

The Sociology Of Islamic Education In Shaping Learners' Social Behavior: A Theoretical Perspective Of Peter L. Berger

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ABSTRACT

The moral degradation and declining social empathy among students in the disruption era require Islamic educational institutions to move beyond their traditional role as centers of doctrinal knowledge transmission and function as effective agents of socialization. This study examines the role of the sociology of Islamic education in shaping students' social behavior through the perspective of Peter L. Berger's social construction of reality theory. Using a qualitative approach with a library research design, data were collected from reputable books and scholarly journals. Data validity was ensured through source and theory triangulation, while analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques involving data reduction, concept classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the formation of Islamic social behavior is a continuous dialectical process encompassing three stages. First, externalization occurs when educators articulate religious values through exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*). Second, objectivation involves institutionalizing these values within school culture, regulations, and the hidden curriculum. Third, internalization refers to students' absorption of these objective realities into their subjective consciousness, resulting in moral habituation. The study concludes that students' social behavior is shaped through institutional sociological processes that integrate these three dialectical stages.

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INTRODUCTION

Education in the contemporary era confronts not only the relentless wave of massive technological disruption but also the increasingly alarming vortex of learners' social behavior degradation. The landscape of modernity, characterized by digital hegemony and hyper-connectivity, paradoxically engenders acute social fragmentation, wherein the currents of individualism, pragmatism, and a crisis of empathy are increasingly amplified within educational spaces. Empirical realities on the ground demonstrate a concerning series of social pathology phenomena; ranging from the escalation of cyberbullying cases among students, destructive inter-school brawls, verbal and physical violence against educators that frequently go viral on social media, to learners' apathetic attitudes toward the suffering of their surrounding environment (Setiawan & Rahmat, 2023). This litany of real-world problems serves as an undeniable indicator that the current younger generation is experiencing an uprootedness (alienation) from noble communal values, religious ethics, and social etiquette (*adab*).

This socio-cultural landscape shift places educational institutions in a highly vulnerable position, particularly when the existing system is reductively utilized merely as a space for cognitive knowledge transfer. Hitherto, many madrasahs and Islamic schools have been trapped in an orientation towards fulfilling academic targets and standardized quantitative grades, while the formation of character and civilized social interaction is marginalized. The failure of educational institutions to decipher and mitigate this social phenomenon results in the emergence of a generation that may be intellectually adept but is socially stunted and devoid of ethics (Fauzi, 2024). The fact that religious subjects frequently halt as merely dogmatic memorization in the classroom without ever being practiced as a solution to daily moral crises underscores the necessity for a fundamental educational reorientation. Education must return to its original paradigm, perceiving learners not merely as monads (isolated individuals) but as integral components of a social entity continuously engaged in a dialectic with their environment.

In responding to this crisis of decadence and systemic failure, the sociology of Islamic education emerges as a crucial conceptual offering. This approach views educational institutions not merely as instruments for dogma transmission or the rote memorization of sacred texts, but as primary socializing agents that actively structure the learners' social reality (Suryana & Majid, 2021). The sociology of Islamic education operates by translating theological-cultural teachings into a practical sociological order. Thus, religion is no longer left exclusively residing in the private sphere or merely serving as answers on an examination paper, but is propelled to manifest as norms, habitus, and functional guidelines for social behavior in the public domain (Hidayatullah, 2022). Through this lens, Islamic educational institutions bear the significant mandate of executing social engineering, namely creating an ecosystem that coerces and facilitates learners to absorb, imitate, and

reproduce prophetic behaviors amidst the disruptive challenges of the times.

Although the discourse on character education continues to resonate nationally, the most pressing academic and practical challenge today is the scarcity of precise frameworks to elucidate "how" the transformation process from abstract religious values into deeply rooted social behavior genuinely occurs. To dissect the anatomy of this issue, the theory of the social construction of reality by Peter L. Berger serves as a highly relevant, acute, and comprehensive analytical tool. In his monumental sociological work, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Berger & Luckmann, 1991), a continuous tripartite dialectical mechanism is proposed: externalization, objectivation, and internalization. This theory is anchored in the premise that society is a human product, yet paradoxically, humans are also a product of society. In educational praxis, this dialectical process is highly applicable for investigating how Islamic culture, role modeling, and regulations (objectivation) are continuously created by educators (externalization), to be subsequently absorbed into the subjective consciousness of learners until they meld into their identity and moral defense against deviant behaviors (Anwar & Mustofa, 2025).

