

## Non-Formal Religious Education as Social Construction: Insights from Indonesian Islamic Traditions

Non-formal religious education plays a crucial role in shaping values, identity, and community cohesion in Muslim societies. This study examines the phenomenon through the lens of social construction theory, highlighting how Islamic traditions in Indonesia serve as educational spaces outside formal institutions. Using a phenomenological case study approach, the research focuses on the practices of Sima'an Al-Qur'an (collective Qur'anic recitation) and Dzikrul Ghofilin (dhikr gatherings) in Ponorogo, East Java. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using thematic coding aligned with Berger and Luckmann's concepts of externalization, objectivation, and internalization. The findings reveal that these traditions function as community-driven educational platforms. They transmit Qur'anic literacy and spiritual discipline, foster character values such as patience, humility, and generosity, and promote intergenerational learning. At the same time, the rituals reinforce collective identity and provide opportunities for civic engagement through interactions with government institutions. These processes illustrate how non-formal religious education operates as a form of social construction, producing and reproducing social realities that integrate religious, cultural, and civic dimensions. By situating Indonesian Islamic traditions within broader educational discourse, this study contributes to understanding how non-formal religious practices sustain social cohesion and align with global agendas of lifelong learning and community development.

**Primary author:** SYAIFUL MAHMUDIN, Afif (Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari Ponorogo)

**Presenter:** SYAIFUL MAHMUDIN, Afif (Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari Ponorogo)

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