Djalal et al. 2021).

In the Indonesian context, gender equality has been formally recognized through various legal and policy frameworks, including the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies in education (Bustelo 1994; Awang 2018). However, the practical realization of gender equality within Islamic educational institutions remains complex. This complexity arises not only from socio-cultural traditions but also from the interpretive frameworks applied to classical Islamic texts, particularly in the field of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). As a discipline deeply rooted in classical scholarship, fiqh often reflects historical contexts that may not fully align with contemporary notions of gender equality (Umar 1999).

One of the critical challenges lies in the persistence of gender bias embedded in classical fiqh texts, which are widely used as primary teaching materials in Islamic boarding schools. Texts such as *Fath al-Mu'in*, for instance, contain normative formulations that are often interpreted in ways that position men as dominant actors in both public and private spheres. When these texts are taught without critical engagement, they may reinforce gender stereotypes and limit the role of women in educational and social settings. This issue has been highlighted in previous studies, which indicate that Islamic educational curricula frequently prioritize normative legal interpretations while neglecting contextual and gender-sensitive perspectives (Maulana et al. 2024).

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that Islamic teachings, at their core, uphold principles of justice and equality. The Qur'an explicitly affirms the equal spiritual and moral status of men and women, as stated in Q.S. al-Hujurat [49]:13 and Q.S. an-Nisa' [4]:124. These verses underscore that human dignity is determined not by gender but by piety and ethical conduct (Jamil 2025). Therefore, the issue of gender inequality in Islamic education is not rooted in the religion itself but rather in the ways

religious texts are interpreted and applied within specific socio-cultural contexts (Fakih 2008).

In this regard, the concept of reinterpretation (*ijtihad*) becomes crucial. Reinterpreting *fiqh* is not an attempt to undermine classical scholarship but rather a methodological effort to bridge the gap between normative texts and contemporary realities. Scholars such as Nasaruddin Umar argue that contextual and socio-historical approaches are necessary to uncover the ethical essence of Islamic teachings, particularly in addressing gender-related issues (Umar 1999). This perspective opens the possibility for transforming *fiqh* education into a more inclusive and equitable learning process.

Despite the growing body of literature on gender and Islamic education, there remains a significant gap in empirical studies that examine how reinterpretation of *fiqh* is actually practiced within classroom settings. Most previous studies have focused on curriculum analysis or theoretical discussions of gender equality, with limited attention to pedagogical practices at the micro level (Abdali 2023; Coltrane 1996). Furthermore, research on Ma'had Aly—an advanced level of *pesantren*-based higher education institution—is still relatively scarce, particularly in relation to gender issues.

This study seeks to address this gap by exploring how gender equality is constructed and negotiated through the reinterpretation of *fiqh* in the educational practices of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain, Indonesia. Unlike conventional approaches that merely assess gender representation, this study employs an analytical framework based on four key dimensions: access, participation, control, and benefits. These dimensions, adapted from gender analysis models ('Advancing Gender Reform in Large-Scale Organisations', n.d.), provide a comprehensive lens to examine how equality is manifested in the learning process.

Empirically, this research is grounded in qualitative fieldwork conducted at Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain, Jember City a *pesantren*-based higher education institution specializing in Islamic jurisprudence. The institution presents a unique case where male and female students participate in the same learning environment, particularly in *fiqh* courses focusing on *munakahat* (Islamic family law) (Addzaky et al. 2025; Harefa 2025). Observations and interviews reveal that both male and female students are given equal access to learning resources and opportunities, including participation in classroom discussions and presentations. This indicates a formal commitment to gender equality in terms of access and participation.

However, the findings also reveal nuanced dynamics that reflect the complexity of gender relations in Islamic education. While female students actively engage in

discussions, some still experience psychological barriers, such as lack of confidence and hesitation in expressing their opinions (Fitriyah et al. 2024). This suggests that equality in access does not automatically translate into equality in control or influence within the learning process. Moreover, the continued use of classical fiqh texts, which contain gender-biased narratives, necessitates active intervention by lecturers to reinterpret these materials in a more inclusive manner (Nasution, Pohan, et al. 2025).

