



Implementation of the Socratic Question Learning Model in Developing Critical Thinking Skills of Grade XI Students in Fiqh Learning at Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin South Lampung

Faturrahman¹, Etika Pujianti², Nur Widiastuti³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam An Nur Lampung, Indonesia

✉ ftrrhmn0301@gmail.com *

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of the Socratic Question Learning Model in developing critical thinking skills of grade XI students in Fiqh learning at Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin, and to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, while data validity is obtained through triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the Socratic Question Learning Model is able to improve students' critical thinking skills, which is characterized by increased ability to analyze Fiqh law, compile logical arguments, contextualize Islamic law with contemporary issues, and internalize tabayyun attitudes and intellectual humility. The main supporting factors include Islamic boarding school culture (bahtsul masail), managerial policy support, and the availability of learning resources, while inhibiting factors include time constraints, differences in students' verbal abilities, and the influence of digital instant culture. This study concludes that the Socratic Question Learning Model is effective for use as a Fiqh learning strategy to develop students' critical thinking skills comprehensively and sustainably.

Keywords: Socratic Questions, Critical Thinking, Fiqh Learning, Madrasah Aliyah.

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological developments and globalization have brought significant changes to the world of education, including the learning process in madrasahs. Increasingly easy access to information through various digital platforms, on the one hand, provides ample opportunities for students to acquire knowledge, but on the other hand, poses serious challenges, particularly in maintaining and developing critical thinking skills. Students tend to receive information instantly without conducting in-depth analysis, evaluation, and reflection on its accuracy and relevance. This condition has resulted in a decline in

critical thinking skills, even though these skills are essential competencies students need to face the complexities of life's problems in the modern era (Robbani, 2025).

Critical thinking skills are crucial in learning Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), as this subject not only requires mastery of Islamic concepts and laws, but also the ability to analyze arguments, understand differences of opinion among scholars, and relate Islamic jurisprudence to the context of everyday life. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of using reason, as stated by Allah SWT in Surah Al-Ankabut, verse 43, which states that only those who possess knowledge can understand Allah's parables. This verse demonstrates that in-depth understanding requires an active and critical thinking process (Irfan et al., 2025). Therefore, students need to be trained not to simply passively receive knowledge, but to be able to examine, question, and reflect on Fiqh material rationally and contextually.

The results of the researcher's initial observations at the Hidayatul Mubtadiin Islamic Senior High School in Sidoharjo Village, Jati Agung District, South Lampung Regency, showed that the teaching of Fiqh in grade XI was still dominated by the lecture method, so that the learning process tended to be teacher-centered. This condition resulted in low active participation of students in class discussions, minimal courage to express opinions, and weak critical thinking skills in understanding and analyzing the material. Although the school had tried to implement the Socratic Questioning method, its implementation was not structured and had not been consistently integrated into each learning session. Educators still experienced difficulties in formulating open ended questions that could stimulate in-depth thinking and provide adequate space for reflection for students.

The Socratic Questioning Method is a learning approach rooted in the Socratic philosophical tradition, emphasizing dialogue, open-ended questions, and the search for meaning through critical thinking. This method encourages students to express opinions, test arguments, and respect the views of others in a focused discussion environment. In its implementation, the Socratic Questioning Method actively engages students, both as participants in the dialogue and as observers who reflect on the discussion process. Through the stages of asking, listening, responding, and reflecting, students are trained to develop systematic analytical, synthesizing, and evaluating skills. In the context of Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) learning, this method is relevant for fostering a deep understanding of Islamic legal concepts and their application in real life.

Various studies have shown that dialogic discussion methods and open-ended questions have a positive influence on students' critical thinking skills. (Aribah et al., 2025) found that the Socratic Questioning method improves students' analytical skills, but was only applied to general subjects. (Rohmawati, 2025) proves the effectiveness of reflective discussions in Islamic Religious Education learning, but has not focused on Fiqh. (Humam & Hanif, 2025) showed increased learning participation through open ended questions, but did not measure specific aspects of critical thinking. (Wilda et al., 2024) studying discussion based Fiqh learning, but not yet using the Socratic approach. (Kusuma et al., 2023) highlights the role of teachers in stimulating critical thinking, without a structured learning model. (Zumrotus, 2022) researching the Socratic method in public schools, not in madrasas.

