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A Critical-Hermeneutic Analysis of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's Thought and Contributions in the Context of Contemporary Education

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ABSTRACT

Academic ethics crisis, social anomie in the digital age, and the commercialization of modern education necessitate a critical reading of Islamic educational heritage. This study aims to analyze deeply and critically the educational thought and contribution of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari through a Critical Hermeneutics framework. This approach fuses the historical horizon of the text (Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim), the sociological horizon of the author's era, and the contemporary educational horizon. Utilizing a qualitative library research method with Ricoeurian and Gadamerian hermeneutics (fusion of horizons), this study reveals three key findings: (1) Hasyim Asy'ari's educational concept relies on the transcendence of adab as an epistemological prerequisite for knowledge acquisition; (2) His historical contribution successfully modernized the boarding school (pesantren) structure through curriculum synthesis in the madrasa system and the integration of nationalism (hubbul wathan minal iman); (3) Critically, the doctrine of ta'dhim and the dominance of bayani-irfani epistemology pose a risk of academic paternalism if implemented dogmatically. This study recommends a re-contextualization of ta'dhim into academic integrity and dialogic mutual respect to restore educational humanism in the era of digital disruption.

Keywords
KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, Critical Hermeneutics, Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim, Contemporary Education, Academic Paternalism, Fusion of Horizons.

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INTRODUCTION

Twenty-first-century education is characterized by rapid advances in science, technology, and digital transformation. Digital technologies have expanded access to information, accelerated knowledge transfer, and created new opportunities for more flexible and inclusive learning. However, these developments have also generated complex ethical and philosophical challenges. The increasing prevalence of academic misconduct, cyberbullying,

declining ethical awareness, and the commercialization of education indicates that technological progress does not automatically lead to the development of humane and ethical educational practices. Education may increasingly be reduced to an instrumental mechanism for producing a competitive workforce, while its fundamental role in developing individuals with moral integrity, social responsibility, and humane values becomes marginalized (F. A. Sari dkk., 2025). This condition demonstrates the importance of revisiting educational philosophies that place human development, morality, and ethical responsibility at the center of the educational process.

Within the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, these challenges are particularly relevant because the intellectual tradition of Islamic education has historically emphasized not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the cultivation of adab (ethical conduct), morality, and responsibility. Islamic education therefore conceptualizes knowledge as inseparable from the moral formation of the learner. This perspective is also evident in the intellectual tradition of Indonesian pesantren, where education has traditionally combined religious knowledge, ethical formation, and social responsibility. The transformation of pesantren education in response to globalization further demonstrates the need to maintain its ethical and cultural foundations while adapting educational practices to contemporary developments (Triono dkk., 2022). Consequently, the intellectual heritage of Indonesian Muslim scholars provides an important resource for critically examining contemporary educational problems.

One of the most influential figures in the development of Islamic education in Indonesia is KH. Hasyim Asy'ari (1871–1947). As an Islamic scholar and founder of Nahdlatul Ulama, his intellectual legacy has played an important role in shaping Islamic educational thought in Indonesia. His educational ideas are particularly reflected in Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim, a work that discusses the ethical relationships between knowledge, teachers, and students. His educational philosophy emphasizes the purification of intention, respect for knowledge and teachers, ethical conduct in seeking knowledge, and the moral responsibilities of educators and learners. Biographical studies indicate that his intellectual formation was strongly connected to the Islamic scholarly tradition and the development of pesantren education in Indonesia (Amatullah dkk., 2021). His educational thought therefore cannot be separated from the historical and social context in which Indonesian Islamic education developed.

Recent scholarship has increasingly demonstrated the relevance of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought to contemporary Islamic education.

(Majiid & Hidayat, 2024), for example, examined the role of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought in the development of Islamic educational discourse in Indonesia and showed that his ideas remain significant in understanding the evolution of Islamic educational thought. Similarly, (Jamil dkk., 2025) emphasized the contribution of his educational ideas to the development of morally oriented generations, particularly through the cultivation of ethical and character-based education. These studies reinforce the argument that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational philosophy remains relevant beyond its historical context.

