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Synthesizing Paulo Freire's Critical Pedagogy and Asghar Ali Engineer's Gender Justice for the Transformation of Humanist Islamic Education

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Abstract

This study examines gender bias in Islamic education by synthesizing Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and Asghar Ali Engineer's concept of gender justice. It argues that gender inequality in madrasahs and pesantren is reproduced not only through curricular representation but also through pedagogical power relations and the legitimization of patriarchal religious interpretations. Using qualitative-theoretical library research, the study draws on foundational works by Freire and Engineer, as well as scholarship on Islamic education, pesantren, critical pedagogy, and gender studies. The literature is analyzed descriptively, comparatively, and integratively to identify the relationship between Freire's critique of banking education and Engineer's critique of patriarchal religious interpretations. The findings show that gender bias operates across three interconnected domains: epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional. Epistemologically, female students are not always recognized as subjects of knowledge. Pedagogically, monological teaching reinforces compliance and limits critical reflection. Institutionally, organizational cultures may sustain unequal distributions of authority and participation. The article's novelty lies in integrating Freire's pedagogical critique with Engineer's theological critique to explain how pedagogical power relations and patriarchal religious interpretations jointly reproduce gender inequality. Its theoretical contribution is a framework for transforming Islamic education across epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional dimensions. The article recommends that Islamic educational institutions prioritize dialogical, reflective learning; contextual interpretation of religious texts; and equitable participation in institutional authority and decision-making.

Keywords: *Critical Pedagogy, Islamic Education, Gender Justice, Paulo Freire, Asghar Ali Engineer*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education is normatively tasked with promoting humanization, moral development, and the establishment of social justice for all individuals, irrespective of gender. Within this paradigm, Islamic education is expected not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to cultivate individuals who are dignified, reflective, and equitable in their perspectives on gender relations (Aisyah & Junaedi, 2024). However, empirical studies demonstrate that Islamic education in Indonesia continues to encounter persistent gender inequalities in teaching materials, pedagogical approaches, and institutional culture (Mala et al., 2025; Najmudin et al., 2025; Suwardi et al., 2017). These disparities are manifested in the representation of women in curricula and textbooks, patterns of supervision, restrictions on mobility, the construction of social roles, and the unequal distribution of authority within Islamic educational environments. The central concern, therefore, is the persistent gap between the normative commitment of Islamic education to humanization and social justice and educational practices that continue to restrict female students' participation, agency, and access to institutional authority.

Within madrasahs and *pesantren*, gender issues frequently arise not as explicit formal prohibitions but through power relations that position educators as the primary authority and students as passive recipients. In these contexts, female students are particularly susceptible to being assigned subordinate roles, both symbolically and pedagogically (Mala et al., 2025; Srimulyani, 2007). Broader research on gender and education further indicates that the subordination of women is perpetuated through intensified supervision of female students, restrictions on their mobility, and limited participation in academic forums (Gordon & Levesque, 2025; Essanhaji & Müftügil-Yalcin, 2026; Borgström Källén & Ferm Almqvist, 2025). These findings suggest that gender bias is perpetuated through subtle mechanisms such as normative expectations, bodily discipline, allocation of voice, and authority structures within educational spaces. Consequently, gender issues in Islamic education should be examined as epistemological, pedagogical, and cultural challenges.

Existing scholarship on gender in Islamic education has examined gender inequality through several related dimensions. At the epistemological level, studies have addressed the representation of women and gender roles in textbooks, curricula, and learning materials (Taieb, 2026; Yetiş & Bakırlıoğlu, 2024). At the pedagogical level, research has highlighted hierarchical teacher-student relations, intensified supervision of female students, restrictions

on their mobility, and unequal opportunities to participate in academic forums (Källén & Almqvist, 2025; Essanhaji & Yalcin, 2026; Gordon & Levesque, 2025; Mala et al., 2025; Srimulyani, 2007). At the cultural and institutional levels, studies have pointed to normative gender expectations, the construction of social roles, and the need to integrate gender perspectives into educational policies and institutional arrangements (Hinton-Smith, 2025; Mala et al., 2025; Srimulyani, 2007). Research on pedagogy also indicates that instructional methods may inadvertently reinforce classroom inequalities when they are not informed by a critical gender perspective (Walsh et al., 2026).