Based on the eight previous studies, several research gaps can be identified: first, most studies have not specifically examined the implementation of the Socratic Questioning method in Islamic Jurisprudence learning in Islamic Senior High Schools (Madrasah Aliyah). Second, previous studies tend to emphasize learning outcomes or participation, but have not explored the process of developing critical thinking skills in depth and systematically. Third, there are not many studies that examine the application of the Socratic Questioning method in the context of Islamic schools based on Islamic values and the local needs of students. Fourth, the implementation of the Socratic method is often partial and has not been studied within a structured and sustainable learning framework.

The novelty of this research lies in the systematic and structured assessment of the implementation of the Socratic Questioning learning method in 11th-grade Islamic Fiqh learning at Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic Senior High School). This study not only measures outcomes but also examines the learning process, the quality of educator questions, student engagement, and critical reflections that emerge during the learning process. Compared to five previous studies, this study integrates the Socratic approach with the characteristics of Islamic Fiqh learning and the madrasah context, resulting in a more contextual, applicable, and relevant implementation model for Islamic religious education.

Based on the description, the purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the implementation of the Socratic Question learning model in Fiqh learning for grade XI at Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin, as well as to examine its role in developing students' critical thinking skills. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic Religious Education learning methods and practical contributions for educators in designing Fiqh learning that is more participatory, reflective, and oriented towards strengthening students' critical thinking skills.

METHOD

The approach used is a qualitative approach with the type of field research, as explained by (Creswell & Creswell, 2023), which aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of implementing the Socratic Question learning model in developing students' critical thinking skills in Fiqh learning. This research was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin located in Sidoharjo Village, Jati Agung District, South Lampung Regency. The selection of the research location was based on academic and practical considerations as stated by (Rukin, 2019) that the research location is where researchers go directly into the field to obtain relevant, factual, and scientifically accountable data. MA Hidayatul Mubtadiin was chosen because it has the characteristics of a religious-based educational institution that is relevant to the research focus, especially Fiqh learning, and has tried to implement Socratic question-based learning methods, although not yet optimal and structured. In addition, this madrasah has B accreditation which indicates that it meets educational quality standards, and is supported by high student enthusiasm in the learning process. This research was conducted from November 2025 until completion, through several stages, namely the preparation stage, the implementation stage, and the data processing and analysis stage.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct observation and in-depth interviews with purposively selected informants, namely the vice principal of the madrasah for curriculum, the Fiqh teacher, and grade XI students directly involved in the implementation of the Socratic Questioning method. This primary data was used to explore the experiences, views, and understanding of informants regarding the implementation of the Socratic Questioning learning method in improving students' critical thinking skills. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from various supporting documents, such as the madrasah profile, vision and mission, institutional history, teacher and student data, facilities and infrastructure, Fiqh learning tools (teaching modules or RPP), teaching and learning activity records, and learning evaluation results. Data collection techniques used included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted in stages, starting from pre-observation to intensive observation during the learning process to directly observe the implementation of the Socratic Questioning method. Interviews were conducted in a structured manner to obtain in-depth data regarding the planning, implementation, and impact of the learning method, while documentation was used to strengthen and complement the data from observations and interviews.

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques, including source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from various informants, such as teachers, students, and madrasah management. Technical triangulation was conducted by checking the suitability of data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, while time triangulation was conducted by collecting data at different times to ensure consistency of information. Data analysis in this study refers to the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by sorting and focusing data relevant to the research focus, data presentation was arranged in the form of descriptive narratives to facilitate understanding of the phenomena being studied, and conclusions were drawn gradually by considering valid and consistent evidence. This analysis process took place interactively and continuously from data collection until the research was declared saturated, resulting in credible and scientifically accountable findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Implementation of the Socratic Question Learning Model in Developing Students' Critical Thinking Skills

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the Socratic Questioning learning model in Fiqh learning in grade XI of Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin has been carried out in stages and in a planned manner, both at the level of madrasah policy and classroom learning practices. The implementation of this model is driven by the Independent Curriculum policy which emphasizes strengthening critical thinking competencies as part of 21st-

century skills. Based on the results of observations and interviews with the Deputy Head of Curriculum, Fiqh teachers, and other subject teachers, it is apparent that the madrasah consciously encourages teachers to reduce the one-way lecture method and replace it with reflective dialogue through probing questions. This approach is aimed at ensuring that students not only understand Fiqh law textually, but also are able to reason about its basis, objectives, and relevance in contemporary life.