In this context, the role of lecturers becomes pivotal. The study finds that lecturers do not merely transmit knowledge but also mediate between classical texts and contemporary values. By integrating government policies, modern gender perspectives, and contextual interpretations, lecturers attempt to reconstruct the meaning of fiqh in ways that promote gender justice. This pedagogical practice represents a form of reinterpretation that is both pragmatic and transformative, as it seeks to align traditional Islamic knowledge with current social realities.

Furthermore, the benefits of this reinterpretative approach extend beyond the classroom. Female students are able to apply their knowledge in various contexts, such as writing for institutional publications, participating in public speaking activities, and engaging in community-based programs. This demonstrates that gender equality in education is not only about equal opportunities but also about empowering individuals to utilize their knowledge and skills in meaningful ways.

Based on these considerations, this study argues that reinterpretation of fiqh within educational practices plays a crucial role in advancing gender equality in Islamic education. By moving beyond textual rigidity and embracing contextual understanding, Islamic educational institutions can foster a more inclusive and equitable learning environment without compromising their religious foundations.

Therefore, this article aims to contribute to the growing discourse on gender and Islamic education by providing empirical evidence from a pesantren-based higher education context. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research question: how is fiqh reinterpreted to promote gender equality in the educational practices of Ma'had Aly? In doing so, the study offers both theoretical and practical insights into the transformation of Islamic education in the contemporary era.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research approach to investigate how gender equality is constructed and negotiated through the reinterpretation of fiqh within the educational practices of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain, Indonesia. A qualitative design is particularly suitable for this study because it allows for an in-depth understanding of social phenomena, focusing on meanings, experiences, and interactions that occur

within a specific educational context (Corbin and Strauss 2014). Rather than relying on numerical measurement, qualitative research emphasizes the interpretation of human behavior and institutional practices as they naturally unfold (Moleong 2014; Creswell 2013). This approach is therefore essential for capturing the complexity of gender dynamics in Islamic education, especially in relation to the teaching of fiqh .

The research adopts a descriptive case study design, focusing on Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain, a pesantren-based higher education institution located in Sukowono, Jember. The selection of this site is based on purposive considerations, particularly its distinctive characteristics as an institution that integrates male and female students within the same classroom environment and emphasizes the study of Islamic jurisprudence. This setting provides a rich context for examining gender relations in Islamic education, especially in courses related to munakahat (Islamic family law), which directly address issues of gender roles, rights, and responsibilities. Case study research is particularly appropriate when the objective is to explore a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Adida et al. 2010; Al Bayati 2025).

Participants in this study were selected through purposive sampling, a technique commonly used in qualitative research to identify individuals who possess relevant knowledge and experience related to the research focus (Sugiyono 2017). The participants include the director (mudir) of Ma'had Aly, lecturers responsible for teaching fiqh courses, administrators of the female dormitory, and students, both male and female, who are actively involved in the learning process. This selection ensures that the data reflect a range of perspectives, from institutional policy to classroom practice and student experience, thereby enhancing the depth and credibility of the findings.

Data collection was conducted using three primary techniques: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis. Observation was carried out by directly attending fiqh learning sessions, particularly those involving discussions, presentations, and interactive teaching methods. Through this process, the researcher was able to examine patterns of interaction between male and female students, including their levels of participation, confidence, and engagement. Participant observation is a crucial method in qualitative research, as it allows researchers to capture real-time behaviors and social interactions that may not be fully articulated in interviews (Bungin 2007).

In addition to observation, in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, including lecturers and institutional leaders, to explore their perspectives on gender equality and their approaches to interpreting classical fiqh texts. These

interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, allowing flexibility to explore emerging issues while maintaining focus on the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews are widely used in qualitative research because they provide a balance between structure and openness, enabling participants to express their views in depth (Creswell 2013).