Studies drawing on Freire have examined critical pedagogy as a framework for educational transformation (Chalaune, 2021) and its application to gender-responsive Islamic religious education curricula (Ferianto & Firmansyah, 2026). Research on Engineer has addressed women's rights and liberation theology (Farah, 2020; Kurniandi, 2024), including contextual interpretations of gender-related Qur'anic verses (Syafirin, 2024). Earlier work has also discussed the relevance of Freire's and Engineer's liberating educational thought to contemporary Islamic education (Mariani, 2013). More recent research has examined Engineer's liberation theology in relation to Islamic education and drawn on Freire's liberatory pedagogy to discuss dialogical and emancipatory learning (Fikri & Qorib, 2025).

The theoretical contributions of Paulo Freire and Asghar Ali Engineer are particularly pertinent in this context. Freire critiques the 'banking model' of education, which positions teachers as the sole authority and students as passive recipients who merely receive, memorize, and comply (Chalaune, 2021; Freire, 2000). In Islamic education, this critique is instrumental for understanding how hierarchical pedagogical authority can hinder dialogue, restrict students' critical engagement, and facilitate the reproduction of gender bias. Complementing Freire's pedagogical critique, Asghar Ali Engineer provides a theological perspective that foregrounds justice, equality, and the liberation of humanity from all forms of oppression, including gender-based oppression (Engineer, 1992; Rahman et al., 2024). According to this perspective, gender issues do not originate from Islamic teachings themselves, but from interpretations that disregard historical context and favor patriarchal readings of religious texts (Fauziah & Rizqiyyah, 2023; Kurniandi, 2024; Musfiroh & Syamsuddin, 2020). Taken together, Freire's perspective helps explain how hierarchical pedagogical practices reproduce unequal power relations, while Engineer's perspective provides a theological basis for critically examining the patriarchal interpretations that may

legitimize such relations. Their synthesis therefore connects the pedagogical mechanisms through which gender inequality is reproduced with the religious interpretations that sustain it.

Building on this foundation, the article analyzes gender bias in Islamic education by synthesizing Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy with Asghar Ali Engineer's concepts of gender justice. It contends that gender inequality in Islamic education cannot be adequately explained solely by issues of female representation in curricula, textbooks, or institutional structures. Instead, it should be understood as resulting from the intersection of pedagogical power relations and the legitimation of patriarchal theological interpretations. The studies reviewed here, however, have not made the intersection of everyday pedagogical power relations and the legitimization of patriarchal religious interpretations the central focus of analysis. This article addresses that specific gap by examining how these two mechanisms jointly reproduce gender inequality in Islamic education. Freire's perspective is utilized to examine how monologic, teacher-centered educational models foster compliance without critical consciousness, while Engineer's perspective is applied to investigate how ahistorical religious interpretations normalize the subordination of women. Accordingly, the article's novelty lies in its gender-focused synthesis of Freire's pedagogical critique and Engineer's theological critique to explain how these two mechanisms jointly reproduce gender inequality and to formulate a transformation framework across epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional domains.

This study adopts a library research methodology utilizing a qualitative–theoretical approach. Library research involves a purposeful process of identifying, locating, evaluating, and interpreting relevant primary and secondary sources to address a research problem (George, 2008). In this study, the literature-based approach serves as an analytical method for critically examining and synthesizing existing scholarship rather than merely compiling references. Primary sources include Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, focusing on the banking model of education, dialogue, critical consciousness, and problem-posing education, as well as Asghar Ali Engineer's The Rights of Women in Islam, which addresses gender justice, liberation theology, and critiques of patriarchal religious interpretation. Secondary sources comprise scholarly articles on Islamic education, *pesantren*, madrasahs, critical pedagogy, gendered interpretations, and gender-responsive learning, with particular emphasis on the Indonesian context. Consistent with the qualitative nature of this library

research, relevant literature was identified purposively through focused examination of scholarly books and journal articles addressing the study's central themes. This study did not employ a predefined database-search protocol, fixed keyword strategy, or PRISMA-based screening process, as its primary concern was the critical examination and interpretation of conceptually relevant literature. Priority was given to publications from approximately the preceding five to ten years, while earlier works were retained when they provided foundational theoretical contributions or were directly relevant to the research, particularly the primary works of Freire and Engineer. Literature was considered relevant when it substantively addressed at least one of the study's three central themes: pedagogical power relations, patriarchal religious interpretations and their implications for gender relations, and the transformation of humanist Islamic education. Particular attention was given to sources that provided conceptual, theoretical, or analytical insights into these themes and their interconnections.

