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Community-Based Islamic Education Model in London: Implications for Indonesia

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Abstract

Background: Islamic education is shaped by differing institutional contexts, particularly between Indonesia's formal state-based system and London's community-based Islamic education. These differences raise critical questions regarding how teacher ethical formation is constructed and practiced across contexts.

Methods: This study employs a qualitative comparative conceptual analysis using library research. Data were drawn from scholarly literature and policy documents on Islamic education in Indonesia and the United Kingdom. The analysis is guided by the frameworks of *tarbiyah* (holistic education), *ta'dib* (ethical formation), and community-based learning theory.

Results: Findings show that teacher ethical formation in London is primarily grounded in community trust, moral responsibility, and experiential engagement within mosques and supplementary schools. In contrast, Indonesia emphasizes formal teacher professionalism through certification and curriculum standardization, although ethical internalization in classroom practice remains inconsistent.

Discussion: The study indicates that teacher ethical formation is not only determined by institutional regulation but also by social and community-based learning environments. The London model highlights strong moral identity formation through informal educational ecosystems, while the Indonesian model reflects structured professionalism with varying ethical depth in practice.

Conclusion: Effective Islamic Religious Education requires integration between formal institutional structures and community-based moral ecosystems to strengthen teacher ethical formation.

Novelty: This study develops a comparative conceptual perspective on teacher ethical formation in community-based (London) and institutional (Indonesia) Islamic education, moving beyond descriptive comparisons toward analytical synthesis.

Keywords: Islamic Education; Community-Based Learning; Islamic Pedagogy; PAI; Character Education



INTRODUCTION

Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) occupies a central position in shaping not only students' cognitive understanding of religious teachings, but also their moral orientation, ethical behavior, and social responsibility. Within Islamic pedagogical thought, education is grounded in the integrated framework of *tarbiyah* (holistic development) and *ta'dib* (ethical formation), which collectively emphasize the inseparability of knowledge, spirituality, and moral discipline. In this paradigm, teachers are not merely instructional agents, but moral exemplars (*uswah hasanah*) whose presence and conduct significantly shape students' ethical formation and religious identity. This positioning places teacher professionalism at the heart of Islamic educational effectiveness, particularly in contexts where moral education is expected to translate into lived ethical practice.

In contemporary educational discourse, however, there is growing concern that the relationship between institutional Islamic education and ethical outcomes is not always linear. In many contexts, formal curriculum structures and standardized teacher competencies do not automatically result in deep moral internalization among learners. This tension becomes particularly evident in state-regulated systems such as Indonesia, where Islamic Education is formally institutionalized within the national education system through curriculum integration, certification mechanisms, and competency-based teacher standards. While this institutional framework reflects strong state commitment to character education, empirical studies suggest a persistent gap between policy-level design and classroom-level ethical practice. The implementation of Islamic values is often mediated by variations in teacher competence, institutional resources, and contextual constraints, leading to inconsistencies in how Islamic ethics are enacted in educational practice (Wijaya Mulya & Schäfer, 2023).

This gap indicates that Islamic Education cannot be fully understood through structural analysis alone, but must also be examined through the lens of ethical agency and socio-cultural mediation. In other words, teacher ethical formation becomes a critical variable that determines whether Islamic educational ideals are transformed into lived pedagogical practice or remain at the level of formal discourse. This problem is not merely technical, but epistemological, as it concerns how Islamic values are transmitted, interpreted, and embodied within different educational systems. In contrast to the Indonesian model, Islamic Education in London, United Kingdom, operates within a pluralistic, secular, and multicultural educational environment. In this context, Islamic learning is not primarily delivered through state-regulated curricula, but through community-based institutions such as mosques, weekend schools, and informal religious learning spaces. This decentralized model reflects a different epistemic structure of education, where moral and religious formation is embedded within social interaction, voluntary participation, and community responsibility rather than institutional mandate. As previous studies indicate, community-based educational systems can strengthen participatory learning and social cohesion, particularly in minority religious contexts where formal institutional support is limited (Muhammad, 2016).

However, this flexibility also produces a distinctive mode of ethical formation. Rather than relying on standardized certification or formal accountability systems, teacher professionalism in London's Islamic educational settings is primarily grounded in moral credibility, community



trust, and relational authority. Ethical formation is thus constructed through lived experience and sustained social engagement, rather than bureaucratic regulation. This creates an alternative paradigm of Islamic Education in which moral authority is decentralized and embedded within community ecosystems. The comparison between Indonesia and London therefore reveals two fundamentally different paradigms of Islamic Education: a formal-institutional model and a community-based relational model. Indonesia emphasizes standardization, curriculum control, and state accountability, while London foregrounds flexibility, community agency, and moral autonomy. These differences raise a more fundamental analytical question: how is teacher ethical formation constructed across different educational architectures, and what does this imply for the effectiveness of Islamic Education in shaping moral and religious identity?.