The ethical dimension of Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim has also received considerable scholarly attention. (Muhid, 2025), through a scoping review, highlighted the importance of character education within KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's work. (Najih dkk., 2025) further identified character values contained in Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim and examined their implications for contemporary Islamic education. Likewise, (Munir dkk., 2025) demonstrated the relevance of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's moral education to character formation in the context of Society 5.0. These studies suggest that his thought contains important ethical principles that can contribute to addressing contemporary educational challenges.

Recent studies have also expanded the discussion beyond individual character formation. (Adib & Mufidah, 2026), for instance, examined Islamic moderation in KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's Risalah Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah and highlighted its psychological values and implications for character education in contemporary Islamic education. (Ni'mah & Syihabuddin, 2026) similarly explored the relationship between Islamic education and the socio-cultural formation of Muslim communities through KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought. (Dariyah dkk., 2026) also discussed his educational ideas in relation to Islamic and social education. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's intellectual legacy extends beyond the teacher–student relationship and includes broader questions concerning morality, social life, moderation, and the role of education in shaping Muslim communities.

Nevertheless, most existing studies tend to approach KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought from a normative, descriptive, or applicative perspective. His ideas are frequently presented as a set of educational values that can be directly adopted in contemporary education, particularly in the areas of character education, moral education, and Islamic pedagogy (Muhid, 2025; Najih dkk., 2025; Jamil dkk., 2025). While such studies are important for demonstrating the continuing relevance of his thought, they provide relatively limited critical examination of the historical circumstances, ideological dimensions, and power

relations underlying the production and interpretation of his educational texts. In other words, the question is not only what KH. Hasyim Asy'ari said about education, but also why those ideas emerged in a particular historical context, what assumptions and social conditions shaped them, and how those ideas should be interpreted when transferred to substantially different contemporary circumstances.

This issue is particularly important because educational texts are not produced within socially neutral spaces. Educational thought is influenced by historical circumstances, intellectual traditions, social structures, and relations of authority. Therefore, interpreting Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim solely as a timeless normative text risks overlooking the historical conditions that shaped its formulation. A critical reading is required to distinguish between the fundamental ethical principles contained in the text and their historically situated expressions. Such an approach makes it possible to preserve the intellectual contribution of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari while simultaneously examining its limitations and possibilities for contemporary educational contexts.

For this reason, the present study employs a Critical Hermeneutics approach. Hermeneutics views interpretation as a dynamic process through which meaning is understood and reconstructed through interaction between the text, its historical context, and the horizon of the interpreter. In qualitative research, hermeneutical interpretation allows researchers to examine not only the explicit meaning of a text but also the processes through which meaning is produced and reproduced (Kholik, 2025). A critical hermeneutical perspective extends this process by questioning the historical assumptions, ideological dimensions, structures of authority, and power relations embedded within a text. The use of hermeneutics in Islamic educational studies has also demonstrated the potential of this approach to reinterpret classical and modern Islamic educational thought in relation to contemporary contexts (Muslih, 2024).

The application of Critical Hermeneutics in this study is therefore intended to move beyond a merely descriptive reconstruction of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational ideas. The analysis places Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim within its historical horizon while simultaneously bringing it into dialogue with contemporary educational problems. This approach makes it possible to examine which aspects of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought remain foundational, which require reinterpretation, and which may have limitations when applied to the conditions of twenty-first-century education. Such a dialectical process is particularly important in an era characterized by

digitalization, globalization, social transformation, and changing relationships between teachers, learners, and knowledge.