The analysis of the literature proceeded through three interconnected stages. First, descriptive analysis was conducted to identify and map the principal concepts, arguments, and theoretical assumptions in Freire's and Engineer's works, alongside relevant findings from previous studies on gender bias in Islamic education. Second, comparative analysis examined the respective analytical focuses and explanatory contributions of Freire's pedagogical critique and Engineer's theological critique, identifying their points of convergence and divergence. Third, integrative analysis brought the two perspectives into dialogue to explain how hierarchical pedagogical relations and patriarchal religious interpretations may jointly reproduce gender inequality in Islamic education. This synthesis subsequently informed the development of a conceptual framework for humanist, gender-responsive Islamic education across epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional dimensions.

DISCUSSION

Patterns of Power Relations and Gender Bias in the Literature on Islamic Education

The literature on Islamic education demonstrates that gender issues encompass not only the representation of women in curricular content but also the underlying patterns of power relations within educational processes. In many teaching practices, educators retain the position of primary knowledge authority, while students are expected to accept,

memorize, and comply (Freire, 2000). Paulo Freire's framework identifies this dynamic as the banking model of education, which positions students as passive recipients rather than active participants capable of developing critical consciousness. Education, at its core, is intended to humanize individuals and liberate them from backwardness and oppression (Sugianto et al., 2025). The findings synthesized from the literature in this section reveal three recurring patterns: gendered representation in curricular content and the production of religious knowledge; hierarchical pedagogical relations that shape students' opportunities to speak, question, and participate; and institutional norms that influence women's access to intellectual recognition, authority, and leadership. These patterns indicate that gender bias is reproduced across interconnected epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional dimensions rather than through isolated classroom practices.

In Islamic education, excessively hierarchical pedagogical relationships become problematic when respect for teachers and scholarly traditions shifts into unquestioning obedience. When learning processes remain pragmatic and passive, treating students as empty vessels without prior understanding, students are less likely to comprehend or internalize the educational experience (Hakim et al., 2025). As a result, the classroom ceases to function as an optimal environment for developing critical reasoning and instead perpetuates existing authority structures. However, hierarchical pedagogical relations do not automatically constitute gender bias. They become gendered when they interact with patriarchal norms that shape how authority, classroom participation, and behavioral expectations are distributed. In such contexts, female students may be expected to demonstrate compliance rather than critical engagement and may have fewer opportunities for argumentation and self-expression than male students (Prastiwi & Farihah, 2024).

Empirical studies support this analysis. In Indonesia, found that Islamic textbooks for Muslim children continue to exhibit gender bias in both visual and social representations, introducing students to unequal role divisions from an early age (Suwardi et al., 2017). This finding is significant because it demonstrates that gender bias in Islamic education is perpetuated not only through ostensibly neutral learning materials but also through institutional structures and educational cultures that shape students' experiences (Condron et al., 2025). Comparative research on textbooks and gender education in various contexts further indicates that the representation of women and men in educational content influences students' perceptions of identity, social roles, and gendered power relations (De La Torre-

Sierra & Guichot-Reina, 2022). Therefore, gender bias in education should be understood as a cultural and institutional mechanism operating through teaching materials, educational structures, and relational patterns within the learning process.

Recent studies further demonstrate that gender inequality in Islamic education in Indonesia is perpetuated through curricula, pedagogy, and institutional practices that reinforce patriarchal norms (Fitria et al., 2025). This evidence suggests that gender issues cannot be attributed solely to written curricula, as bias also manifests in instructional content, pedagogical approaches, authority distribution, and institutional culture. Instructional content frequently reflects bias through the predominance of male perspectives in the production and representation of religious knowledge (Fawaid & Handayani, 2025). More broadly, research on knowledge production and feminist epistemology indicates that androcentrism shapes the definition, teaching, and transmission of legitimate knowledge within educational institutions (Kim & Li, 2026; Polanco-Zuleta et al., 2026). In teaching practice, stereotypes and power relations are continually reproduced when pedagogy lacks gender awareness (Kube et al., 2024). Furthermore, institutional norms and cultures can sustain gender bias by shaping daily educational experiences (Sulla et al., 2025). Therefore, gender bias should be regarded as a structural issue operating at epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional levels, as highlighted in studies on the politics of knowledge, power, and challenges to gender discourse in higher education (Read, 2025; Unal, 2025). These dimensions reinforce one another: gendered representations influence which knowledge is treated as authoritative, pedagogical practices shape whose voices can question and interpret that knowledge, and institutional norms stabilize these patterns through unequal recognition and access to leadership.