From a theoretical standpoint, Islamic Education is deeply rooted in the integration of *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib*, which together emphasize the formation of morally grounded, spiritually aware, and intellectually balanced individuals. Within this framework, teacher professionalism cannot be reduced to technical competence alone, but must be understood as ethical embodiment and spiritual responsibility. Contemporary Islamic educational theory increasingly views ethical formation as a dynamic process shaped by the interaction between institutional structures, community environments, and individual moral agency. Previous scholarship has further highlighted that Islamic educational practices are influenced by broader epistemological and socio-cultural transformations, particularly in the context of globalization and shifting knowledge systems (Sabic-El-Rayess, 2020). In addition, Islamic personality development theories emphasize that moral cultivation is central to educational success, positioning ethics as the foundation of both learning and teaching processes (Othman et al., 2014). These perspectives collectively suggest that Islamic Education must be analyzed not only as a formal curriculum system, but as a lived ethical ecosystem involving teachers, institutions, and communities.

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic Education, there remains a significant gap in comparative studies that explicitly connect community-based Islamic education in Western minority contexts with formal institutional systems in Muslim-majority countries. Existing research tends to treat these domains separately, either focusing on national Islamic education systems or diaspora-based religious education, without sufficiently bridging their conceptual and pedagogical implications. As a result, limited attention has been given to how teacher ethical formation operates across these contrasting environments and what transferable insights may be generated. Addressing this gap, this study examines community-based Islamic Education in London and its implications for strengthening Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia, with a specific focus on teacher ethical formation as the central analytical lens. Rather than merely comparing educational models, this study seeks to uncover how ethical authority, pedagogical practice, and professional identity are constructed within different socio-educational systems.

Therefore, this study aims to: (1) analyze the characteristics of community-based Islamic education in London with emphasis on teacher ethical formation, (2) examine the pedagogical and ethical mechanisms underpinning this model, and (3) explore its implications for improving Islamic Education practices in Indonesia.



By situating Islamic Education within a comparative and interdisciplinary framework, this study contributes to Islamic pedagogy and comparative education studies by advancing a more integrated understanding of teacher ethical formation across institutional and community-based systems. It also argues that effective Islamic Education requires a synthesis between formal institutional structures and community-driven moral ecosystems, where teachers function simultaneously as professional educators and moral agents embedded within broader social contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) is widely conceptualized as a holistic educational system that integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions in shaping learners' moral and social conduct. Within Islamic pedagogical philosophy, education is not merely understood as knowledge transmission (*ta'lim*), but as a comprehensive process of character formation (*tarbiyah*) and ethical discipline (*ta'dib*). These two foundational concepts emphasize that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is not only intellectual mastery, but the development of morally grounded individuals whose knowledge is embodied in ethical behavior. In this framework, teachers occupy a central position as moral exemplars (*uswah hasanah*), meaning that teacher professionalism is inseparable from ethical embodiment and spiritual responsibility.

Recent scholarship in Islamic Education increasingly highlights that teacher professionalism is not only a technical or administrative construct, but also an ethical and spiritual phenomenon. Studies indicate that internal values such as spirituality, moral commitment, and personal discipline significantly influence teacher performance and educational quality outcomes (Wu, 2025). Similarly, continuous professional development and reflective practice are identified as key mechanisms for improving Islamic educational effectiveness (Masuwai et al., 2024). However, while these studies acknowledge the importance of teacher ethics, they often remain focused on individual-level factors without sufficiently addressing how institutional and socio-cultural environments shape ethical formation. This limitation suggests the need for a more structurally and contextually grounded analysis of teacher professionalism in Islamic Education.

In the Indonesian context, Islamic Education is strongly institutionalized within the national education system through standardized curricula, teacher certification frameworks, and formal policy regulations. This state-centered model reflects a high degree of institutional control and accountability, ensuring uniformity in curriculum implementation and professional standards. Research on Islamic schooling in Indonesia indicates that institutional management and teacher competency are key determinants of educational quality (Halstead, 2018). Moreover, Islamic higher education institutions are increasingly aligning with global academic standards while maintaining Islamic identity (Sudirman et al., 2025). However, a critical issue emerging from this institutional strength is the persistent gap between formal policy and classroom practice. In many cases, teacher compliance with certification requirements does not necessarily translate into deep ethical internalization in pedagogical practice. This suggests that institutionalization, while structurally strong, may not fully guarantee the lived embodiment of Islamic ethical values in education.