This research is driven by two fundamental urgencies: theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this study seeks to fill the research gap regarding the historically imbalanced discourse on the formation of learners' social behavior. Previous studies have frequently been dominated by psychological approaches that partially focus on individual cognitive-emotional aspects, or they remain trapped in theological-normative approaches that reduce religious values to mere textual doctrines without observing the context of their social relations and clashes (Mubarak, 2025). Integrative studies dissecting how these doctrines are sociologically constructed, institutionalized, and internalized into a communal reality to combat social pathologies in madrasahs remain exceptionally minimal. Therefore, this study based on Peter L. Berger's constructivism is absolutely essential to enrich the academic repertoire (Zainuddin & Rahmawati, 2024). Practically, this research is urgently needed to present a philosophical-sociological guideline and framework for educators, school principals, and policymakers. The objective is to ensure they no longer respond to juvenile delinquency in a reactive-punitive manner, but rather become capable of systematically and preventively executing "school environment engineering" (institutional objectivation) (Kurniawan, 2026).

Based on the background of alarming social phenomena, the literature void, and the comprehensively elaborated research urgencies, the formulation of the problem in this library research is focused on: How does the sociology of Islamic education play a role in shaping learners' social behavior when analyzed through Peter L. Berger's theory of the social construction of reality? Specifically, this study intends to prove and address how the stages of value externalization, educational environment objectivation, and character internalization dialectically interact in overcoming learners' moral crises. This is aimed at affirming that noble Islamic social behavior is not an innate entity

emerging from a vacuum, but rather the masterpiece of institutionally structured sociological engineering within Islamic educational institutions (Rahman & Hasanah, 2025).

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach with a library research design. The selection of this design is based on the primary objective of the study, namely to explore, synthesize, and construct a theoretical understanding regarding the dynamics of shaping learners' social behavior through the lens of the sociology of Islamic education (Zainuddin & Rahmawati, 2022). Library research in this context is not merely a compilation of reading materials, but rather a systematic investigative process to deconstruct various literature to find an applicable intersection between social construction theory and the praxis of religious education in the contemporary era (Suryana, 2024).

The data sources in this study are classified into two categories: primary and secondary data. Primary data are sourced from the seminal literature by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, specifically *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (1991), as well as authoritative texts that serve as fundamental references in the discipline of Islamic education (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Meanwhile, secondary data are obtained from various reputable scientific journal articles, conference proceedings, and reference books published within the last ten years (2016–2026), in order to guarantee relevance, validity, and novelty within the current context of educational sociology (Hidayatullah & Anwar, 2025).

The data collection technique is conducted through digital documentation methods by navigating academic databases, subsequently followed by thematic categorization. The collected literature is reduced and classified into specific themes that directly intersect with the focus of the problem, such as learners' social interactions, madrasah ecosystems, and the inculcation of moral values (Fauzi, 2024). This categorization aims to filter information that specifically narrates the phenomenon of learners' moral crises while simultaneously discovering mitigation strategies through structured sociological engineering (Kurniawan & Majid, 2026).

The final stage is data analysis, which is carried out using the content analysis method based on the dialectical framework of Peter L. Berger's social constructivism. This analysis is divided into three continuous logical stages: (1) Externalization Analysis, focused on examining how educators and policymakers articulate the values of Islamic teachings into concrete activities in schools; (2) Objectivation Analysis, utilized to dissect how these values become institutionalized and structured into culture, curricula, and binding regulations within the educational environment; and (3) Internalization Analysis, directed at observing how this institutional culture is absorbed into the subjective consciousness of learners until it settles and manifests into permanent social behavior (Rahman & Hasanah, 2025).

Data Validity and Content Analysis Flow

To ensure the sharpness and depth of the study, the process of meaning extraction in this research adheres to qualitative data validity standards through source triangulation and theoretical triangulation mechanisms. Source triangulation is executed by conducting repeated readings and constant comparisons across reputable journal literature and textbooks, while theoretical triangulation integrates constructivist sociology with the philosophy of Islamic tarbiyah (Moleong, 2018). All validated data are then analyzed using content analysis tools adapting the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994). This stage commences with data reduction, namely filtering literature that specifically discusses learners' social pathologies and the concepts of Islamic education, subsequently followed by the classification of concepts into Peter L. Berger's three dialectical frameworks. The subsequent stage is an in-depth interpretation of the relations between these concepts, which culminates in drawing conclusions regarding the mechanisms of shaping learners' social behavior holistically (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Externalization Stage: Articulation of Values and Educators' Role Modeling as Initial Reality