The experiences of women in Islamic educational institutions reveal complexities that transcend a binary framework of oppression versus empowerment. Eka Srimulyani's research on women in *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) demonstrates that these institutions can facilitate mobility, religious identity formation, and expanded educational access for women. However, significant challenges persist regarding the distribution of authority, intellectual recognition, and leadership opportunities (Srimulyani, 2007). Thus, while Islamic educational institutions possess emancipatory potential, this potential depends on transformations in the power relations that structure the learning environment. These experiences should not be understood merely as a result of women's underrepresentation, but also as an outcome of

pedagogical power relations that restrict who is allowed to speak, who is considered authoritative, and who is conditioned to obey (Bardazzi & Bazzoni, 2020). From Freire's perspective, emancipatory education should foster dialogue, reflection, and critical consciousness (Freire, 2000). Therefore, interpretations of Islamic education that are humanistic and gender-responsive (Ferianto & Firmansyah, 2026) must begin with a critique of excessively vertical pedagogical relationships, as it is precisely there that gender inequality is often subtly yet systematically reproduced.

Freire's critique of the banking model of education is relevant to this analysis not because hierarchical pedagogy is inherently gender-biased, but because it helps explain how passive learning can restrict students' capacity to question gender assumptions embedded in educational content and religious instruction (Freire, 2000). When such pedagogical asymmetry operates within patriarchal settings, these assumptions may be transmitted as authoritative knowledge and reinforced through unequal expectations for female and male students (Prastiwi & Farihah, 2024). The banking model therefore helps identify the pedagogical mechanism through which gender bias may be transmitted and normalized, while Engineer's perspective provides a basis for examining the religious interpretations that may legitimize such inequality (Engineer, 1992).

Theological Deconstruction of Gender Domestication Narratives

The literature reviewed in this subsection reveals a recurring pattern: gender domestication is sustained when historically situated patriarchal interpretations are taught as unquestionable religious truths and reinforced through asymmetrical pedagogical authority (Rahman et al., 2024; Sani, 2024). Asghar Ali Engineer's scholarship is particularly pertinent, as he addresses the status of women in Islam through not only normative fiqh, but also philosophical, anthropological, sociological, and historical perspectives (Farah, 2020). This multidimensional approach facilitates a more critical reading of religious narratives concerning women, especially when such texts are invoked to justify the domestication, subordination, or restriction of women's roles in educational settings. Nevertheless, further clarification is needed in studies that explicitly connect theological interpretation, pedagogy, and gender domestication within Islamic education.

In "Women's Rights in Islam," Engineer contends that gender injustice is inseparable from the ways Muslim societies interpret and institutionalize religious teachings within

specific social contexts. He argues that, at the normative level, Islam upholds principles of justice, balance, and equality of human dignity. The subordination of women, however, primarily results from social constructions and religious interpretations shaped by patriarchal cultures. Engineer's critique therefore requires distinguishing Islam's normative commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity from interpretations shaped by patriarchal social conditions, and reassessing those interpretations in light of their historical context and ethical consequences. The predominance of men in the production of religious authority has allowed patriarchal perspectives to acquire religious legitimacy, even though these views often emerge from particular social, legal, and cultural circumstances that may not align with Islam's ethical message of justice (Anwar et al., 2025; Nadia & Faoziah, 2024; Saifullin et al., 2026; Wijaya et al., 2025; Zhussipbek et al., 2024). Recent research likewise identifies a gap between women's participation in Islamic knowledge production and recognition of their scholarly authority (Aulia, Aproni, et al., 2026). Therefore, reinterpretation of religious texts is necessary not to reject religion, but to reaffirm Islam's orientation toward justice, dignity, and emancipation (Tasbih et al., 2024).

A central focus in the discourse on gender in Islam is the interpretation of QS. al-Nisā' [4]:34, particularly the concept of qiwāmah. Classical interpretations frequently understand this concept hierarchically, establishing male superiority over women. These readings become problematic when presented without sufficient historical and social context, as they may lead students to perceive male-female relations as inherently structured by domination and subordination. Applying Engineer's justice-oriented perspective to QS. al-Nisā' [4]:34 requires examining qiwāmah within its socio-historical context rather than treating it as an unconditional basis for male authority, as illustrated by contextual approaches to the verse (Syafirin, 2024; Musfiroh & Syamsuddin, 2020). In Islamic education, the challenge lies not only in the content of interpretations but also in the methods by which they are communicated to students. When historical interpretations are presented as absolute truths without space for dialogue, students, particularly female students, may internalize subordinate roles as sacred and non-negotiable.