Documentation analysis was also employed to support and validate the data obtained from observation and interviews. The documents analyzed include course syllabi, institutional publications such as the Ma'had Aly bulletin, student writings, and academic records. These documents provide important insights into how gender equality is reflected in both formal and informal aspects of the educational process. The use of multiple data sources is essential for triangulation, which enhances the credibility and reliability of qualitative findings (Miles and Huberman 1994).

Data analysis in this study follows an interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data condensation stage, the researcher selected and organized relevant data based on the analytical framework of gender equality, which includes access, participation, control, and benefits. This framework serves as a conceptual lens to interpret how equality is manifested in different dimensions of the learning process (Miles and Huberman 1994). The data were then systematically displayed to identify patterns and relationships, enabling the researcher to develop meaningful interpretations. Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified through cross-checking with multiple data sources to ensure their validity and consistency.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, several strategies were employed, including methodological triangulation, prolonged engagement in the field, and continuous reflection during the research process. Triangulation was achieved by combining observation, interviews, and documentation, as well as by involving participants from different roles within the institution. These strategies are essential in qualitative research to enhance credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the findings (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Through these methodological considerations, this study ensures that its findings accurately represent the educational practices and gender dynamics within Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain.

Results and Discussion

Reinterpreting Fiqh for Gender Equality: Access, Participation, and Control in Islamic Learning

The reinterpretation of fiqh within the educational practices of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain illustrates a negotiated transformation of Islamic jurisprudence pedagogy, where gender equality is pursued not by abandoning classical texts but by re-reading them through contextual and pedagogical lenses. This transformation operates across three interrelated dimensions—access, participation, and control—which together reveal how equality is constructed in practice and how authority is redistributed within the classroom. Rather than a linear shift, the process is dialogical, involving continuous mediation between textual authority, institutional norms, and contemporary gender discourses (Amri 2023; Warren 2007).

In terms of access, the findings indicate that male and female students are provided with equal opportunities to engage in fiqh learning. There is no formal differentiation in access to classrooms, learning materials, or academic roles such as presenting and leading discussions. Female students attend the same sessions as male students, particularly in munakahat (Islamic family law), and are assigned similar academic responsibilities. This aligns with the principle that equitable access is a foundational condition for educational justice (Luhuringbudi et al. 2025). Observational data show that lecturers routinely assign female students as presenters, including for complex sections of Fath al-Mu'īn, indicating that access is not merely symbolic but operationalized within instructional practice.

However, access is not neutral; it is shaped by institutional and cultural norms. For example, female students are expected to remain in the classroom while waiting for lecturers to avoid situations considered ethically problematic. This suggests that equality is enacted within a framework of moral regulation characteristic of pesantren environments. Such negotiated equality reflects what Unterhalter describes as “contextual equality,” where universal principles are adapted to local socio-cultural settings rather than imposed uniformly (Kurdi 2024; Unterhalter 2012).

A critical dimension of access in this context concerns epistemic access—how knowledge is framed and interpreted. The continued use of Fath al-Mu'īn introduces gendered formulations rooted in premodern socio-legal contexts (Jahroh 2015). Rather than transmitting these formulations uncritically, lecturers engage in interpretive mediation. As one lecturer stated: *“Fiqh texts cannot be understood rigidly; they must be interpreted in accordance with contemporary contexts and current regulations, including those related to gender equality.”* This statement indicates a shift from textual literalism

toward contextual hermeneutics. Such an approach resonates with calls for renewed *ijtihad* in contemporary Islamic thought, where legal reasoning must respond to changing social realities (Kamali 2015). In pedagogical terms, this reflects a move from content transmission to interpretive engagement, enabling students to access not only the text but also its ethical horizons. Thus, access in this setting is both material (opportunities and resources) and epistemic (interpretive framing), and the latter is crucial for mitigating gender bias embedded in classical sources (Umar 1999).

The dimension of participation further reveals the dynamics of inclusion within classroom interactions. The data indicate that female students actively participate in discussions, ask questions, and present arguments during *fiqh* sessions (Maimun et al. 2020). Lecturers deliberately foster an inclusive environment by inviting contributions from both genders and structuring sessions around discussion and presentation rather than lecture alone. This reflects a shift toward dialogic pedagogy, which is associated with deeper learning and greater equity in participation (Freire 2021).