At the same time, Islamic Education in Indonesia is undergoing transformation due to broader socio-cultural and technological changes. Digitalization, curriculum reform, and community-based learning initiatives are reshaping how Islamic knowledge is transmitted and practiced (Hidayati et al., 2025). This development indicates that the Indonesian system is gradually evolving into a hybrid model that combines formal institutional structures with informal and community-based elements. Nevertheless, the dominant orientation remains curriculum-driven, which raises questions about how effectively ethical formation is achieved within such a regulated framework.

In contrast, Islamic Education in the United Kingdom, particularly in urban multicultural contexts such as London, operates within a decentralized and community-based framework. In this setting, Islamic education is primarily delivered through supplementary schools, mosques, and informal learning institutions rather than state-controlled curricula. As highlighted in previous studies, Islamic Education in minority contexts plays a crucial role in sustaining religious identity, moral development, and intergenerational continuity among Muslim communities (Saada, 2023). Unlike Indonesia, where institutional authority is centralized, the UK model distributes educational responsibility across community actors, making ethical formation highly dependent on social participation and communal engagement. However, this decentralization does not imply the absence of structure; rather, it reflects a different logic of educational governance. Islamic educational practices in diaspora contexts are strongly shaped by community cohesion, parental involvement, and cultural adaptation processes. The sense of belonging and communal responsibility significantly influences how Islamic values are transmitted and internalized (Suhartanto et al., 2025). In this context, teacher authority is not primarily derived from formal certification but from moral credibility, trustworthiness, and active engagement within the community. This creates a distinct form of teacher professionalism that is relational, rather than bureaucratic.

From a comparative perspective, existing literature suggests that teacher professionalism is fundamentally shaped by institutional logics and socio-cultural structures. In state-regulated systems such as Indonesia, teacher ethics are standardized through formal policies, certification systems, and administrative accountability (Nawas et al., 2025). Conversely, in community-based systems such as London, teacher professionalism emerges from informal governance, moral trust, and community expectations (Tatik et al., 2025). However, most comparative studies tend to describe these differences at a surface level without deeply analyzing how these structural variations influence the actual process of teacher ethical formation. This represents a significant conceptual gap in the literature.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in Islamic educational philosophy (*tarbiyah* and *ta'dīb*), teacher ethical theory, and comparative education frameworks. Islamic pedagogy emphasizes holistic human development that integrates intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions as an inseparable unity. In addition, the concept of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* provides an important ethical framework for understanding educational governance in Islam, where the protection and development of human morality become central educational objectives (Hartanto et al., 2025). Despite the richness of these theoretical foundations, their integration into empirical comparative studies of teacher ethics remains limited.



Community-based education theory further enriches this discussion by emphasizing that learning is socially embedded and collectively constructed. Studies show that community cooperation plays a significant role in sustaining educational continuity and moral values through shared responsibility and participation (Fahmi Mr. et al., 2024). This perspective aligns closely with Islamic educational principles, yet its application in formal Islamic Education systems remains underexplored. At the same time, globalization introduces both opportunities and tensions in Islamic Education. While it enables knowledge exchange and institutional modernization, it also creates friction between traditional Islamic values and contemporary educational paradigms (Abdurrahman, 2016; Bourget, 2019; Daheri, 2022). This tension further complicates the process of teacher ethical formation in both institutional and community-based settings.

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic Education, a key gap remains: limited comparative conceptual analysis that directly connects community-based Islamic Education in Western minority contexts with formal institutional systems in Muslim-majority countries. Existing studies tend to treat these contexts separately, either focusing on national education systems or diaspora education, without sufficiently bridging the conceptual relationship between institutional structure and ethical formation of teachers. Addressing this gap, this study positions teacher ethical formation as the central analytical lens to examine community-based Islamic Education in London and its implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia. Rather than treating the two contexts as isolated systems, this study conceptualizes them as contrasting but interconnected models of ethical formation shaped by different institutional logics.