Theological deconstruction within Islamic education should prioritize transforming the pedagogical approaches to teaching religious texts. Texts historically used to justify rigid gender roles must be reread by distinguishing the ethical messages of the Qur'an from the socio-historical contexts in which interpretations developed (Yuliharti et al., 2025). This

framework posits that gender injustice arises not directly from religious texts, but from interpretations shaped by patriarchal contexts and institutionalized through religious authority (Khairuddin et al., 2024). Accordingly, Islamic education should serve as an ethical foundation for revising interpretations that normalize inequality, rather than legitimizing the subordination of women. The focus of deconstruction should be on interpretive, pedagogical, and institutional practices that reinforce unequal power relations, rather than on Islamic teachings themselves. However, further clarification is required regarding the specific pedagogical processes that reinforce gender domestication.

When examined through the lens of Freire's critical pedagogy, the issue extends beyond the content of religious interpretation to encompass pedagogical methods. Religious texts are often delivered monologically, employing the banking model of education in which teachers are the sole authorities and students are passive recipients (Slavutzky & Audet Gosselin, 2025). This approach prevents students from distinguishing between revelation, interpretation, and the social interests embedded in interpretive processes, despite the fact that interpretation always shapes social relations and should be addressed through an open, historically aware hermeneutic framework (Alsaied, 2025). As a result, religious education risks perpetuating patriarchal ideology rather than fostering a just and reflective Islamic consciousness. In contrast, dialogical Islamic education encourages students to engage with religious texts critically and tolerantly (Aulia et al., 2024), to analyze the historical context of interpretations, and to recognize the power relations underlying the construction of religious meaning (Radino & Mubarok, 2025). In digital learning environments, such critical engagement also requires verifying religious information against authoritative sources and Islamic ethical principles (Aulia, Suryanih, et al., 2026). Therefore, theological deconstruction in Islamic education must be accompanied by pedagogical transformation to ensure that religious interpretation becomes both more contextual and more emancipatory.

Overall, the literature indicates that gender domestication is sustained through the interaction of patriarchal interpretations and their hierarchical transmission in educational settings. Engineer's justice-oriented critique challenges the theological legitimation of women's subordination, while Freire's critical pedagogy explains how monological teaching can normalize such interpretations. Accordingly, deconstructing gender domestication in Islamic education requires both historically contextualized religious interpretation and

dialogical pedagogy that recognizes women as equal participants in religious knowledge production.

A Framework for Humanistic and Gender-Responsive Transformation in Islamic Education

The literature synthesis identifies three interconnected domains through which gender inequality is reproduced in Islamic education: epistemological authority, pedagogical practices, and institutional culture. These findings indicate that transformation must address how religious knowledge is produced and interpreted, how students participate in learning, and how authority is distributed within educational institutions (Mardatillah et al., 2025; Wijaya et al., 2025).

Simultaneously, this transformation necessitates a pedagogical shift from rote memorization and passive acceptance to dialogue, inquiry, reflection, and collaborative knowledge construction. While several studies underscore the value of participatory approaches, few explicitly demonstrate how pedagogical reforms can directly confront gender inequality within Islamic education's learning processes. This approach encourages learners not only to understand religious texts, but also to examine historical contexts, power dynamics, and social interests that shape interpretation (Bendraou & Sakale, 2024; Jusubaidi et al., 2024). Therefore, humanistic and gender-responsive Islamic education extends beyond curricular revisions, aiming to foster an academic culture characterized by openness, dialogue, and justice. Such a culture is particularly crucial in contexts where teacher-centered instruction, insular academic environments, and patriarchal interpretations of religion continue to limit intellectual freedom and reinforce the subordination of women (Silahuddin et al., 2025; Yuliharti et al., 2025).

At the epistemological level, humanistic Islamic education requires a paradigm shift in the perception of both religious knowledge and learners' roles. Religious knowledge should be viewed not as a set of doctrines transmitted unilaterally from teacher to student, but as the outcome of a learning process involving dialogue, reflection, and active participation. As a result, the learning process extends beyond memorization and passive acceptance, providing opportunities for learners to question, evaluate arguments, and intentionally construct their religious understanding (Annur et al., 2026; Fakrijal, 2025; Haidar, 2025). Within a gender-responsive framework, female students must be acknowledged as epistemic agents with equal rights to interpret, inquire, and present religious arguments. This

recognition is essential, as barriers to women's access to and development of knowledge are often shaped more by prevailing social norms and conservative interpretations than by the core values of Islam (Erwani & Siregar, 2024; Saifullin et al., 2026). Thus, humanistic Islamic education must affirm the equal intellectual dignity, educational rights, and capacity of both men and women to contribute to socio-religious life (Hasbiyallah et al., 2024; Tashmatov et al., 2025).