Despite these efforts, participation is not evenly experienced. Observations and interviews suggest that some female students hesitate to speak, particularly in open debates. While they demonstrate adequate comprehension during presentations, their engagement during unscripted discussion is sometimes limited by confidence-related barriers. This finding aligns with research showing that gendered socialization influences communicative confidence and perceived legitimacy in academic discourse (Fakih 2008). In this case, the barrier is not institutional exclusion but internalized norms that shape self-efficacy.

This tension between opportunity and confidence is evident in classroom interactions. Female students often contribute substantively when prompted but are less likely to initiate debate. Male students, by contrast, more frequently take the floor, interrupt, or extend arguments. This asymmetry suggests that participation should be assessed not only by frequency of speaking but also by initiative, persistence, and discursive authority (Nasution, Hsb, et al. 2025). Consequently, while participation is formally inclusive, it remains uneven in practice, indicating that equality requires more than equal opportunity—it requires the cultivation of agency.

The dimension of control provides a deeper lens for examining power relations within the learning process. Control refers to the capacity to shape the trajectory of discussion, determine interpretive frames, and influence collective conclusions (Chanifah et al. 2024; Agnes et al. 2022). The findings indicate that although female students are assigned leadership roles in presentations, they do not always exercise

full control over subsequent discussions. Male students often assume greater authority in steering debates, challenging arguments, and synthesizing conclusions. This suggests that control remains partially gendered, reflecting broader patterns of discursive dominance documented in educational settings (Sadker and Zittleman 2009). Importantly, this imbalance is neither fixed nor unaddressed. Lecturers actively intervene to redistribute control by encouraging female students to respond, defend their interpretations, and lead discussions. As one lecturer noted: *“Female students actually have the ability, but they need encouragement to build confidence and take a more active role in leading discussions.”*

This pedagogical stance underscores the role of the lecturer as a mediator of epistemic authority. Rather than a neutral facilitator, the lecturer actively shapes participation structures to counterbalance gendered tendencies in discourse. Such intervention is consistent with equity-oriented pedagogy, which recognizes that equal treatment does not necessarily produce equal outcomes and therefore requires targeted support (Yaakob et al. 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, the interplay among access, participation, and control reflects the multidimensional nature of gender equality (Moser, 1993). Access ensures entry into the learning space; participation enables engagement; and control determines influence and authority. In fiqh education, these dimensions are further complicated by the presence of authoritative texts that encode historical gender norms. Therefore, achieving equality requires not only structural adjustments but also epistemological work—reinterpreting texts and reconfiguring pedagogical practices (Syahputra 2023; Mappasessu and Akmal 2025a).

In Ma’had Aly Nurul Qarnain, this epistemological work is evident in how lecturers bridge classical jurisprudence with contemporary gender discourses. By situating fiqh within current legal frameworks and social realities, they transform the classroom into a site of critical engagement rather than passive reception. This approach aligns with contemporary scholarship advocating for contextualized Islamic jurisprudence that foregrounds justice and public interest (*maṣlaḥah*) (Kamali 2022). Pedagogically, it enables students to see fiqh as a living tradition open to reinterpretation rather than a closed canon.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the reinterpretation of fiqh operates as a pedagogical strategy that reconfigures access, enhances participation, and incrementally redistributes control. While equal access has been largely achieved and participation has improved, disparities in control persist, indicating the need for sustained pedagogical intervention. The study therefore demonstrates that advancing

gender equality in Islamic education requires an integrated approach that combines interpretive reform with classroom-level practices.

In sum, the case of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain shows that gender equality in fiqh education is both attainable and contingent. It is attainable through deliberate reinterpretation and inclusive pedagogy, yet contingent on addressing deeper cultural and psychological factors that shape participation and control. This underscores the importance of viewing fiqh not only as a body of legal knowledge but also as a pedagogical field where meanings, identities, and power relations are continuously negotiated.