At the technical level of learning, Fiqh teachers apply the Socratic model through systematic questioning techniques, starting with clarifying questions, asking assumptions, and then reflective questions that require cause-and-effect reasoning. Teachers do not immediately provide right or wrong answers, but instead encourage students to explain their logic. This pattern creates a dialogic classroom atmosphere and positions students as active subjects of learning. Observations show that students are trained to express opinions based on evidence, rather than simply memorizing legal documents. This process fosters intellectual awareness that Fiqh is not simply a collection of laws, but rather the result of *ijtihad* with a methodological basis.

The impact of implementing the Socratic model is not only felt in Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) but also affects other subjects, particularly *Aqidah Akhlak* (Islamic creed). *Aqidah Akhlak* teachers observed an improvement in the quality of classroom discussions, with students becoming more confident in expressing their opinions, using cause-and-effect logic, and not easily accepting information without verification. This finding indicates a transfer of critical thinking skills that transcends subject boundaries. This indicates that habituating critical dialogue in a single subject can foster a more reflective and rational cross-disciplinary mindset.

From the students' perspective, the Socratic Questioning learning model significantly changed their learning habits. Students reported no longer simply memorizing halal and haram laws, but were encouraged to explore the reasons, evidence, and background behind the establishment of these laws. Some students even began independent preparation by reading scriptures or other sources before class began to better defend their arguments when challenged by teacher questions. This demonstrates a paradigm shift from rote learning to deep learning, which emphasizes in-depth understanding.

However, the research also found that the implementation of the Socratic model faced several obstacles, primarily related to time constraints and differences in thinking skills among students. The in-depth dialogue process often requires more time than conventional methods, requiring teachers to skillfully manage discussions to ensure learning objectives are achieved. Furthermore, not all students have the same level of courage and literacy skills, requiring teachers to differentiate questions to ensure all students are actively involved. Nevertheless, the implementation of the Socratic Questioning model at MA Hidayatul Mubtadiin has generally proven effective in developing students' critical thinking skills.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Implementing the Socratic Questioning Learning Model in Developing Students' Critical Thinking Skills

The research results show that the successful implementation of the Socratic Questioning learning model at MA Hidayatul Mubtadiin is supported by various interrelated internal and external factors. One of the main supporting factors is the synchronization between the pesantren culture and the madrasah learning system. The majority of students are santri (Islamic boarding school students) who are accustomed to the traditions of deliberation and discussion within the pesantren environment. This habit of discussion and argumentation serves as social capital that strongly supports the implementation of the Socratic model in formal classes, so that students are familiar with critical dialogue.

Another supporting factor is the madrasa's democratic climate and openness to learning innovation. Managerial support from the curriculum is reflected in the provision of adequate learning resources, such as Islamic jurisprudence books and supporting literature in the library. Furthermore, the teachers' humanistic and non-judgmental communication style creates a psychologically safe classroom environment. Students feel comfortable expressing their opinions without fear of being criticized, allowing the courage to think and speak naturally.

In addition to supporting factors, this study also identified several inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Socratic Questioning model. The main obstacle lies in the limited allocation of learning time. Socratic dialogue requires a considerable amount of time to explore students' thinking in depth, while curriculum demands that teachers complete material within a certain timeframe. This often leads to discussions stalling before reaching a complete conclusion, thus preventing students' critical thinking potential from being fully explored. Another obstacle is the differences in students' thinking abilities and language skills. Some students may have understood the material but have difficulty expressing their logical thinking systematically and verbally. This limited articulation ability makes some students passive in discussions, despite having good intellectual potential. Furthermore, the influence of instant culture due to the use of gadgets and social media also weakens students' ability to think deeply.

Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that the successful implementation of the Socratic Questioning model depends heavily on the balance between systemic support and teachers' ability to manage heterogeneous classes. Without flexible time management, question differentiation strategies, and literacy reinforcement, this model risks failing to perform optimally. Therefore, a collective commitment from all elements of the madrasah is needed to overcome these obstacles so that the development of critical thinking skills can be felt equally by all students.