In conclusion, the literature demonstrates that Islamic Education is a dynamic and context-sensitive field shaped by the interaction between institutional structures, socio-cultural environments, and moral agency. However, the comparative dimension of teacher ethical formation remains under-theorized, particularly in relation to how community-based and formal institutional systems shape different modes of ethical professionalism. This study therefore contributes by developing a more integrated conceptual understanding of teacher ethical formation across community-based (London) and institutional (Indonesia) contexts, thereby strengthening the discourse on comparative Islamic Education and expanding its theoretical horizons.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative comparative research design within the framework of Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) and interdisciplinary educational studies. The qualitative approach is considered appropriate because it enables an in-depth exploration of meanings, practices, and contextual constructions of community-based Islamic Education in London and its implications for Islamic Education in Indonesia. Rather than measuring variables quantitatively, this study emphasizes interpretive understanding of how teacher professionalism and Islamic educational ethics are constructed, negotiated, and practiced across different socio-educational environments. This orientation is consistent with



contemporary qualitative research traditions in Islamic Education that prioritize contextual depth, interpretive rigor, and value-based inquiry.

The research design used is a comparative qualitative case study. This design allows systematic comparison between two contrasting educational contexts, namely community-based Islamic Education in London, United Kingdom, and formal Islamic Education (PAI) in West Java, Indonesia. The comparative orientation is particularly relevant because the two contexts represent different institutional logics: Indonesia operates within a state-regulated and curriculum-driven system, while London relies on community-based and supplementary educational structures (Saada, 2023). This contrast provides a strong analytical foundation for examining how teacher professionalism and ethical formation are shaped by institutional arrangements and socio-cultural environments.

The research context reflects two distinct educational ecosystems. Indonesia represents a Muslim-majority country where Islamic Education is formally institutionalized through national curriculum frameworks, teacher certification systems, and standardized competency policies. In this system, Islamic Education is a compulsory subject within formal schooling structures under state supervision. In contrast, London represents a Muslim-minority context where Islamic Education is delivered primarily through supplementary schools, mosques, and community-based learning institutions. These institutions function outside formal state curricula and depend heavily on community initiative, parental involvement, and voluntary participation (Suhartanto et al., 2025). The difference between these two contexts is not only structural but also pedagogical and ethical in nature, influencing how Islamic values are transmitted and internalized.

Data collection in this study is conducted through three main techniques: literature review, document analysis, and comparative conceptual analysis. The literature review involves systematic examination of scholarly works on Islamic Education, teacher professionalism, *tarbiyah*, *ta'dib*, and comparative education theory. In addition, recent studies on teacher ethics, professional commitment, and Islamic educational transformation are included to strengthen theoretical grounding (Ofem et al., 2024; Ahmad et al., 2025). Document analysis is conducted on policy documents, curriculum frameworks, and educational regulations from both Indonesia and the United Kingdom. In Indonesia, this includes Islamic Education curriculum standards and teacher competency regulations, while in the UK context it includes policies related to religious education, multicultural education, and community-based schooling systems. Comparative conceptual analysis is then used to interpret how Islamic educational ethics and teacher professionalism are constructed across both contexts.

Data analysis is conducted using a qualitative descriptive-comparative approach. The analysis begins with thematic categorization of data into key analytical dimensions, including teacher professionalism, ethical values, institutional structure, and pedagogical practice. These categories are then interpreted using Islamic educational theories, particularly *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib*, which emphasize holistic moral, spiritual, and intellectual development. The comparative stage of analysis focuses on identifying patterns of similarity and difference between Indonesia and London, particularly in relation to institutional structure, ethical formation processes, and socio-cultural influences on educational practice. This analytical



strategy aligns with comparative education perspectives that emphasize the interaction between institutional systems and moral-ethical formation in educational settings (Hartanto et al., 2025). To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study applies source triangulation by cross-checking information from academic literature, policy documents, and theoretical frameworks. This strengthens interpretive consistency and reduces bias in comparative qualitative analysis. Interpretive validity is maintained by grounding analysis in established Islamic educational theories and peer-reviewed scholarly works on Islamic Education and teacher professionalism (Masuwai et al., 2024). Ethical considerations are also observed through accurate citation practices, responsible interpretation of cultural and religious contexts, and adherence to academic integrity standards. Since this study does not involve direct human participants, ethical risks are minimal; however, intellectual honesty remains a central principle throughout the research process.

Overall, this study adopts a structured qualitative comparative framework that integrates Islamic educational philosophy with global contextual analysis. By comparing community-based Islamic Education in London with formal Islamic Education in Indonesia, the methodology enables a deeper understanding of how teacher ethical formation is shaped by institutional, cultural, and community-based factors. This approach also reflects contemporary developments in Islamic Education research that emphasize the dynamic interaction between formal educational institutions and community learning systems in shaping teacher professionalism and ethical practice (Sadiah, 2022; Muslih et al., 2024).