The state of the art therefore indicates an important research gap. Previous studies have established the relevance of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought to character education, moral education, Islamic moderation, Society 5.0, and contemporary Islamic education (Adib & Mufidah, 2026; Munir dkk., 2025; Najih dkk., 2025; Ni'mah & Syihabuddin, 2026). However, relatively little attention has been given to reconstructing his educational thought through a systematic Critical Hermeneutics framework that simultaneously considers historical context, textual meaning, ideological dimensions, structures of authority, and contemporary educational realities. The existing literature consequently leaves a conceptual space for examining not only the relevance of his ideas but also the process through which those ideas can be critically reinterpreted and reconstructed for contemporary education.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to reconstruct KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought through a Critical Hermeneutics perspective by integrating historical, textual, ideological, and contextual analysis. Rather than simply identifying educational values in Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim, this study critically examines the relationship between the original context of the text and contemporary educational challenges. This approach offers a different contribution from studies that primarily inventory or describe the moral and character values contained in KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's work. The study seeks to demonstrate how the concept of adab, the ethical relationship between teachers and learners, the purpose of knowledge, and the moral responsibility of education can be reconstructed without detaching these concepts from their historical origins.

The significance of this research is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of Islamic educational philosophy by introducing a critical interpretive perspective into the study of Indonesian Islamic educational thought. It also contributes to the broader discussion of how classical Islamic educational ideas can be interpreted in response to contemporary transformations rather than merely reproduced as normative doctrines. Practically, the findings may provide a conceptual foundation for developing educational practices that balance technological and intellectual advancement with ethical formation, character development, and human dignity. In this respect, the study positions KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's intellectual legacy not simply as a historical inheritance but as a source for critical dialogue concerning the future of education.

Based on this background, this study aims to reconstruct the educational thought and contribution of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari through a Critical Hermeneutics perspective and to examine its potential recontextualization in addressing contemporary educational challenges. Specifically, the study analyzes the historical context and textual structure of Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim, identifies its principal educational ideas and contributions, examines its ideological and critical dimensions, and formulates its contemporary relevance through a process of critical recontextualization. The study employs a qualitative library research design, drawing upon KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's works and relevant academic literature as its primary and supporting sources. The central research question is: How can the educational thought and contribution of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari be reconstructed through a Critical Hermeneutics perspective, and how can his educational ideas be recontextualized to address the challenges of contemporary education?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using library research (library research) to examine and reconstruct the educational thought of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari through a Critical Hermeneutics perspective. Library research was selected because the object of analysis was not human participants or experimental observations but written sources containing historical, philosophical, and educational ideas. The research involved systematically collecting, reading, comparing, interpreting, and critically examining relevant documentary sources (N. Sari dkk., 2023; Sugiyono, 2021). The research was conducted through a systematic process consisting of source identification, source selection, documentation, thematic categorization, textual interpretation, critical comparison, and synthesis of findings.

The primary data consisted of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's principal educational work, Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim fima Yahtaju ilaih al-Muta'allim fi Ahwal Ta'limih wama Yahtaju ilaih al-'Alim fi Maqamat Ta'limih. This text was selected as the primary source because it explicitly discusses the ethical foundations of teaching and learning, the characteristics and responsibilities of teachers and students, the purpose of knowledge, and the appropriate conduct in the educational process. Additional primary textual sources included other relevant works attributed to KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, particularly Risalah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah and Muqaddimah al-Qanun al-Asasi li Jam'iyyah Nahdhatul Ulama, insofar as they provided contextual information concerning his intellectual, religious, and social thought.

Secondary data comprised biographical and historical documents concerning KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, scholarly books, and peer-reviewed journal articles published in relevant academic fields. Particular attention was given to recent scholarly publications examining KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational philosophy, character education, Islamic education, moral education, Islamic moderation, and its relevance to contemporary educational contexts. Sources were selected purposively according to four criteria: (1) direct relevance to KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought or the interpretation of his major works; (2) academic or scholarly credibility; (3) relevance to the historical, philosophical, or contemporary context of the research; and (4) sufficient bibliographic information to enable verification. Sources that merely mentioned KH. Hasyim Asy'ari without substantive discussion of his educational thought were excluded from the main analytical corpus.