Based on the results of concept reduction and classification across various literature, the first stage that initiates the construction of learners' social behavior is externalization. In Berger's ontological and sociological view, externalization is the continuous outpouring of human beings into the world, both physically and mentally, because humans cannot survive in a vacuum without expressing themselves (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). In the spectrum of the sociology of Islamic education, literature interpretation indicates that externalization is a crucial phase where educators, madrasah principals, and policymakers translate normative theological texts and doctrines (the Qur'an and Hadith) into living, practical conceptions of adab (etiquette) and social behavior. At this stage, religious texts are actualized into concrete actions.

Educators act as the primary agents (sociological actors) who construct the initial reality through comprehensive role modeling (*uswah hasanah*). They do not merely deliver moral lectures at the front of the classroom; rather, they consciously, intentionally, and continuously articulate the values of empathy, tolerance, discipline, and communication ethics to the learners through everyday gestures (Hasanah, 2024). Amidst the era of digital disruption, where figures of moral authority fiercely compete with virtual figures (influencers), the externalization by educators must appear more dominant, authentic, and persuasive. This active externalization process philosophically rejects the classical behaviorist assumption that considers a child merely a passive blank slate (*tabula rasa*). Conversely, it positions education as an active and dialogical effort by educators to awaken, stimulate, and link critical reasoning and etiquette, which are inherently aligned with the learners' social *fitrah* (innate disposition) (Mubarak, 2025).

The Objectivation Stage: Institutionalization of the Ecosystem, Coercive Power, and School Culture

The classified data subsequently indicate a firm sociological premise: the ideal values externalized by educators—no matter how excellent—will not endure and will simply evaporate if they do not undergo objectivation. Objectivation is the crystallization process by which these externalized products manifest into an independent, institutionalized objective reality, appearing separate from their creators, to the point that it reciprocally controls the individuals within it (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). The results of the content analysis reveal that within Islamic educational institutions, objectivation tangibly manifests in the form of institutionalizing school culture, designing the hidden curriculum, enforcing disciplinary rules, and establishing repetitive daily traditions such as the habituation of the Dhuha and congregational prayers, weekly charity (infaq) movements, and the implementation of strict anti-bullying regulations (Irawan & Kusuma, 2022).

This spatially and regulatively structured ecosystem functions as a "social fact" possessing a coercive power to regulate, restrict, and direct interactions among learners. In this phase, the objectivity of the madrasah creates a sociological boundary between justified and deviant actions. Furthermore, the robust and steady objectivation of the madrasah ecosystem acts as a protective shield or counter-hegemony against the negative impacts of digital capitalism and permissive lifestyles, which frequently alienate learners from the empathetic social reality of the real world (Syamsuddin, 2025). The physical environment (such as the centrality of the mosque's layout in the school) and the social environment (such as sanctions for moral violators) merge into a unified objectivation that directs learners toward a single structured value system.

The Internalization Stage: Absorption of Objective Reality into Personality Structure

The pinnacle and most decisive stage of this dialectical analysis is internalization, namely the process of reabsorbing objective reality into individual subjective consciousness (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Data interpretation from various literature sources indicates that the objectivation of the madrasah environment, which is continuously experienced, felt, and practiced by learners, will ultimately be psychologically absorbed and identified as their own. School rules that initially felt coercive, burdensome, or merely formal (objective/heteronomous compliance) gradually transform into autonomous moral consciousness (subjective).

It is during this critical phase that true social behavior is comprehensively formed. Learners no longer perform good deeds or avoid violations out of fear of disciplinary sanctions, surveillance cameras, or teachers' reprimands, but rather because these Islamic values have absolutely settled into their personality structure, self-identity, and daily habituations regardless of their whereabouts (Rahman, 2021). The consistency of interpretations across sources affirms that the

phenomenon of student pathology and the failure of educational institutions to prevent deviant behavior – such as students who are pious at school but violent outside – frequently stem from flaws in this internalization process. This occurs when religious values are allowed to halt merely as cognitive memorization for examination purposes, without ever genuinely touching and transforming the learners' deepest subjective consciousness (Suryana & Majid, 2024).