RESULTS

The findings of this study indicate that community-based Islamic education in London constitutes a distinct pedagogical and ethical formation system that is structurally grounded in communal participation, voluntary engagement, and socially embedded religious learning. Unlike formal state-regulated education systems, Islamic education in London is not centralized within governmental curriculum structures but is instead distributed across mosques, weekend schools, Islamic centers, and informal community learning spaces. These institutions collectively form an educational ecosystem in which moral and religious learning is deeply integrated into everyday social life. From the perspective of *tarbiyah*, this system reflects a holistic educational process in which intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions are cultivated through lived experience rather than institutional prescription. From the perspective of *ta'dib*, ethical formation occurs through habituation, role modeling, and continuous social reinforcement within the community (Muhammad, 2016; Latuapo, 2023).

A key analytical characteristic of the London model is that education is not separated from social existence but is instead embedded within it. This embeddedness creates a learning environment in which Islamic values are continuously observable, practiced, and socially validated. Pedagogically, the system is characterized by participatory and experiential learning strategies, including storytelling, dialogical learning, collective worship practices, and community-based religious activities. These pedagogical forms are not merely instructional techniques but function as mechanisms of ethical internalization. In *tarbiyah* terms, they represent a process of continuous moral nurturing, where learners develop religious



understanding through participation in real-life community practices rather than abstract classroom instruction.

The findings further reveal that ethical formation in the London context is strongly dependent on experiential reinforcement. Students do not only learn Islamic values cognitively but also experience them through repeated social interactions. This continuous exposure strengthens internal moral disposition, particularly in areas such as responsibility, empathy, religious identity, and communal solidarity. In this regard, *ta'dib* is operationalized not through formal assessment or regulatory enforcement, but through lived ethical encounters that shape behavior over time. This explains why moral internalization in community-based Islamic education tends to be relatively strong despite the absence of formal institutional control.

An important analytical finding concerns the construction of teacher professionalism in the London context. Teachers in community-based Islamic education are not primarily legitimized through formal certification systems but through social trust, moral credibility, and religious commitment. Within the framework of *ta'dib*, teacher authority is relational rather than structural. It is continuously negotiated through interactions with students, parents, and the wider Muslim community. Teachers are expected to embody Islamic ethical values in their personal and professional conduct, making them moral exemplars (*uswah hasanah*) whose behavior becomes an extension of the curriculum itself. This relational model of professionalism produces what can be conceptualized as “community-validated ethical authority.” In this system, the sustainability of teacher legitimacy depends on consistency of moral behavior, trustworthiness (*amanah*), and perceived sincerity in religious commitment. Unlike formal institutional systems, where professionalism is largely measured through certification and bureaucratic compliance, the London model evaluates professionalism through lived ethical performance. This creates a form of continuous moral accountability that is socially enforced rather than administratively regulated.

In contrast, Islamic education in Indonesia—particularly in West Java—operates within a formal institutional framework governed by national curriculum standards, certification systems, and centralized educational policies. From a *tarbiyah* perspective, this system emphasizes structured intellectual and moral development through standardized learning objectives, curriculum frameworks, and formal classroom instruction. Islamic Education (PAI) is institutionally embedded as a compulsory subject within the national education system, ensuring systematic coverage of Islamic knowledge and values across educational levels. However, the findings indicate that while institutionalization provides structural stability, it does not automatically ensure deep ethical internalization in practice. The implementation of *ta'dib* within Indonesian classrooms often remains uneven, depending on teacher competence, institutional support, and contextual constraints. In many cases, Islamic values are formally included in lesson plans but are not fully embodied in classroom interactions or student behavioral outcomes. This suggests a disjunction between curricular *tarbiyah* (planned moral education) and lived *ta'dib* (actual ethical formation).

This gap can be analytically explained through the nature of institutionalized education systems. In Indonesia, teacher professionalism is largely defined by administrative standards, certification requirements, and performance indicators. While this ensures accountability and



standardization, it may also limit pedagogical flexibility and reduce the space for experiential learning. As a result, ethical formation tends to become procedural rather than deeply internalized. Previous studies have similarly highlighted that formal Islamic education systems often face challenges in translating curriculum objectives into meaningful ethical transformation in classroom practice (Haryanto et al., 2024). From a comparative analytical perspective, the London and Indonesian models represent two distinct epistemological orientations in Islamic education. The London model is grounded in a relational-communal epistemology, where knowledge and ethics are co-constructed through social interaction and community engagement. In this model, *ta'dib* emerges organically through participation in social and religious life. In contrast, the Indonesian model reflects a structural-institutional epistemology, where knowledge and ethics are transmitted through standardized curricula and regulated teaching systems. Here, *tarbiyah* is formally guaranteed, but *ta'dib* depends heavily on individual teacher implementation.