From Learning to Empowerment: Gendered Benefits and the Transformation of Fiqh Education

While the dimensions of access, participation, and control reveal the structural and interactional aspects of gender equality in Islamic education, the dimension of benefits provides a more outcome-oriented perspective, focusing on how educational processes translate into empowerment and broader social impact. In the case of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain, the findings indicate that the reinterpretation of fiqh does not merely reshape classroom interactions but also produces substantive benefits that contribute to the intellectual, social, and professional empowerment of students, particularly female students (Nor et al. 2024; Warren 2007). These benefits reflect a transformation in the orientation of fiqh education, from normative transmission toward transformative engagement.

Empirically, the data demonstrate that both male and female students benefit equally from access to knowledge, learning resources, and academic opportunities. However, the significance of these benefits becomes more evident when examining how female students utilize and extend their learning beyond the classroom context. Female students are actively involved in intellectual activities such as writing articles for institutional publications, including the Ma'had Aly bulletin. This indicates that learning outcomes are not confined to internal cognitive processes but are translated into forms of knowledge production. In educational theory, such a transition from knowledge acquisition to knowledge creation is a key indicator of higher-order learning and empowerment (Yaakob et al. 2025).

In addition to written contributions, female students are also engaged in oral and social forms of knowledge dissemination. They participate in delivering religious lectures, acting as tutors in dormitory-based learning sessions, and contributing to academic discussions in both formal and informal settings (Yaakob et al. 2025). These

activities demonstrate that fiqh education, when supported by inclusive pedagogical practices, can enhance students' communication skills, leadership capacity, and confidence in public engagement. This is particularly significant in the context of Islamic education, where religious authority has historically been gendered, with male scholars occupying dominant positions. The increasing visibility and participation of female students in these roles suggest a gradual reconfiguration of gendered authority within the religious and educational spheres.

The emergence of these benefits is closely linked to the reinterpretative approach adopted in fiqh teaching. By contextualizing classical texts and integrating contemporary perspectives on gender, lecturers create a learning environment that encourages critical thinking, reflection, and application (Luhuringbudi et al. 2025). This pedagogical shift enables students to engage with fiqh not merely as a fixed body of legal rules but as a dynamic and evolving field of knowledge. Such an approach aligns with contemporary perspectives in Islamic legal studies, which emphasize the importance of contextual interpretation (ijtihad) in addressing modern social issues, including gender equality (Hallaq 2004).

From a theoretical standpoint, the relationship between education and empowerment has been widely conceptualized within the framework of capability theory. Sen argues that education enhances individuals' capabilities, enabling them to make meaningful choices and participate more effectively in social life. In the context of gender equality, empowerment involves expanding women's agency, autonomy, and ability to influence their environment (Nussbaum 2006). The findings of this study suggest that the reinterpretation of fiqh contributes to these processes by providing female students with the intellectual tools and social opportunities necessary to exercise agency within and beyond the educational setting.

However, the realization of these benefits is not without challenges. While female students demonstrate significant progress in applying their knowledge and participating in intellectual activities, certain limitations remain, particularly in terms of sustained confidence and leadership in mixed-gender contexts (Hardy 2025; Abdullah 2017). These limitations are not primarily the result of institutional barriers but are more closely related to internalized social norms and cultural expectations that shape individual behavior. This indicates that empowerment is not an immediate outcome of equal access but a gradual process that requires continuous reinforcement through pedagogical support and institutional encouragement.

The institutional environment of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain plays a crucial role in facilitating this process. The integration of male and female students within the same learning environment, combined with the use of interactive teaching methods, creates a context in which gender equality can be practiced and experienced directly. Furthermore, the presence of female lecturers contributes to the normalization of women's authority in Islamic education, providing role models that reinforce the possibility of gender-equitable participation in religious scholarship. This aligns with existing research highlighting the importance of institutional culture and representation in promoting gender equality (Unterhalter 2012).

ore broadly, the findings suggest that the reinterpretation of fiqh contributes to a transformation in the purpose and function of Islamic education. Traditionally, fiqh education has been oriented toward the preservation and transmission of established legal knowledge. However, in this context, fiqh education is reoriented toward the development of critical, reflective, and socially engaged individuals. This transformation is particularly evident in the ways students apply their knowledge to real-world contexts, including community engagement, intellectual production, and public communication (Mappasessu and Akmal 2025b).