Application of Critical Thinking and Internalization of Tabayyun Attitude in Students' Lives

The research results show that the implementation of the Socratic Questioning model not only impacts classroom learning activities but also influences students' attitudes and mindsets in their daily lives. One of the most significant impacts is the development of tabayyun (religious inquiry), the habit of verifying information before accepting it as truth. Students become accustomed to questioning legal bases, arguments, and sources of information, as they are trained through reflective questions in Fiqh classes.

The internalization of this tabayyun attitude is evident in how students respond to religious information on social media. Students no longer accept information at face value, but instead engage in critical reflection by questioning the validity of the evidence and its contextual relevance. This pattern demonstrates that the disciplined questioning technique in the Socratic model has transformed into an ingrained habit of thinking. Thus, Fiqh learning not only transfers knowledge but also fosters critical and responsible intellectual character.

Furthermore, students demonstrated increasingly mature inferential skills in addressing contemporary issues. They were able to connect classical Islamic jurisprudence principles to modern realities, such as issues of zakat (alms), online buying and selling, and social ethics. This ability demonstrates that students have achieved higher-order thinking skills, where they not only understand texts but also contextualize them rationally and argumentatively.

Observations also show an increase in intellectual maturity in addressing differences of opinion (*ikhtilaf*). Through Socratic dialogue, students understand that differences in jurisprudence (Fiqh) have their own basis and logic. This understanding fosters a knowledge-based attitude of tolerance (intellectual humility), where students are less prone to condemning others' opinions and are more open to diverse perspectives. This attitude is crucial for developing a moderate and rational Muslim personality.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the Socratic Questioning learning model at MA Hidayatul Mubtadiin successfully produces students who are not only academically competent but also intellectually and spiritually mature. Critical thinking skills internalized through tabayyun (reconciliation), argumentation skills, and tolerance of differences are evidence that Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) learning can function as a vehicle for character development and critical reasoning relevant to the challenges of the times.

Discussion

This discussion confirms that the implementation of the Socratic Questioning Learning Model in Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) learning at MA Hidayatul Mubtadiin represents a concrete transformation of the Islamic religious learning paradigm, from a textual-dogmatic approach to a dialogical-critical approach. The research findings indicate that the implementation of this model does not stand alone but is firmly rooted in the Independent Curriculum policy, which emphasizes the 4C competencies, particularly critical thinking. This aligns with the perspective of (Sastradinata, 2023) which asserts that critical thinking can

only develop through questions that challenge assumptions and encourage in-depth reflection. The shift in the role of the Fiqh teacher from "answer provider" to dialogue facilitator demonstrates an epistemological shift from a behaviorist to a constructivist paradigm. This finding reinforces the findings of the study (Asror, 2022) which states that inquiry and dialogue-based models are able to improve the quality of students' reasoning in Islamic Religious Education subjects.

The preparatory learning phase, which requires independent exploration of Islamic legal texts and references, has proven to be an important foundation for developing students' critical thinking. Researchers found that mandatory reading prior to discussions created positive intellectual pressure that encouraged responsibility for independent learning. Theoretically, this practice aligns with the concept of self-regulated learning proposed by the researchers. (Kristiyani, 2020), where students self-regulate their learning process through planning, monitoring, and evaluation. In the context of the Socratic Model, this preparation stage is identical to the initial elenchus, which is the process of making students aware of the limitations of their initial knowledge. This finding aligns with research. (Novianti et al., 2023) which emphasizes that Socratic dialogue is only effective if students have an adequate literacy base to be tested rationally.

The dynamics of discussions through Socratic Circles demonstrate how students' contextual reasoning has developed significantly. Findings indicate that students are not only able to cite arguments but also draw inferences and evaluate contemporary problems, such as online buying and selling and modern zakat. This demonstrates the achievement of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) as classified by (Fuadi et al., 2025). The Socratic model in this study functions as an epistemological bridge between classical texts and social reality, as emphasized by (Rahman, 2019) about the importance of the double movement in understanding Islamic law. Thus, Fiqh is no longer understood as a static legal product, but rather as a living system of reasoning that adapts to changing times.

