Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Indonesia (JPAII)
Vol. 7, No. 5, October 2026, pp. 378~385
ISSN: 2722-628X, DOI: 10.37251/jpaii.v7i5.3964

Circumcision in Islamic Law and Islamic Educational Values: An Examination of Aqidah, Worship, and Health Aspects

Ahmad Fauzan Ramadhan[1], Siti Aisyah Rahmawati[2]
[1,2]Department Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiah and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received Sept 13, 2026
Revised Sept 20, 2026
Accepted Oct 19, 2026
Online First Oct 30, 2026

Keywords:

Circumcision
Faith
Health
Islamic Education
Worship

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to identify the Islamic educational values contained in the Islamic law (sharia) of circumcision (khitan), focusing on the aspects of faith (aqidah), worship, and health, and to explain the educational meaning of each value.

Methodology: This qualitative study used library research with a descriptive-analytical design. Data were collected through documentation from primary sources, namely books on fiqh and circumcision, and from secondary supporting books. The data were grouped into faith, worship, and health categories using a categorization table, and then analyzed with content analysis to draw inferences.

Main Findings: Circumcision contains three Islamic educational values. The value of faith appears as an embodiment of belief, the perfection of religion, and the identity of Muslims, following the example of Prophet Ibrahim. The value of worship appears as a means of ensuring purity from impurity and ritual impurity for valid prayer, pilgrimage, and umrah. The value of health appears as cleanliness and disease prevention. The three values are interrelated.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study positions circumcision as a structured source of Islamic educational values, rather than only a matter of jurisprudence or medicine as in most previous studies. It integrates faith, worship, and health in one analysis and derives educational implications for parents and educators, thereby extending the discussion of circumcision into Islamic education.

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Corresponding Author:
Ahmad Fauzan Ramadhan,
Department Islamic Religious Education Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiah and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara,
Jl. William Iskandar Pasar V, Medan Estate, Deli Serdang, North Sumatra 20371, Indonesia
Email: ahmadfauzanramadhan@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Circumcision (khitan) is an Islamic sharia practice that has long been known and observed by Muslims around the world. This teaching originates from the millah (creed) of Prophet Ibrahim a.s., whom Prophet Muhammad SAW was commanded to follow in the Qur'an [1]. The Messenger of Allah SAW also classified circumcision as part of the natural disposition (fitrah) of human beings, together with shaving the pubic hair, trimming the mustache, clipping the nails, and plucking the underarm hair [2]. For this reason, circumcision is regarded as a perfection of the fitrah and a distinguishing mark attached to a Muslim [3]. Circumcision is also part of thaharah (ritual purification), which ensures purity from ritual impurity (hadas) and impurity (najis) so that acts of worship can be performed properly, and it benefits health because it removes the part of the body where dirt and germs accumulate [3].

From an educational perspective, religious practices such as circumcision contain values, namely normative standards that influence how people make choices and take action [4]. Islamic education itself is understood as a process of changing an individual's behavior in personal life, in society, and in the surrounding environment [5]. The nature and aims of Islamic education have also been discussed in recent international literature [6], [7]. Research on other Islamic rituals likewise treats them as educational means for self-purification and identity formation, as shown for ritual prayer [8]. Recent studies in Indonesia also examine Islamic educational values through cultural media such as puppetry art [9], curriculum development [10], and online sources of Islamic knowledge [11]. However, in society circumcision is often understood narrowly as a family tradition, a thanksgiving celebration, or merely a medical procedure, as reported in studies of Muslim communities [12]–[14]. Some people are not yet aware of the Islamic educational values contained in the sharia of circumcision. As a result, circumcision tends to be carried out as a ceremonial and technical matter, while its educational dimension is not deliberately conveyed to the child.

Studies of circumcision so far have mostly discussed the aspects of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), including the basis of the command, its limits, and the rulings on circumcision for males and females [3]. Other studies focus on the health aspect, namely the benefits of circumcision for hygiene and disease prevention [3]. Recent international discussions likewise examine the religious status of circumcision and the disagreement among scholars about it [15], while medical studies have examined its health effects, for example the risk of urinary tract infection [16], [17]. Rahimi examined the educational values in the sharia of male circumcision and concluded that circumcision contains educational values that can be drawn upon to guide a child toward becoming a pious Muslim [18]. Akhairuddin studied the Islamic educational values for children in the basiru tradition during circumcision events in West Sumbawa using an ethnographic approach, and found educational values of aqidah, morals, health, and sex education instilled by parents in their children [19]. These studies provide a strong foundation regarding the ruling and benefits of circumcision.

