

# EDUCATIONAL IDEOLOGY IN INDIGENOUS MUSLIM COMMUNITIES: Emancipation, Environmental Stewardship, and Food Sovereignty

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**Abstract:** This study examines the ideological orientations shaping indigenous education in the context of environmental protection and food security amid deepening marginalization. The research employs a mixed-methods design, combining William O’Neill’s Educational Ideology Questionnaire with qualitative observations and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that indigenous education actors predominantly adopt conservative and intellectualist orientations, emphasizing the preservation of customary values, ecological balance, and structured knowledge transmission. Institutional practices, however, reflect more liberal tendencies, prioritizing inclusivity and adaptive learning. This interplay of ideologies positions education as both contextual and emancipatory, reinforcing indigenous agency in advancing ecological resilience, food sovereignty, and social justice.

**Keywords:** environmental protection, food security, educational ideology, indigenous peoples

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## Introduction

The purpose of education is widely understood as the liberation from the shackles of ignorance,<sup>1</sup> and education itself serves as the essential means to achieve such emancipation.<sup>2</sup> Historically, schools were initially established to help parents pass on values to the younger generation, meaning that schools carry a noble educational mission. Historically, formal education existed as a tool to maintain social stability<sup>3</sup> and transmit cultural values from one generation to the next.<sup>4</sup> The initial goal of education in society was to shape individuals to conform to social norms and the collective needs of society, not merely for individual achievement.<sup>5</sup> In the context of traditional societies, education serves as a means of transmitting values, morality, and life skills through family and social institutions such as schools.<sup>6</sup> Starting from the medium of education, generally referred to as schools, one can ideally determine the direction of education through the educational system. This is the reality for an open and accessible society. However, what about indigenous communities whose access and opportunities are unequal? This inequality is reflected in the various social realities faced by indigenous communities in obtaining educational services.

The Suku Anak Dalam community continues to face challenges in accessing formal education due to geographic isolation and a lack of basic educational infrastructure.<sup>7</sup> Similar findings were presented showed that indigenous communities often feel alienated because the national curriculum does not represent their local culture and wisdom.<sup>8</sup> The modernization of education in the Bonokeling community has actually led to the erosion of local character values due to a non-contextual educational approach<sup>9</sup>. In Tana Towa Kajang, emphasized that indigenous women have less access to education due to a patriarchal social structure and limited access to formal schools.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, in Tambraw,

West Papua, indigenous communities developed community-based educational alternatives, such as Fenia Meroh, because formal institutions were deemed incapable of meeting their local needs.<sup>11</sup> Communities of all ages can access both formal and informal education, formulated by the government, similar to regular schools. However, when discussing education for indigenous peoples, it does not only target school-age people but also people who have not had the opportunity to access school. This means that the essence of education is not only about thinking about school. Despite the growing body of research on indigenous education, limited attention has been given to the ideological positions of education practitioners who design, implement, and negotiate educational practices within indigenous contexts.

Indigenous communities have not only lost access to formal education but have also been marginalized from various forms of non-formal and informal education developed within their own communities. *Sekolah adat* (customary schools) in Kalimantan employ a local wisdom-based curriculum to teach historical knowledge, customary structures, and local languages, subjects not offered in formal schools.<sup>12</sup> Documents the informal religious education system in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya, which emphasizes synergy among families, schools, and customary leaders in building cultural identity and moral character.<sup>13</sup> The Sunda Wiwitan community in Garut faces challenges in accessing belief-based education services, as formal institutions fail to accommodate their cultural needs.<sup>14</sup> The role of *dukun adat* (traditional elders) in Tengger, Malang, as moral educators of indigenous youth, preserving local values that would otherwise be lost if education relied solely on formal schooling.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, the Sokola Rimba model for the Orang Rimba illustrates the need for a contextual learning approach that allows education to occur through living and working within traditional settings, rather than conforming to rigid structures of modern schooling.

A ritualistic and rigid educational model, characterized by a disconnection between the self and reality, is less compatible with the context of Indigenous communities, despite the shared understanding that education remains essential for their development. Research in Kampung Naga and Kampung Urug reveals that both formal and informal education play a crucial role in sustaining local customs while preserving cultural identity amid the currents of modernity.<sup>16</sup> In the Baduy Luar community, the informal learning system known as ngolah is rooted in family structures, traditional leaders, and daily customary practices, embedding cultural values and local wisdom without relying on formal school infrastructure.<sup>17</sup> Ethnographic studies also show that although the Baduy Dalam community rejects formal education, knowledge transfer, particularly in agriculture and customary norms, continues through intergenerational transmission, demonstrating that education remains valued within customary frameworks.<sup>18</sup>