The findings suggest that these two epistemological orientations produce different pathways of ethical formation. In London, ethical formation is internally driven and socially reinforced, whereas in Indonesia it is externally structured and institutionally regulated. This difference explains why community-based Islamic education tends to produce strong moral identity formation despite limited formal structure, while institutional Islamic education ensures consistency but sometimes struggles with depth of ethical internalization. Despite these differences, the findings also show that both systems are not without limitations. The London model, while strong in moral engagement and identity formation, faces challenges related to standardization, curriculum coherence, and long-term sustainability. The absence of centralized regulation may lead to variability in teaching quality and learning outcomes. On the other hand, the Indonesian model, while strong in institutional consistency and curriculum control, faces challenges in pedagogical flexibility, experiential learning, and meaningful ethical embodiment.

This duality indicates that neither system is sufficient on its own to fully realize the holistic objectives of Islamic education as envisioned in *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib*. Instead, both systems highlight complementary strengths that, if integrated, could produce a more balanced educational model. The findings therefore lead to a synthesized analytical construct: the Community-Based Islamic Education Model. This model integrates three interrelated dimensions. First, community-centered learning ecosystems function as the primary space for moral and religious socialization, where education extends beyond formal classrooms into everyday social life. Second, experiential and participatory pedagogy serves as the main mechanism for internalizing Islamic values through lived practice, dialogue, and communal engagement. Third, teacher moral-professional identity is constructed through a balance of social trust (*amanah sosial*) and ethical responsibility (*mas'uliyah tarbawiyah*), where teachers act simultaneously as educators and moral exemplars.

In this synthesis, *tarbiyah* provides the structural and developmental dimension of education, while *ta'dib* ensures ethical embodiment and moral discipline. Community-based learning acts as the mediating space where both dimensions are actualized. The London model thus serves not as a direct system to be replicated, but as an analytical reference for understanding how ethical formation can be strengthened through community integration. Overall, the findings



demonstrate that Islamic educational ethics are not static outputs of institutional design but dynamic processes shaped by the interaction between structure, agency, and community life. The London case illustrates the power of socially embedded moral learning, while the Indonesian case reflects the strength of institutionalized educational governance. The analytical significance of this study lies in its demonstration that effective Islamic education requires a balanced integration of both systems, where institutional frameworks support consistency while community ecosystems ensure ethical depth and lived moral formation.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that community-based Islamic education in London represents a distinct form of pedagogical and ethical formation that is deeply embedded within social relations, voluntary participation, and collective religious responsibility. Rather than being primarily governed by state curricula, Islamic education in diaspora contexts such as London is sustained through mosques, weekend schools, and informal community institutions. This confirms that Islamic education in minority contexts operates as a socially constructed educational ecosystem, where learning is not merely institutional but fundamentally relational and participatory (Halstead, 2018; Saada, 2023). From a theoretical perspective, this condition reflects the operationalization of *tarbiyah* as holistic development and *ta'dib* as ethical discipline within lived community structures. The London case demonstrates that ethical formation is not exclusively dependent on formal pedagogy, but is continuously produced through everyday social interaction, religious practice, and communal engagement. This aligns with the idea that Islamic education is inherently a moral-social process rather than a purely instructional system (Othman et al., 2014; Rekan et al., 2025).

A critical analytical point emerging from this study is that the London model constructs teacher professionalism as a form of moral-social authority, rather than bureaucratic legitimacy. Teachers are recognized not through certification systems, but through trust, spiritual credibility, and sustained engagement with the community. This supports broader findings that professional identity in education is significantly shaped by workplace spirituality and psychological capital (Wu, 2025). In this sense, teacher ethical formation is relational, emerging through continuous interaction between educators, families, and community institutions. To synthesize this model more clearly, the key characteristics of the London community-based Islamic education system can be summarized as follows:

Table 1. Key Characteristics of Community-Based Islamic Education in London

Dimension	Characteristics	Theoretical Link
Institutional structure	Decentralized (mosques, weekend schools, informal learning spaces)	Community-based learning theory
Pedagogy	Experiential, storytelling, dialogue-based	<i>Tarbiyah</i> (holistic formation)
Ethical formation	Socially constructed, practice-based	<i>Ta'dib</i> (ethical internalization)
Teacher authority	Moral trust and community recognition	Moral professionalism theory
Learning orientation	Identity formation and religious continuity	Islamic personality development

Source: Author's own elaboration based on literature review and document analysis.