Nevertheless, a research gap remains in the study of the sharia of circumcision. Previous research has focused more on the aspects of fiqh and health than on the perspective of Islamic education. Studies that specifically identify and map the Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision remain limited. For example, recent international studies have approached circumcision mainly through its religious and ethical status [15], religious responsibility and masculinity [12], and the knowledge and attitudes of religious officials [14], rather than through its educational value. A systematic literature review has mapped Islamic educational values, including aqidah values, in Indonesian puppetry art [9], but comparable mapping for the sharia of circumcision is still lacking. In addition, the relationship between these values and the aspects of aqidah, worship, and health in shaping the Muslim personality has not been studied comprehensively [20]. This situation shows the need for research that examines circumcision as part of the process of Islamic education. Accordingly, this study is expected to provide a scientific foundation for educators and parents to understand and use circumcision as a means of instilling Islamic educational values in children.

The novelty of this study lies in a perspective that positions circumcision as a source of Islamic educational values, rather than merely as a legal or medical matter. This study uses the library research method with content analysis of primary and secondary sources. It integrates three dimensions of Islamic educational values, namely aqidah, worship, and health, in a single comprehensive analysis. These three dimensions are examined to uncover the educational meaning contained in the sharia of circumcision for the formation of the Muslim personality. The results are expected to produce a map of the educational values of the sharia of circumcision that can serve as a reference in developing family education and child education.

This study is important for providing a complete understanding of the educational value of circumcision so that it is not interpreted only as a religious ritual, but also as a means of Islamic education. These values can serve as a basis for instilling faith in children from an early age. In addition, circumcision can be a means of habituating children to purification and cleanliness as part of carrying out worship. The health aspect of circumcision can also raise children's awareness of the importance of taking care of their physical health. Thus, an understanding of the educational value of circumcision is in line with the goal of Islamic education, which is to form a generation of Muslims who are strong in aqidah, worship, and health.

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to identify the Islamic educational values contained in the sharia of circumcision. It focuses on three main aspects, namely aqidah, worship, and health. Each aspect is analyzed to uncover the educational values contained in it. This study also aims to explain the relevance of these values to the formation of the Muslim personality. Through this study, readers are expected to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of Islamic education in the sharia of circumcision. The results are expected to become a source of knowledge for parents and educators in instilling Islamic values in children. Furthermore, this study is expected to serve as a reference for the development of Islamic education, particularly in the family environment.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Type and Design of the Research

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research design. Library research is research whose object is explored through various library information, such as books, magazines, scientific journals, and documents [21]. Systematic literature reviews have likewise been used to identify Islamic educational values in existing studies [9], [10]. This approach was chosen because all of the data consist of concepts, arguments from scripture, and scholars' views available in the literature, rather than field data. Based on its nature, this study is descriptive, that is, it seeks to describe and interpret the object as it is, systematically [22]. The design used is descriptive-analytical, which means collecting and organizing data, then analyzing and interpreting it through content analysis, a technique widely used to interpret meaning from text data [23], [24].

2.2. Research Subjects and Objects

Library research does not involve a population and sample of human participants, so this study does not use a sampling technique. The subjects of the research are library sources related to circumcision and Islamic education. These sources are divided into primary and secondary sources as explained in subsection 2.3. The object of the research is the Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision. In this article, the study is limited to three aspects, namely aqidah, worship, and health.

2.3. Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are the main literature directly related to the research object, namely the sharia of circumcision and Islamic educational values. The primary literature used includes the book Khitan dalam Perspektif Syari'at dan Kesehatan (Circumcision in the Perspective of Sharia and Health) by Tim Riset Al-Qira'ah [3], Khitan dan Kesehatan (Circumcision and Health) by Ihsanuddin [25], and Ilmu Pendidikan Islam (Islamic Educational Science) by Bukhari Umar [5]. Meanwhile, secondary sources are supporting literature used to strengthen the analysis of Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision, among others Al-Islam: Pendidikan Agama Islam (Al-Islam: Islamic Religious Education) by Rois Mahfud [20], Fiqh Bayi (Fiqh of Infants) by Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah [2], Mengartikulasikan Pendidikan Nilai (Articulating Value Education) by Rohmat Mulyana [4], and Fiqh Kesehatan (Fiqh of Health) by Ahsin W. Al-Hafidz [26]. Other supporting literature includes books on child education, parenting, health, and Islamic education listed in the thesis bibliography.