Data collection was conducted through documentary techniques. The researchers first identified relevant primary and secondary sources and subsequently read the selected materials repeatedly to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their content and context. Relevant textual passages were documented and organized according to predetermined analytical categories. The categories included the purpose of education, the concept of knowledge, the ethics of teachers, the ethics of students, teacher–student relationships, moral formation, social responsibility, and the relationship between religious knowledge and educational practice. Additional categories were developed inductively when recurring concepts emerged during the reading and interpretation process. The documented data were then compared across sources to identify similarities, differences, conceptual relationships, and changes in meaning between the historical text and contemporary educational discourse.

The analysis combined qualitative content analysis with Critical Hermeneutics. Content analysis was used to identify, classify, and organize recurring concepts and themes within the selected texts, whereas hermeneutical analysis was used to interpret the meaning of those concepts in relation to their historical and contemporary contexts. Hermeneutical interpretation was conducted as a dynamic process involving the interaction between the text, its historical context, and the contemporary horizon of interpretation. This approach recognizes that the meaning of a text cannot be separated entirely from the circumstances in which it was produced or from the context in which it is interpreted (Kholik, 2025). Accordingly, the analysis first reconstructed the meaning of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational ideas within the socio-historical context of the early twentieth-century Indonesian Islamic educational

environment. The findings were then brought into dialogue with contemporary educational issues to identify their continuing relevance, possible reinterpretations, and limitations.

The critical dimension of the analysis was developed by examining the assumptions, values, authority structures, and historical conditions underlying the educational ideas identified in the texts. Rather than treating KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's ideas as universally applicable propositions, the analysis distinguished between fundamental ethical principles and historically situated formulations. The reconstructed ideas were subsequently compared with concepts from contemporary educational philosophy, particularly critical pedagogy, in order to examine their epistemological implications, educational potential, and applicability to contemporary educational challenges. This comparative process was intended not to impose contemporary theories upon the historical text, but to establish a critical dialogue between the historical horizon of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought and the contemporary horizon of education.

To enhance the credibility of the findings, the study applied source triangulation and interpretive cross-checking. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing statements and concepts found in the primary texts with relevant biographical, historical, and contemporary scholarly sources. Interpretive cross-checking was conducted by repeatedly reviewing the original textual passages against the analytical categories and interpretations developed during the analysis. Contradictory or substantially different interpretations in the literature were retained and examined rather than selectively excluded. This procedure was intended to reduce the risk of interpreting individual passages in isolation from their broader intellectual and historical context.

The analysis was conducted through an iterative process. Initial readings were used to identify significant concepts, followed by coding and thematic categorization of relevant passages. The coded data were then interpreted in relation to the historical context of the text and compared with contemporary educational scholarship. The final stage involved synthesizing the findings into a reconstruction of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought and identifying its contemporary relevance, potential for recontextualization, and limitations. Because this study is qualitative and interpretive, no statistical tests were employed. The unit of analysis was the meaning and educational concept contained in the selected textual sources rather than numerical observations or human participants.

The methodological scope of the study is limited to documentary and textual analysis. Consequently, the findings do not constitute empirical evidence of the effectiveness of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational concepts

when implemented in contemporary schools, universities, or pesantren. Rather, the study provides a philosophical and conceptual reconstruction that may serve as a basis for subsequent empirical research. The use of Critical Hermeneutics also means that interpretation remains dependent on the historical and theoretical horizon adopted by the researcher. This limitation was addressed by maintaining close reference to the original texts, comparing multiple scholarly sources, and distinguishing textual evidence from the researcher's interpretation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought reveals that his educational philosophy is fundamentally oriented toward the integration of knowledge, morality, spirituality, and human formation. Rather than conceptualizing education merely as the transmission of cognitive information, Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim presents education as a process through which knowledge is connected to ethical conduct and religious responsibility. This finding is consistent with recent studies that identify character, morality, and adab as central elements of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought (Muhid, 2025; Najih dkk., 2025). However, the present analysis extends these findings by examining not only the values contained in the text but also their historical context, epistemological assumptions, and possibilities for reinterpretation in contemporary education.