This table highlights that Islamic education in London functions through a relational ethics framework, where moral values are transmitted through lived experience rather than formal assessment structures. Such a system is particularly effective in diaspora contexts where institutional support is limited but community cohesion remains strong (Suhartanto et al., 2025). In contrast, Islamic education in Indonesia reflects a state-institutionalized educational paradigm, where teacher professionalism and ethical formation are regulated through curriculum standardization, certification systems, and bureaucratic accountability mechanisms. This formalization ensures consistency in educational delivery and strengthens policy coherence. However, as indicated by empirical studies, such institutionalization does not always guarantee deep ethical internalization in classroom practice (Nawas et al., 2025; Tumin, 2020). The Indonesian case thus reflects what can be conceptualized as a structural ethics model, in which Islamic values are transmitted through formal curriculum frameworks rather than lived community interaction. While this model provides stability, it may also create a gap between “formal compliance” and “lived ethical practice.” This gap is increasingly recognized in Islamic education literature, where curriculum implementation does not always translate into meaningful character formation (Haryanto et al., 2024; Hayadin et al., 2025). To clarify the comparative logic, this study proposes a dual analytical framework:

Table 2. Comparative Ethical Formation Models

Aspect	London Model	Indonesian Model
Basis of ethics	Community-relational	Institutional-structural
Teacher role	Moral guide & community agent	Certified professional educator
Learning mode	Experiential & participatory	Curriculum-based & standardized
Ethical transmission	Social practice & lived religion	Formal instruction & policy regulation
Strength	Moral internalization	Systematic standardization
Limitation	Lack of standardization	Weak experiential depth

Source: Author’s own elaboration based on comparative literature review and conceptual analysis.

This comparative analysis suggests that the differences between both systems are not merely contextual, but epistemological in nature. The London model aligns more closely with constructivist and community-based learning theories, where knowledge and ethics are co-produced through social interaction (Fahmi et al., 2024; Muhammad, 2016). Meanwhile, the Indonesian model aligns with institutional rationalization theory, where education is structured through formal governance and measurable standards. A deeper theoretical implication of this distinction is that Islamic educational ethics cannot be reduced to institutional compliance alone. Instead, ethical formation emerges through the integration of *tarbiyah* (holistic development), *ta’dib* (disciplinary moral formation), and community-based social learning. This supports the argument that Islamic education is a multi-layered moral ecosystem, rather than a single institutional mechanism (Hartanto et al., 2025).

The role of globalization further complicates this dynamic. As Sabic-El-Rayess (2020) argues, globalization reshapes epistemological frameworks in Islamic education, creating tensions between traditional moral values and modern educational structures. In Indonesia, this is evident in the ongoing transformation of Islamic institutions toward global academic standards while maintaining religious identity (Sudirman et al., 2025). Similarly, digitalization and hybrid learning systems are increasingly influencing pedagogical practices (Hidayati et al.,



2025). From this perspective, the London model offers an important counterbalance to institutional formalization. It demonstrates that ethical formation can remain strong even in the absence of centralized educational governance, as long as community participation remains active and socially meaningful. However, it also lacks the regulatory stability found in the Indonesian system. This indicates that neither model is sufficient on its own.

The implications for Indonesia are therefore not simply about adopting a foreign model, but about reconstructing the relationship between institution and community. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) could benefit from integrating structured curriculum with community-based experiential learning. This would allow ethical formation to move beyond cognitive understanding toward lived practice. Research has shown that community participation significantly strengthens moral and social development in educational contexts (Syafri & Budin, 2025). Moreover, teacher professionalism in Indonesia may need to shift from a purely certification-based model toward a more relational-professional identity, where ethical competence, spiritual responsibility, and community engagement become central indicators of professionalism. Studies on teacher development suggest that professional effectiveness is strongly influenced by internal values, spirituality, and continuous reflective practice (Masuwai et al., 2024; Hasan et al., 2025).

Finally, the synthesis of findings leads to the formulation of a Community-Based Islamic Education Model, which integrates three core dimensions: (1) community-centered learning ecosystems as the foundation of moral formation, (2) experiential and participatory pedagogy as the primary learning mechanism, and (3) teacher moral-professional identity rooted in trust, spirituality, and social responsibility. This model positions Islamic education not merely as a bounded institutional curriculum system, but as an interconnected ethical ecosystem in which learning is continuously produced through interaction between teachers, learners, families, and wider community structures. In this framework, community institutions such as mosques, informal religious gatherings, weekend schools, and family networks function as active pedagogical spaces where Islamic values are not only taught but lived and practiced in daily social life. Teacher professionalism is therefore redefined beyond formal certification and administrative compliance, emphasizing instead moral credibility, spiritual depth, and sustained relational engagement with the community as the core of ethical authority in education. From a comparative education perspective, this model contributes to understanding that teacher ethical formation is shaped not only by institutional regulation, but also by socio-cultural embeddedness and community dynamics, thereby bridging structural and relational approaches in Islamic educational theory.