This shift can be understood as a movement from a normative paradigm of education to a transformative paradigm. In the normative paradigm, knowledge is treated as fixed and authoritative, and the role of the learner is to absorb and reproduce it. In contrast, the transformative paradigm emphasizes critical engagement, contextual understanding, and the application of knowledge in addressing contemporary challenges (Asfiyak et al. 2025). The reinterpretation of fiqh serves as a bridge between these paradigms, enabling Islamic education to remain rooted in tradition while simultaneously responding to the demands of modern society.

To synthesize these findings, the transformation of fiqh education at Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain can be conceptualized as a shift toward a more inclusive and empowerment-oriented model. This model integrates reinterpretation of classical texts, participatory pedagogy, and opportunities for knowledge application, resulting in a learning process that not only transmits knowledge but also develops students' capabilities and agency.

The key elements of this transformation are summarized in the following table:

Dimension	Traditional Fiqh Education	Reinterpreted Fiqh Education (Findings)	Impact on Gender Equality
Access	Limited by textual interpretation and cultural norms	Equal access to learning resources and opportunities	Reduces structural inequality
Participation	Teacher-centered, limited student engagement	Interactive and inclusive participation	Enhances engagement and inclusion
Control	Dominated by hierarchical authority	Gradual redistribution of academic influence	Challenges gender hierarchy
Benefits	Focus on knowledge transmission	Knowledge application (writing, teaching, public engagement)	Promotes empowerment and agency

Table 1 . Transformation of Fiqh Education toward Gender Empowerment

This table illustrates that the reinterpretation of fiqh has practical implications for transforming educational practices and outcomes. By moving beyond a purely normative approach, Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain demonstrates how Islamic education can integrate tradition with contemporary values, particularly in advancing gender equality.

In conclusion, the findings indicate that the benefits of fiqh education extend beyond academic achievement to encompass broader forms of empowerment, particularly for female students. The reinterpretation of fiqh plays a central role in this transformation, enabling a more inclusive, context-sensitive, and socially relevant model of Islamic education. While challenges remain, particularly in addressing internalized barriers, the study provides evidence that pedagogical innovation and interpretive reform can significantly contribute to advancing gender equality within Islamic educational institutions.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that the reinterpretation of fiqh within the educational practices of Ma'had Aly Nurul Qarnain plays a significant role in advancing gender equality in Islamic education. Rather than positioning classical fiqh texts as rigid and unchangeable authorities, the study reveals that these texts can be critically re-engaged through contextual interpretation and pedagogical innovation. This reinterpetative approach enables Islamic jurisprudence to remain relevant while addressing contemporary concerns related to gender justice.

The findings indicate that gender equality has been progressively realized across the dimensions of access, participation, control, and benefits. Equal access to learning resources and opportunities has largely been achieved, and participatory learning environments have facilitated the active involvement of both male and female students. However, the study also highlights that disparities remain, particularly in terms of control and influence within classroom interactions, reflecting the persistence of internalized cultural norms and gendered patterns of behavior.

Importantly, the study shows that the benefits of fiqh education extend beyond academic understanding to include broader forms of empowerment. Female students are increasingly able to apply their knowledge in intellectual, social, and communicative contexts, indicating a shift from passive learning to active engagement and agency. This transformation suggests that fiqh education, when approached through reinterpretation, can function as a powerful tool for fostering gender empowerment within Islamic educational institutions.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the discourse on Islamic education by demonstrating that gender equality is not inherently incompatible with classical Islamic scholarship. Instead, it can be achieved through a dynamic process of reinterpretation that bridges tradition and modernity. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of integrating gender-sensitive pedagogy and critical engagement with texts in shaping more inclusive educational environments.

Future research is recommended to explore similar processes in different institutional contexts and to further examine the long-term impact of reinterpretative approaches on gender relations in Islamic education.

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