The historical analysis indicates that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought developed within a strong pesantren and Islamic scholarly tradition. His intellectual journey through several pesantren in Java and his subsequent period of study in Mecca contributed to the formation of his authority in Islamic scholarship. His return to Java and establishment of Pesantren Tebuireng in 1899 demonstrate that his educational thought was not limited to theoretical reflection but was also expressed through institutional practice (Amatullah dkk., 2021; Dariyah dkk., 2026). Tebuireng functioned as an educational institution in a social environment affected by colonial economic and cultural conditions. This historical setting is important because it indicates that his educational ideas were developed in response to concrete social realities rather than formulated independently of context. His later involvement in the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama further demonstrates the relationship between education, religious authority, and social organization.

This historical finding helps explain why education in KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought carries a strong ethical and social orientation. Education was not conceived solely as individual intellectual advancement but as part of a

broader effort to preserve religious knowledge, cultivate moral conduct, and strengthen social responsibility. This interpretation is compatible with studies emphasizing the contribution of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought to the development of Islamic educational discourse in Indonesia (Majiid & Hidayat, 2024) and its continuing relevance to social and cultural formation (Ni'mah & Syihabuddin, 2026). The significance of this finding lies in demonstrating that the ethical emphasis of Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim should be understood in relation to the historical function of education as a means of maintaining intellectual and religious continuity within a changing social environment.

The textual analysis further shows that the epistemological foundation of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought is closely connected to the relationship between knowledge and moral purpose. Knowledge is valuable when it contributes to the improvement of human conduct and remains oriented toward religious responsibility. The purpose of education can therefore be interpreted through three interconnected dimensions: overcoming ignorance, maintaining the continuity of Islamic scholarly traditions, and seeking the pleasure of God. This orientation places education within a transcendental framework in which intellectual development and moral development cannot be separated. (F. A. Sari dkk., 2025) similarly emphasize the humanistic and ethical dimensions of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational philosophy, while (Bahri dkk., 2024) highlight the relationship between Islamic educational objectives and the formation of individuals who understand their responsibilities as both servants of God and members of society.

A particularly important finding concerns the central position of adab. The analysis of Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim identifies ethical conduct toward oneself, teachers, the learning process, and learning materials as interconnected dimensions of education. The emphasis on intention, discipline, humility, perseverance, respect, and responsibility indicates that knowledge acquisition is understood as an ethical process rather than a purely cognitive activity. This finding supports previous research showing that Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim contains substantial character values relevant to contemporary Islamic education (Muhid, 2025; Najih dkk., 2025). It also corresponds with (Munir dkk., 2025), who argue that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's moral educational thought remains relevant to character formation in the context of Society 5.0.

The importance of this finding becomes clearer when considered against contemporary educational conditions. The expansion of digital technologies has increased the speed with which students can obtain and reproduce information, but access to information does not necessarily guarantee ethical use of knowledge. In this context, the concept of adab can be interpreted as an ethical

framework for using knowledge responsibly. The contemporary relevance of this principle is also reflected in studies discussing KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought in relation to Islamic moderation, character formation, and contemporary social life (Adib & Mufidah, 2026; Ni'mah & Syihabuddin, 2026). Nevertheless, this interpretation should not be understood as evidence that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari directly anticipated contemporary digital education. Rather, the present study identifies a conceptual correspondence between his ethical framework and current educational concerns. This distinction is important to avoid attributing contemporary concepts to a historical thinker without sufficient textual evidence.

The analysis also identifies a distinctive conception of the teacher–student relationship. In KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's framework, the relationship is not constructed merely as a formal exchange between a service provider and a recipient of educational services. The teacher carries intellectual and moral responsibilities, while the student is expected to demonstrate respect, discipline, humility, and commitment to learning. The relationship therefore has a strong ethical and spiritual dimension. Previous studies similarly emphasize the importance of teacher and student character in KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought (Jamil dkk., 2025; Muhid, 2025). However, a critical hermeneutical reading also reveals that this relationship contains a potential tension when transferred directly into contemporary educational settings.