Cross-Interpretation and Drawing Integrative Sociological Conclusions

As a holistic conclusion drawn from the theoretical triangulation between Peter L. Berger's constructivist sociology and the epistemology of tarbiyah (Islamic education), a fundamental understanding emerges that the shaping of learners' social behavior is neither a linear, mechanical process nor a one-way transfer of knowledge. The traditional assumption that moral lectures will automatically culminate in character improvement is definitively refuted by this sociological reality. The process of character formation is intrinsically an unbroken, dynamic, and interdependent dialectical cycle across its stages. If an educational institution exclusively emphasizes the externalization process – limited to delivering moral advice, theological doctrines, or theoretical transfers within the classroom – without the willingness to construct a binding framework of objectivation, the process is guaranteed to be flawed. The absence of a supportive madrasah system, facilities that align with religious values, and strict, consistent regulations causes the taught values to simply evaporate in the minds of the learners. This imbalanced condition renders the internalization of a solid social character impossible to achieve. Instead of fostering moral consciousness, this failure of dialectical integration will ultimately only engender hypocritical behavior, transactional pseudo-obedience in the presence of teachers, or contradictory attitudes within learners when they are outside the surveillance of school authorities (Zainuddin & Rahmawati, 2024).

Conversely, when rigorous coherence and synchronization occur among these three stages, an educational ecosystem with extraordinary transformative power is established. The authentic role modeling of educators (externalization), fully supported by the stability of the school system, infrastructure, and culture (objectivation), will create highly ideal sociological conditions for the learners' psychological readiness to accept and absorb values (internalization). Within this coherent ecosystem, the educational institution transforms into a sociological incubator where religious values are no longer perceived as external burdens or dogmatic coercions, but rather as an essential compass navigating their daily social interactions. Institutionalized regulations and religious culture structurally guide learners from a phase of heteronomous compliance (driven by the fear of punishment or the expectation of praise) toward a phase of moral autonomy (intrinsic consciousness from within). This synchronization demonstrates that sociological environmental engineering in madrasahs is capable of stemming the tides of digital capitalism and pragmatism that continuously erode the empathetic sensitivity of the younger generation in the contemporary era.

Furthermore, the success of this dialectical process does not halt at the individual in isolation; rather, it will generate a remarkable cycle of sustainability for the preservation of school culture. Learners who have achieved a mature stage of internalization will not merely remain passive recipients, but they will transform into new sociological agents in their respective environments. They will automatically execute derivative externalization processes by transmitting these noble values, etiquette (*adab*), and discipline to their peers, juniors, and the broader community outside the school, thereby creating a sustainable and regenerative cultural legacy. It is precisely through this systematic, measurable, and continuous social engineering that Islamic educational institutions can comprehensively mitigate contemporary moral crises. Ultimately, Islamic education that integrates the analytical tool of constructivist sociology does not merely discharge curricular obligations, but tangibly produces a consummate learner profile: a generation that is not only cognitively and intellectually superior but also civilized, embodies a prophetic character, and demonstrates profound social sensitivity amidst the intricate complexities of modern society (Fauzi & Setiawan, 2026).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the content analysis of the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that the sociology of Islamic education plays a crucial role in shaping learners' social behavior through a continuous cycle of institutional engineering. Addressing the formulation of the research problem, the formation of Islamic character is not a linear and passive transfer process of normative doctrines, but rather the product of the dialectic of the social construction of reality (Peter L. Berger), which operates through three structured stages within the school environment:

1. Externalization (The Creation of Reality): Educators position themselves as the primary agents who articulate Islamic theological texts into social practices through role modeling (*uswah hasanah*) and continuous direct interaction.
2. Objectivation (The Institutionalization of Reality): These exemplary values are subsequently constructed institutionally into an objective reality that binds the entire academic community, manifesting in the form of school culture, disciplinary rules, daily habituations, and the hidden curriculum.
3. Internalization (The Absorption of Reality): The institutionalized social ecosystem (objective) is then psychologically absorbed and identified by learners into their subjective consciousness. Rules that initially originated from the outside gradually settle into internal moral habituation, thereby giving birth to permanent Islamic social behavior.

In summary, learners' social behavior does not emerge from a vacuum (*tabula rasa*), but is rather the product of the sociological order shaped by the *madrasah*. The failure to mitigate the contemporary moral crisis among students

generally occurs due to the severance of this dialectical chain—namely, when religious teachings merely halt as classroom theories (pseudo-externalization) without ever being genuinely institutionalized into a living school culture (objectivation), thus failing to be internalized into the hearts and minds of the learners.

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