Data were collected through documentation, namely by searching for, reading, recording, and gathering relevant information from various written sources [27]. This process was carried out by identifying literature related to the sharia of circumcision, selecting information according to the research focus, and grouping the data based on the aspects of Islamic education under study. The collected data were then classified into the aspects of aqidah, worship, and health in accordance with the research boundaries. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using content analysis to identify and interpret the Islamic educational values contained in the sharia of circumcision.

2.4. Research Instrument

The categorization table was developed to provide a systematic framework for identifying and classifying Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision. It consists of three categories: faith (aqidah), worship, and health. Each category is defined based on the concept of Islamic education [20] and specified through indicators relevant to the research focus. These indicators guided the researcher in examining the literature, organizing the collected data, and interpreting the educational values associated with the sharia of circumcision. The categorization framework is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Categorization of Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision

No	Value Category	Definition	Indicator in the Sharia of Circumcision
1	Faith (aqidah)	Belief that is affirmed in the heart, declared with the tongue, and proven through deeds [20]	Circumcision as evidence of the embodiment of faith in Allah SWT and of following the millah of Prophet Ibrahim a.s.
2	Worship	Devotion and servitude of humans to Allah SWT [20]	Circumcision as a means of ensuring purity from ritual impurity and impurity for valid prayer, pilgrimage, and umrah
3	Health	Efforts to maintain outer and inner cleanliness as disease prevention [20]	Circumcision protects the body from dirt and various diseases

As presented in Table 2, the categorization framework comprises three main dimensions of Islamic educational values. The faith (aqidah) dimension focuses on belief in Allah SWT and adherence to the religious tradition of Prophet Ibrahim a.s. The worship dimension concerns purification and personal cleanliness in relation to the proper performance of religious practices, while the health dimension emphasizes bodily cleanliness and disease prevention. These categories served as analytical guidelines for classifying information obtained from the literature. By applying this framework, the researcher could examine the educational meaning of circumcision systematically according to the three dimensions established in this study.

2.5. Data Analysis Technique

The data in this study were analyzed using the descriptive-analytical method and content analysis. The descriptive-analytical method is used to describe, interpret, and analyze library data so that the relationship between one issue and another can be explained in greater depth. Meanwhile, content analysis is used to draw inferences from the data that have been processed and analyzed as an answer to the research questions, paying attention to the validity of the inferences and the context of the data studied [28], [23], [24]. The analysis was carried out on literature discussing the sharia of circumcision and the Islamic educational values contained in it. The results of the analysis are then presented descriptively with reference to the aspects of faith, worship, and health education as the focus of this article.

2.6. Research Procedure

This research procedure was carried out systematically through six stages, namely determining the research focus, collecting library sources, documenting data, categorizing data, analyzing data, and drawing conclusions. The first stage is determining the research focus, namely identifying the Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision. The second stage is collecting primary and secondary library sources relevant to the sharia of circumcision, the concept of Islamic education, and the values of aqidah, worship, and health. The third stage is collecting data using the documentation technique through reading, identifying, and recording information in line with the research focus, including the source identity and page numbers.

The fourth stage is categorizing the data based on three aspects of Islamic educational values, namely aqidah, worship, and health. The fifth stage is analyzing the data using the descriptive-analytical method and content analysis by describing, interpreting, and examining the meaning of the data based on the context of the sources used. The sixth stage is drawing conclusions based on the results of the analysis to answer the research focus regarding the Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision. The flow of this research procedure is presented in Figure 1.