The main strength of this model lies in its ability to promote deep moral internalization through lived experience and social participation. By emphasizing experiential and participatory pedagogy, learners are able to internalize Islamic values such as responsibility, compassion, and identity formation in more meaningful ways compared to purely formal instructional approaches. In addition, the model strengthens the role of the community as a co-educator, creating a shared responsibility for moral development that extends beyond the classroom. This is particularly relevant in multicultural and minority contexts, where formal institutional support may be limited, as illustrated by the London case. Furthermore, the integration of *tarbiyah* and *ta'dib* within this model ensures a holistic educational orientation that unites



intellectual, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of learning, thereby reinforcing the comprehensive nature of Islamic education as a process of human development rather than mere knowledge transmission. However, the Community-Based Islamic Education Model also presents several limitations. First, its reliance on community-driven structures may lead to variability in educational quality, as there is no standardized mechanism to ensure consistency across different learning environments. Second, the absence of strong institutional regulation may create challenges in maintaining curriculum coherence and teacher competency standards, especially when applied in large-scale national education systems such as Indonesia. Third, the model may face difficulties in integration with formal education systems, where policy frameworks and administrative requirements are dominant, potentially limiting its scalability and institutional adoption. Despite these limitations, the model provides an important conceptual contribution by reframing Islamic education as a hybrid ethical ecosystem that integrates institutional structures with community life, offering a more holistic and context-sensitive understanding of teacher ethical formation and Islamic pedagogical practice in contemporary comparative education discourse.

CONCLUSION

This study examines community-based Islamic education in London and its implications for strengthening Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia. The findings reveal a clear structural distinction between the two contexts. In London, Islamic education operates within a community-driven ecosystem where mosques, weekend schools, and informal learning spaces function as the primary sites of pedagogical and ethical formation. Learning is deeply embedded in social interaction and lived religious practice, while teachers are positioned as moral agents whose authority is grounded in trust, spiritual credibility, and community recognition rather than formal certification. In contrast, Indonesia represents a formal institutional model of Islamic education characterized by curriculum standardization, teacher certification systems, and strong state regulation. This structure ensures consistency and accountability, yet it does not always guarantee deep internalization of Islamic ethical values in classroom practice.

Despite these differences, both contexts reaffirm the central role of teachers as moral exemplars in shaping students' ethical and religious development. However, the mechanisms of ethical formation differ significantly. The London model reflects a community-relational ethics system in which values are transmitted through participation, social engagement, and experiential learning. The Indonesian model reflects a state-institutional ethics system in which values are transmitted through formal curriculum structures and regulatory frameworks. This distinction highlights that Islamic educational ethics are not only shaped by policy or curriculum, but also by the interaction between institutional systems and community environments. Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic education discourse by integrating the concepts of *tarbiyah* (holistic development), *ta'dib* (ethical formation), and community-based learning theory. This integration shifts the understanding of Islamic education from a curriculum-bound system to a broader ethical ecosystem in which teachers, institutions, and communities jointly shape moral learning. The main conceptual contribution of this study is the formulation of a Community-Based Islamic Education Model that emphasizes three interconnected dimensions: community-centered learning environments,



experiential and participatory pedagogy, and teacher moral-professional identity rooted in trust, spirituality, and social responsibility.

Practically, the findings suggest several important implications for Islamic education in Indonesia. First, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) should incorporate stronger community-based learning approaches to extend moral education beyond classroom boundaries. Second, teacher professional development should move beyond administrative certification toward continuous ethical and spiritual formation that strengthens moral agency. Third, collaboration between schools, families, and religious communities should be systematically strengthened to bridge the gap between formal curriculum implementation and lived religious practice. For future research, empirical studies involving field observations, teacher interviews, and student perspectives are recommended to further validate and refine the proposed model. Comparative studies across other Muslim minority and majority contexts would also enhance the generalizability of findings and enrich global discourse on Islamic education. In conclusion, this study demonstrates that effective Islamic education requires a balanced integration of formal institutional structures and community-based moral ecosystems, positioning teachers as both professional educators and ethical agents within a broader social learning environment.

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