The concept of ta'dhim toward teachers illustrates this tension. Within its historical context, respect for teachers can be understood as a mechanism for preserving scholarly authority, transmitting knowledge, and maintaining the ethical structure of the pesantren learning tradition. However, when interpreted as unconditional obedience, the same principle may conflict with contemporary expectations concerning student autonomy, critical inquiry, and dialogical learning. The issue should therefore not be framed as a rejection of ta'dhim, but as a question of how its meaning can be reconstructed. A contemporary interpretation may preserve respect, ethical communication, and recognition of scholarly expertise while rejecting passive obedience that prevents students from questioning, discussing, or critically evaluating knowledge. This interpretation is consistent with the broader need to examine the boundaries of traditional educational authority within pluralistic and changing educational environments (Kewuel dkk., 2017).

Another finding concerns the relationship between KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought and institutional educational development. His contribution was not limited to the formulation of ethical principles. Historical scholarship indicates his involvement in the development of more structured

educational institutions, including the introduction of classical forms of instruction in Tebuireng (Majiid & Hidayat, 2024). This demonstrates an important dimension of his educational thought: the preservation of religious and moral values did not necessarily require resistance to institutional change. Instead, educational institutions could adapt their organizational and curricular forms while maintaining their underlying ethical orientation. This finding complicates interpretations that portray traditional Islamic educational thought simply as resistant to modernization.

The inclusion of general subjects and foreign languages in the educational environment associated with Tebuireng further illustrates this adaptive orientation. Rather than treating religious and general knowledge as necessarily incompatible, educational development could accommodate different forms of knowledge according to their perceived usefulness. (Muslih, 2024) shows that educational reform within the Indonesian Islamic context involved negotiating the relationship between inherited religious traditions and new forms of knowledge. From a critical hermeneutical perspective, this aspect of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought is significant because it demonstrates that the preservation of tradition and educational adaptation do not necessarily constitute opposing positions. The relevant question is instead how adaptation can occur without abandoning the ethical and intellectual principles that give education its meaning.

At the same time, the findings reveal epistemological limitations that should be acknowledged. KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought places strong emphasis on religious textual knowledge and spiritual-moral formation. Although this framework provides an important foundation for ethical education, it does not provide a comprehensive theoretical model of modern empirical science, experimental methodology, or contemporary scientific knowledge production. This limitation should not be interpreted as a deficiency in relation to present-day standards alone because the intellectual agenda and historical circumstances of the early twentieth century were substantially different from those of contemporary education. Nevertheless, it becomes important when considering the direct application of his educational philosophy to modern educational systems. Contemporary education requires an epistemological dialogue between religious and ethical knowledge and empirical, scientific, and technological forms of inquiry.

This finding supports the need for what may be termed a three-dimensional epistemological dialogue between bayani, 'irfani, and burhani orientations. The textual and normative dimension represented by bayani provides a foundation for understanding religious sources; the spiritual and

ethical dimension associated with 'irfani emphasizes moral and inner formation; while the rational-empirical orientation represented by burhani enables systematic investigation of observable phenomena. The present study does not argue that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari himself formulated this three-part epistemological synthesis in a systematic philosophical framework. Rather, the synthesis is proposed as a contemporary reconstruction that can place his educational principles in dialogue with the epistemological demands of modern education. This distinction constitutes an important boundary of the interpretation.

The findings consequently suggest that the contemporary relevance of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought should be understood through recontextualization rather than direct transplantation. Several principles remain conceptually relevant, particularly the integration of knowledge and ethics, the importance of teacher responsibility, the cultivation of learner discipline, and the orientation of education toward social and moral responsibility. However, their contemporary implementation requires reinterpretation. Ta'dhim, for example, can be reconstructed as mutual respect and academic integrity rather than unquestioning obedience. The teacher can retain an important ethical and intellectual role while simultaneously functioning as a facilitator who encourages critical inquiry. Similarly, the concept of knowledge can be expanded into an educational framework that combines religious literacy, ethical reasoning, scientific inquiry, and digital competence.