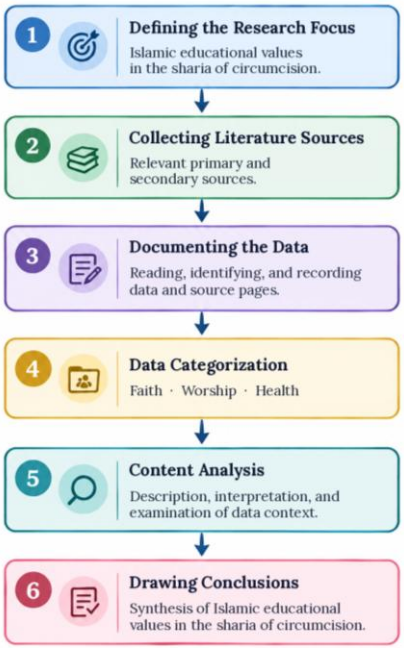


Figure 1. Research procedure

Based on Figure 1, all stages of the research were carried out sequentially and are interrelated. The library data that had been collected were documented, then grouped into the categories of aqidah, worship, and health. The data were then analyzed to gain an understanding of the Islamic educational values contained in the sharia of circumcision, so that conclusions could be formulated in line with the research objectives.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the literature analysis on Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision, three main categories of values were found, namely the value of aqidah, the value of worship, and the value of health. These three categories were obtained through the identification and grouping of information from various literature discussing circumcision from an Islamic perspective. The results show that circumcision has meanings related to the practice of religious teachings and the formation of behavior in everyday life. The value of aqidah relates to faith and obedience to Allah Swt. The value of worship relates to personal cleanliness and the discussion of purification in the performance of worship. Meanwhile, the value of health relates to maintaining bodily cleanliness and habituating clean-living behavior. The results based on these three categories are presented in the following subsections.

3.1. The Value of Aqidah (Faith)

The literature analysis shows that the sharia of circumcision is related to the value of aqidah, particularly in the aspects of faith and obedience to Allah Swt. In the literature reviewed, circumcision is associated with the practice of fitrah in Islamic teachings [25]. Circumcision is also seen as related to Islamic identity and the observance of religious tradition [29]. Studies in Muslim contexts likewise describe circumcision as closely tied to religious responsibility [12], and in Islamic educational thought ritual practices are discussed as means of identity formation [8]. In addition, literature discussing the history of circumcision in Islam mentions the story of Prophet Ibrahim a.s., who was circumcised at the age of 80 [30]. This information shows that circumcision is connected to a religious tradition known in Islamic teachings. In the educational context, this value can be a means of introducing obedience to religious teachings to children. Thus, the value of aqidah in the sharia of circumcision can be identified through the aspects of faith, religious obedience, and the introduction of Islamic identity.

3.2. The Value of Worship

The results show that the sharia of circumcision is related to the value of worship, particularly in the discussion of cleanliness and purification, or thaharah. The literature reviewed links circumcision with maintaining the cleanliness of the genitals [20]. This discussion also relates to the matter of purification in the performance of worship as explained in the source referred to [30]. Research on other acts of worship, such as ritual prayer, similarly shows that ritual practices can serve as pedagogical means for spiritual self-purification and identity formation [8]. Empirical work on Islamic prayer also explores its psychological dimension, such as mindfulness during prayer [31]. Personal cleanliness is one of the aspects given attention in learning everyday religious practice. This finding shows that the discussion of circumcision can be linked to introducing the importance of keeping the body clean. In the context of Islamic education, this introduction can help children understand personal cleanliness and preparation before performing worship. Therefore, the value of worship in the sharia of circumcision includes the introduction of purification, the maintenance of cleanliness, and the habituation of responsibility in religious practice.

3.3. The Value of Health

The literature analysis shows that the value of health in the sharia of circumcision relates to maintaining the cleanliness of the genitals and body care. Several sources mention that circumcision can make it easier to clean the area under the foreskin [3], [25]. This discussion shows a link between circumcision and efforts to keep the genitals clean. In addition, circumcision is discussed as part of the practice of fitrah in Islamic tradition [2]. In the educational context, this finding can be associated with introducing the habit of maintaining personal cleanliness from an early age. This habituation includes an understanding of body care and the importance of practicing clean-living behavior. Thus, the value of health in the sharia of circumcision relates to genital cleanliness and self-care, while claims about specific medical benefits still require adequate scientific evidence. For example, systematic reviews have examined whether circumcision reduces urinary tract infection in specific groups of children, such as boys with antenatal hydronephrosis [16], [17], and a review of traditional circumcision practices highlights that health outcomes can differ between traditional and medical settings [32]. Health claims should therefore be framed according to the available evidence.

Results show that the sharia of circumcision contains three Islamic educational values, namely aqidah, worship, and health. This finding shows that circumcision can be understood not only as a religious practice but also as part of an educational process related to the formation of understanding and behavior. Rahimi's study [18] can serve as a comparison for seeing the similarities and differences among studies of circumcision from an Islamic perspective in line with the focus of that study. Other international studies have approached circumcision through its religious and ethical status [15] and through religious masculinity [12], which differ from the educational focus of the present study. Meanwhile, Akhairuddin's study [19] of the basiru tradition in West Sumbawa shows a social dimension and educational values in the practice of circumcision in a particular

community context. The difference between this study and previous studies lies in its analytical focus, which specifically groups the values of circumcision into the categories of aqidah, worship, and health. This grouping gives a more structured picture of the educational aspects that can be identified from the literature on the sharia of circumcision. Thus, this study complements previous studies by mapping Islamic educational values that can be used as material for developing education in the family and in religious settings.