At the pedagogical level, transforming Islamic education to be humanistic and gender-responsive necessitates a shift from monological teaching to dialogical, reflective, and problem-based learning. Freire's problem-posing education model can be adapted by employing religious texts, students' social experiences, and issues of gender injustice as materials for critical classroom reflection (Freire, 2000; Najmudin et al., 2025). Practically, this approach is implemented through case-based discussions, contextual readings, group dialogues with equal participation from all students, rotation of leadership roles, and assignments that critically analyze gender representation in textbooks or institutional practices (Abdul-Jabbar & Makki, 2024; Hu et al., 2024). Thus, the classroom becomes not only a site for transmitting doctrine but also a space for cultivating critical awareness, argumentative skills, and the negotiation of justice within Islamic education.

At the institutional level, transforming humanistic Islamic education requires cultivating an institutional culture aligned with the principles of gender justice. Existing research frequently limits itself to normative assertions about equality, often neglecting analysis of how internal policies, leadership distribution, participation in academic forums, female representation in decision-making, and educational governance may perpetuate gender bias (Mardhiyah et al., 2025; Siswadi et al., 2025). Such critical evaluation is essential, as gender inequality is often embedded in institutional practices that restrict women's voices, mobility, and intellectual authority, rather than through explicit prohibitions. Therefore, establishing an inclusive academic culture involves recognizing women's agency, expanding leadership opportunities, distributing authority equitably, and implementing mechanisms that enable meaningful participation by women in educational processes, beyond symbolic representation (Fatmawati et al., 2024; Muafiah et al., 2024). In this way, gender justice becomes an integral component of the ethical mission of Islamic education, rather than a supplementary administrative concern (Athoillah et al., 2024).

The synthesis of Freire and Engineer connects the three dimensions of transformation. Epistemologically, Freire's view of learners as critical subjects converges with Engineer's justice-oriented interpretation of Islam, supporting women's recognition as equal producers and interpreters of religious knowledge (Engineer, 1992; Freire, 2000). Pedagogically, Freire's dialogical, problem-posing approach enables students to question patriarchal interpretations rather than receive them as unquestionable doctrine (Freire, 2000; Najmudin et al., 2025). Institutionally, Freire's critique of hierarchical power and Engineer's commitment to gender justice support equitable participation, authority, and decision-making (Aisyah & Junaedi, 2024; Engineer, 1992; Mala et al., 2025; Najmudin et al., 2025). These dimensions are interdependent: inclusive knowledge production requires dialogical learning, while both depend on institutional arrangements that recognize women's agency. Together, they frame humanistic Islamic education as a praxis of liberation grounded in contextual interpretation, dialogical pedagogy, and just institutional governance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that gender bias in Islamic education is reproduced through the interaction of pedagogical power relations and patriarchal religious interpretations. Monological teaching can position students as passive recipients of knowledge and limit their capacity to question gender assumptions, while patriarchal interpretations may legitimize unequal gender roles and authority. Their interaction influences whose knowledge is recognized, whose voices are heard, and who gains access to institutional authority.

The article's theoretical contribution lies in a gender-focused synthesis of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and Asghar Ali Engineer's concept of gender justice. Freire explains how hierarchical pedagogical practices reproduce passivity, while Engineer provides a theological basis for challenging patriarchal interpretations. Their synthesis establishes an interconnected framework across epistemological, pedagogical, and institutional dimensions, showing that gender-responsive transformation requires inclusive knowledge production, dialogical learning, and equitable institutional authority.

Methodologically, the qualitative-theoretical library research approach enabled critical, descriptive, comparative, and integrative examination of the selected literature. However, the study remains conceptual, is limited to the perspectives of Freire and Engineer, and does not empirically examine differences across Islamic educational institutions. Future research

should investigate how these mechanisms operate in madrasahs, *pesantren*, and Islamic higher education through context-sensitive empirical studies, while incorporating broader perspectives from critical education and gender scholarship. In practice, Islamic educational institutions should strengthen dialogical learning, contextual religious interpretation, and women's equitable participation in institutional authority and decision-making.

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