Planning or design is a central emphasis, particularly in the development of educational frameworks for indigenous communities. Ideally, however, the educational ideology for indigenous peoples should be free from dependence, intervention, and the pressures of dominant structures. Therefore, the study of indigenous educational ideology is crucial, not merely as a discourse, but as part of a social realm<sup>19</sup> that will shape the future direction of indigenous communities. In reality, indigenous peoples inhabit specific territories where they live, grow, and develop according to environmental principles. Ecologically, these areas, often surrounding forests, are places where local wisdom is preserved to sustain both the environment and their livelihoods. Over time, indigenous communities have faced the challenges of social change brought about by modern life, which in some respects has pressured them to conform to dominant structural interests, including in the field of education. Furthermore,

indigenous peoples often find themselves within areas of dominant political and economic interest, where they are frequently marginalized amid land conflict struggles. These studies predominantly focus on educational forms, access, and cultural preservation within indigenous communities. However, they rarely interrogate the ideological orientations of education practitioners, such as teachers, facilitators, or community educators, who mediate between state-driven educational frameworks and indigenous epistemologies.

The existing reality shows that Indigenous communities are often trapped within the interests of dominant structures, both the state and corporations, that prioritize economic growth and investment. In this context, Indigenous peoples are frequently portrayed as obstacles to development, resulting in the marginalization of their rights to customary lands, living spaces, and environmental management. In East Kalimantan, many customary lands belonging to Indigenous communities remain unrecognized under formal law, leading to prolonged conflicts between residents and mining companies.<sup>20</sup> These companies, holding official mining business permits (IUP), have received full legitimacy from the state, even though the areas they exploit are ancestral lands that have been inhabited by local communities for generations.

A similar case has also occurred in the development of Indonesia's new capital city (IKN) Nusantara in Kalimantan, where the Indigenous Paser Balik community feels excluded from the planning and decision-making processes. The construction of IKN is prone to neglecting the rights of Indigenous peoples due to weak constitutional protection and the lack of mechanisms recognizing customary territories.<sup>21</sup> These agrarian conflicts are further exacerbated by overlapping legal systems, between formal laws that are administrative and individual in nature, and customary laws that are communal and collective. The state's legal framework, which tends to favor investment and economic

growth, often sidelines social justice for Indigenous communities, resulting in their loss of land, identity, and living space, the very foundations of their livelihood.<sup>22</sup> This condition frequently places Indigenous peoples in a position of disadvantage. Functionally, Indigenous communities play an essential role as “environmental guardians” within their own territories, and education should ideally serve to strengthen their capacity to enhance environmental resilience and ensure sustainable food security.

In this context, education becomes a strategic arena where ideological struggles occur, between developmentalist, state-centered paradigms and indigenous worldviews rooted in ecological sustainability. Understanding how education practitioners conceptualize and negotiate these ideologies is therefore crucial, as their perspectives directly shape educational practices that may either marginalize or empower indigenous communities in sustaining their ecological resilience and food security.

This condition often places Indigenous communities in a disadvantaged position. However, when given the role of *environmental guardians* within their own territories, Indigenous peoples have proven their capacity to maintain ecological resilience and ensure food security through local wisdom-based practices. This is evident in the findings the Urang Kanekes (Baduy) community in Banten.<sup>23</sup> They employ a shifting cultivation system (*huma*) and store their harvests in *leuit* (granaries) to sustain food supplies during lean seasons. Meanwhile, the traditional practice of *rewang plea* in East Flores, a form of communal cooperation aimed at spiritually and ecologically protecting gardens from pests before the planting season, which serves as part of the Indigenous community’s food security strategy.<sup>24</sup> In Tasikmalaya, the Kampung Naga community, which practices a traditional agricultural system based on seasonal and natural cycles. The harvests are stored in communal *leuit* and distributed according

to collective needs, fostering sustainable food stability.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Kampung Adat Cireundeu community in Cimahi revealed that they have substituted rice with cassava as their primary staple and developed various derivative products.<sup>26</sup> This not only reflects food resilience but also represents a self-reliant and sustainable local economic strategy. Across these studies, it becomes clear that education directed toward strengthening local wisdom will, in turn, enhance the capacity of Indigenous communities to maintain ecological balance and achieve sustainable food security.