In terms of psychological-intellectual impact, this study found an increase in independent thinking and intellectual humility. Students became more open to differences of opinion (*ikhtilaf*) and no longer viewed Islamic law in a black-and-white manner. This finding aligns with the ultimate goal of *krit_triangleal* education according to (Tasmara, 2001), namely, developing independent and intellectually responsible thinkers. From an Islamic educational perspective, these findings are relevant to the principle of *tabayyun* (verification) as stated in Surah Al-Isra', verse 36, which emphasizes the obligation to verify knowledge. This research reinforces these findings. (Nurhasanah, 2021) which states that dialogic learning in Islamic Education is able to suppress narrow fanaticism and increase tolerance based on scientific arguments.

The discussion of supporting factors shows that the synergy of Islamic boarding school culture, particularly the tradition of *bahtsul masail*, provides a very strong dialectical foundation. The Islamic boarding school environment has accustomed students to arguing, accepting criticism, and seeking rational arguments. Theoretically, this condition creates psychological safety, which, according to (Vygotsky & Cole, 2018) is crucial for cognitive development through social interaction. Support for literacy facilities and madrasah managerial policies further strengthen the critical thinking ecosystem. This finding is consistent with

research (Mauzifa et al., 2025) which emphasizes that the success of the critical learning model is largely determined by the alignment between institutional culture, school policies, and teacher competencies.

However, this study also confirmed the existence of significant inhibiting factors, particularly time constraints, students' verbal abilities, the digital instant culture, and the intellectual gap in heterogeneous classes. Time constraints reinforce Al-Khateeb's criticism that the Socratic model is indeed demanding in terms of duration and is less compatible with a dense curriculum structure. Students' communication barriers demonstrate that critical thinking cannot be separated from language and rhetorical skills, as emphasized by (Annisa, 2025). Meanwhile, digital instant culture contradicts constructivist principles, which emphasize deep thinking processes. Therefore, researchers assert that the success of the Socratic Model requires scaffolding strategies, question differentiation, and adaptive classroom management to ensure inclusive and sustainable critical thinking development.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of the Socratic Question Learning Model with the context of Islamic boarding school culture-based Fiqh learning (*bahtsul masail*) within the Merdeka Curriculum framework. This research not only demonstrates the effectiveness of the Socratic model in improving critical thinking skills but also reveals how Socratic dialectics can shape attitudes of *tabayyun*, intellectual independence, and intellectual humility in students. Furthermore, this research offers a new perspective that Fiqh learning can be developed as a contextual, critical dialogue space, bridging classical Islamic legal texts with contemporary issues, thereby enriching the study of Islamic Religious Education learning which has tended to be oriented solely on memorization and the transmission of knowledge.

This study has several limitations that need to be considered in interpreting the results. First, the study was conducted at a single educational unit, namely Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin, with subjects limited to 11th-grade students. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to the context of other madrasas or schools with different characteristics. Second, this study used a descriptive qualitative approach, so that the measurement of critical thinking skills is based more on process observations, interviews, and analysis of student learning behavior, not supported by standardized quantitative instruments. Furthermore, limited learning time also hampers the optimization of in-depth Socratic dialogue, especially in the face of the dense target of the Fiqh curriculum that must be completed in one semester.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Socratic Question Learning Model in Fiqh learning in class XI of Madrasah Aliyah Hidayatul Mubtadiin has been proven to be able to significantly develop students' critical thinking skills, which is indicated by the increase in students' abilities in analyzing Islamic legal issues, constructing logical arguments, making inferences about contemporary issues, and internalizing the attitude of *tabayyun* in responding to religious information. This model encourages a change in the learning paradigm from one that was

initially centered on educators to dialogic and reflective learning, so that students are no longer passive and dogmatic, but active, independent, and intellectually responsible. However, this study also found several obstacles, such as limited learning time, differences in verbal and intellectual abilities between students, and the influence of instant culture due to easy access to digital information. Therefore, this study recommends that Fiqh educators optimize learning planning with more flexible time allocation, implement differentiated question strategies according to student abilities, and strengthen literacy and mentoring of students' scientific communication. In addition, the madrasah is advised to continue to support critical dialogue-based learning policies by providing adequate learning resources and ongoing teacher training, so that the Socratic Question Learning Model can be applied more systematically and sustainably in order to improve the quality of Fiqh learning and form critical, moderate, and moral students in the modern era.

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