The findings on the value of aqidah show that circumcision relates to the introduction of faith and obedience to the teachings of Allah Swt. This is in line with the literature that discusses circumcision as part of fitrah in Islamic teachings [2], [25]. From the perspective of value education, Mulyana [4] explains the importance of values as a foundation that influences human beliefs, judgments, and behavior. Based on this perspective, introducing the meaning of circumcision can be one means of introducing religious values to children. The value of worship in this study is seen through the link between circumcision and personal cleanliness and the discussion of purification, or thaharah [20], [30]. Meanwhile, the value of health relates to maintaining the cleanliness of the genitals and habituating body care [3], [25]. These three categories show that the sharia of circumcision can be studied through the relationship among religious understanding, the practice of worship, and the behavior of maintaining personal cleanliness.

Novelty of this study lies in grouping the Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision into three main categories, namely aqidah, worship, and health. This grouping is used to identify the different educational focus of each category. The value of aqidah emphasizes the introduction of faith and obedience to Islamic teachings, while the value of worship highlights the relationship among cleanliness, purification, and the performance of worship. The value of health, in turn, emphasizes the importance of maintaining bodily cleanliness and habituating clean-living behavior. These three categories are summarized in a single analytical framework that connects the findings from the literature with the educational aspects that can be introduced to children. This framework helps clarify the educational dimension contained in the discussion of the sharia of circumcision. Therefore, the contribution of this study is to provide a map of Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision that can serve as a basis for further study and the development of educational materials.

Results of this study have implications for parents and educators in introducing the Islamic educational values related to the sharia of circumcision. In the short term, the results can be used as material to explain to children the religious meaning of circumcision, the importance of purification, and the maintenance of personal cleanliness. The delivery of this material needs to be adapted to the child's age and level of understanding. Recent evidence that religious officials may lack accurate knowledge about circumcision [14] also underlines the need for sound educational materials for families and religious leaders. The role of popular religious figures in shaping public understanding of Islamic values has also been discussed in relation to Islamic education [33]. Religious education scholarship likewise discusses the place of critical thinking in teaching about religion [34], and research on Islamic education classrooms examines how teachers address civic issues [35], which supports presenting this material in a reflective and age-appropriate way. Parents can connect explanations about circumcision with introducing religious obedience and the habit of caring for bodily cleanliness. In educational settings, the results can serve as a consideration for designing learning materials that connect religious teachings with everyday behavior. In the long term, this mapping of values has the potential to support the development of Islamic education teaching materials that integrate the aspects of aqidah, worship, and personal cleanliness. However, the effect of applying such materials on children's understanding and behavior still needs to be proven through empirical research.

Study has limitations because it uses a literature review approach and does not involve direct data collection through interviews or observation. Therefore, the results describe findings based on the literature analyzed, not the results of measuring the application of educational values in children's lives. This study also has not tested the effectiveness of using the discussion of the sharia of circumcision as Islamic education material. In addition, the discussion of health benefits requires support from primary medical sources so that each claim can be explained proportionally, such as systematic reviews and clinical studies [16], [17]. This study focuses on the values of aqidah, worship, and health, so the social, cultural, and moral (akhlak) dimensions have not been analyzed in depth. Differences in fiqh views on the ruling and practice of circumcision have also not been discussed comprehensively, although such differences are documented in the literature [15]. Accordingly, future research can use field methods, broaden the categories of analysis, and involve relevant medical and religious sources to strengthen the research findings.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify the Islamic educational values in the sharia of circumcision and to explain their educational meaning. The results of the literature review show three main values, namely aqidah, which relates to faith and obedience to Allah Swt.; worship, which relates to cleanliness and purification; and health, which emphasizes the maintenance of personal cleanliness. These three values are interrelated in shaping religious understanding and clean-living habits. Thus, circumcision can be viewed as a means of Islamic

education that covers the aspects of faith, worship, and health. Future research is recommended to conduct field studies to examine the application of these values, to verify the health benefits through primary medical sources, and to develop and test Islamic education teaching materials based on the results of this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their gratitude to Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara Medan for its academic support during the preparation of this article. The authors also acknowledge the contributions of the authors of the books and scientific publications that served as references for this library research. This study received no specific financial support from any funding agency.

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