Previous studies have proposed several educational models for communities based on contextual approaches. Literacy and entrepreneurship education model for the Indigenous Communities of East Barito through a local wisdom and context-based approach.<sup>27</sup> An educational model that revitalizes the cultural heritage values of the Gayo community, which can serve as a reference for community education, especially as these values have been increasingly eroded by regulation and globalization.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, character education grounded in local culture within the Cireundeu Traditional Village community.<sup>29</sup> In addition, non-formal education models can strengthen communities' capacity to adapt to environmental changes.<sup>30</sup>

The education of indigenous communities continues to present a complex dilemma, particularly concerning whether a generalized or context-specific approach should be adopted. Within existing power structures, education can function as a mechanism to perpetuate the status quo or be reduced to mere pragmatism, thereby undermining its essential purpose and further alienating indigenous peoples from their traditions and ecological environment. This underscores the necessity of an ideological inquiry among education practitioners to conceptualize education that empowers indigenous communities both as stewards of their ecological systems and as actors capable of enhancing

food security. While previous studies have examined educational models, cultural preservation, and local wisdom within indigenous communities, few have critically explored the ideological foundations held by education practitioners themselves. This study contributes to the literature by foregrounding the ideological orientations of education practitioners and analyzing how these ideologies influence educational practices aimed at strengthening ecological resilience and food security within indigenous communities. This study seeks to critically examine the ideological orientations of education practitioners and their implications for educational practices that support indigenous ecological resilience and food security. To frame this inquiry, the study draws on Paulo Freire's concept of liberation education, which positions education as a dialogical and transformative practice rooted in lived experience.

The concept of liberation education developed by Paulo Freire is a form of resistance to the conventional education system, which is oppressive and hierarchical. In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,<sup>31</sup> criticized the educational model he called "banking education," in which students are merely seen as empty vessels to be filled by teachers, without the opportunity to think critically and reflect on the realities of their lives. According to Freire, education should be liberating, humanizing, and position students as active subjects in the process of social change.

This thinking is highly relevant not only in Latin America, where Freire championed his cause, but also in the Indonesian context, particularly for marginalized groups such as indigenous communities. A liberation pedagogical approach can be applied in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era by incorporating local cultural values and creating participatory and dialogical learning spaces.<sup>32</sup> In the context of national education, this approach strongly aligns with the spirit of the Independent Curriculum. Furthermore, Freire's problem-posing education model, which

encourages students to explore issues from their own realities, aligns closely with the principles of contextual learning.<sup>33</sup> Students are encouraged to engage in dialogue, develop solutions, and critically understand the social structures that influence their lives. Furthermore, the application of liberation education principles in the context of non-formal education in Indonesia.<sup>34</sup> Through various community empowerment programs, Freire's principles of dialogue, critical awareness, and collective action have proven effective in strengthening community capacity, particularly in addressing social inequality and the dominance of structural power. Widya Mandala Catholic University, Freirean education is an effort to combat the dehumanization born of oppressive systems.<sup>35</sup> He stated that students must be positioned as conscious beings capable of thinking and acting, not passive objects of uniform and centralized educational policies.

Education as a "bank" style, an illustration to show that education is only for the benefit and interests of technocrats.<sup>36</sup> The uniform education system is a means for technocrats to carry out indoctrination that is full of political and economic ideology. For Freire, education must be built on reality, methodologically emphasizing actions and total reflection, namely the principle of education that acts to change oppressive reality, and in the process continuously fosters awareness of reality and the desire to change the reality of the oppressed.

Education is a noble act. However, on the other hand, the dilemma of education is between legitimizing and perpetuating existing systems or structures. Fakhri states that education is fraught with ideology.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, this study uses O'Neil's theoretical concept of ideology to understand educational issues through its underlying ideology. This way, education can be seen, and its implications for various educational theories adopted, and how future education will be implemented can be predicted.

Educational ideology is essentially the essential nature and its implementation related to schooling. Ideology based on six social ethics, an ethical system drawn from political philosophy that becomes a conservative ethic consisting of educational fundamentalism, educational intellectualism, and educational conservatism.<sup>38</sup> The three liberal educational philosophies consist of educational liberalism, educational liberationism, and educational anarchism. This ideology will later become the background for the figure of an education observer; this observer can become a formulator, if they have a certain ideology and agree, then it will color education in indigenous communities in the dominant ideology of the education observer.

Education itself (Darmaningtyas 1999) is essentially a fundamental act in the form of interpersonal communication; in this process, there is a process of humanizing young humans in the sense of hominization, and humanization is the process of developing human humanity. Education must help us to know and want to act as humans. Education must be oriented towards recognizing the reality of the human self and oneself; this recognition must be in a subjective and objective context.<sup>39</sup> Freire developed his theory in the form of praxis, namely through communication and dialogue, and critical reflection is made collectively in social action. Then it is necessary to change the condition of “silent culture,” which is the characteristic of the image of a society that is powerless, silent, and considered something that must be obeyed. To change this, participatory education is needed. Freire explains praxis education (unity of intention), words and works, with the explanation that it is basically the unity of the functions of thinking, speaking, and doing. In the educational process, there are three elements: the teacher, as a conscious subject, students also as conscious subjects, and then the third is the reality of the world as a conscious object. The relationship

with conditions like this is what must exist in participatory education.