This recontextualization provides a more balanced response to the challenges of contemporary education than either uncritical preservation or complete rejection of traditional educational thought. In the context of digital transformation and artificial intelligence, the contribution of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought lies less in providing technical solutions than in offering an ethical orientation for the use of knowledge and technology. The rapid availability of information makes questions of honesty, responsibility, intellectual integrity, and respect for knowledge increasingly important. In this sense, the principle that knowledge should be accompanied by ethical conduct can provide a conceptual basis for discussing responsible learning and digital citizenship. However, empirical research would be required to determine whether such a framework produces measurable changes in students' behavior; the present study does not make that causal claim.

The findings also have implications for contemporary Islamic education. First, educational institutions may draw upon the concept of adab to strengthen character formation without separating it from intellectual development. Second, teacher education can interpret teacher authority in ways that combine

expertise and ethical leadership with dialogical pedagogical practices. Third, Islamic educational institutions can maintain their religious identity while engaging constructively with science, technology, and changing social conditions. These implications are consistent with recent scholarship emphasizing the continuing relevance of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought for character education, Islamic education, and contemporary social transformation (Adib & Mufidah, 2026; Munir dkk., 2025; Ni'mah & Syihabuddin, 2026).

Overall, the major finding of this study is that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's educational thought cannot be adequately understood either as a fixed historical doctrine or as a ready-made solution to contemporary educational problems. Its significance emerges through the interaction between its historical context and contemporary educational needs. The Critical Hermeneutics approach demonstrates that his thought contains enduring ethical principles while also reflecting historical assumptions that require reinterpretation. The contribution of this study therefore lies in proposing a critical model of recontextualization: preserving the ethical orientation of adab, maintaining the moral responsibility of educators and learners, and simultaneously opening the educational relationship to dialogue, critical inquiry, scientific reasoning, and technological transformation.

The study has several limitations. First, the analysis is based on documentary and textual sources and therefore does not empirically assess the implementation or effectiveness of the reconstructed educational framework in contemporary schools, universities, or pesantren. Second, hermeneutical interpretation inevitably involves the researcher's analytical horizon, even when efforts are made to maintain textual and source triangulation. Third, the proposed recontextualization represents a conceptual interpretation rather than a validated educational model. Future research should therefore examine the proposed reconstruction through empirical studies involving educators, students, and Islamic educational institutions. Such research could investigate how principles of adab, teacher–student relations, critical inquiry, and ethical digital learning can be operationalized and evaluated in contemporary educational practice.

CONCLUSION

Through a Critical Hermeneutics perspective, the educational thought of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari can be understood not merely as a historical doctrine but as an ethical and educational framework whose meaning can be critically reconstructed in response to contemporary educational challenges. His emphasis on adab demonstrates that knowledge, moral responsibility, and

human formation are inseparable dimensions of education. At the same time, the historical analysis indicates that his educational thought was shaped by the social, intellectual, and religious conditions of his time. Consequently, its contemporary relevance should not be understood through direct transplantation, but through critical recontextualization. This study shows that principles concerning ethical conduct, teacher responsibility, learner discipline, and the meaningful use of knowledge remain conceptually relevant, while historically situated elements such as hierarchical authority require reinterpretation within contemporary principles of dialogue, critical inquiry, and academic autonomy. The study therefore contributes to Islamic educational scholarship by demonstrating how the intellectual heritage of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari can serve as a basis for dialogue between Islamic educational traditions and the ethical, scientific, and technological demands of contemporary education. Future research should empirically examine how this conceptual reconstruction can be translated into educational practices across schools, madrasahs, and pesantren.

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