Specifically, this concerns how consciousness emerges within communities and the necessity of enlightenment through educational processes that are defined by the communities themselves and adapted to their specific contexts. For instance, in the case of indigenous peoples in Indonesia, particularly the Pubian community, education should be based on the community's own methods and grounded in real-life problems.<sup>40</sup> These problems often include environmental challenges, food security, and land conflicts, which frequently marginalize indigenous communities from forested areas. At the core of the educational process is conscientization,<sup>41</sup> a process of raising awareness that must not cease but continuously develop and expand. When an individual reaches a critical understanding of reality, they move beyond mere memorization, as they no longer express ideas mechanically without understanding their meaning.

Participatory education, as described by,<sup>42</sup> begins with engaging the community in dialogues about their lived experiences and everyday challenges. Through these dialogues, educators identify generative words, which serve as key terms representing the problems under discussion. These words are then codified, creating existential representations of human experiences with phenomena, and subsequently decoded to generate new, creative codifications that are explicit, critical, and action-oriented. The real context of the community, such as indigenous peoples living in areas affected by land conflicts, provides a framework for observing objective reality. At the same time, a theoretical context is established when educators and learners codify their environment to understand the underlying causes of these phenomena. The deeper the effort to acquire knowledge within this framework, the further it enables individuals to uncover and comprehend the complexities of reality.

This participatory education emphasizes dialogue that does not consider the uniformity of learning locations or the type of uniforms used, but rather emphasizes reality so that students are able to identify problems and overcome them. The curriculum should also not be “throwaway” but should be created based on community needs through an in-depth research process on what the community needs. In this case, the author looks at environmental protection as a habitat for their lives and food security for the welfare and sustainability of indigenous communities.

## **Method**

This study employed a mixed-methods approach with a quantitative-dominant design to examine the ideological orientations of education practitioners in an indigenous context. The mixed-methods approach was chosen because the study investigates ideology, which requires both measurable indicators<sup>43</sup> and contextual interpretation to capture meanings embedded in social and cultural practices.<sup>44</sup> Quantitative data provide a structured assessment of educational ideology, while qualitative data offer contextual depth to explain and interpret the quantitative findings.

The study was conducted among the Pubian Telu indigenous community, which was deliberately selected due to its current experience of land conflict that directly affects their ecological livelihood and educational practices. Although not classified as a remote community, Pubian Telu represents an indigenous group whose identity is strongly tied to territorial and environmental relations. This context makes the community analytically relevant for examining educational ideology with regard to ecological resilience and food security. The study involved 30 respondents selected through purposive sampling, comprising educators, indigenous leaders, education stakeholders, community members, and government officials. This sampling strategy was used because

individuals involved in indigenous education are not formally recorded and are widely distributed, requiring deliberate selection based on direct relevance and experience.

Quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire adapted from O'Neil's,<sup>45</sup> The Educational Ideology instrument to assess respondents' ideological orientations toward education. Qualitative data were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews to explore lived experiences, sociocultural contexts, and local meanings of education. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically through an interpretive approach. Data integration was conducted at the interpretation stage<sup>46</sup> to examine how qualitative findings contextualize and strengthen the quantitative results<sup>47</sup>, thereby enhancing the validity of the study.<sup>48</sup> With this approach, the study is expected to not only describe the structural position of indigenous communities in education but also provide transformative recommendations within a more equitable and contextual educational framework.

## **Results and Discussion**

Historical studies review the population or people who inhabit the original Lampung Province, consisting of indigenous communities, namely the Pepadun and Peminggir customs. Lampung Pepadun Abung Siwow Megou (Nine clans) and Tulang Bawang Megow Pak (Four clans). For Lampung Peminggir and Way Kanan Buai Lima (Five Descendants) and Pubian Telu Suku (Three Tribes). The Pubian indigenous community inhabits eight indigenous areas: Tanjung Karang, Balau, Buku Jadi, Tegineneng, Seputih Barat, Padang Ratu, Gedong Tataan, and Pugung.

This tribal community also experiences the same thing as indigenous communities in several other provinces, namely, facing the dynamics of conflict in indigenous communities,

especially conflicts with State Companies with indigenous communities; among others, this has occurred in several indigenous areas, such as in Pesawaran, Lampung-Sumatra. However, this study does not emphasize the dynamics of land conflicts, but rather what educational ideology can ensure that indigenous communities are still given the role of having authority over their customary territories, which also serves as environmental guardians and has food security, so that customary and territorial systems are maintained, and education also runs well, both school-age education and adult education.

### **Dominant Ideological Tendencies among Indigenous Education Observers**

The findings indicate that educational observers involved in indigenous education demonstrate a plurality of ideological orientations. Based on responses from 30 purposively selected participants, the data reveal a dominant tendency toward Educational Conservatism and Educational Intellectualism, alongside emerging orientations aligned with Educational Liberalism and Liberationism. This configuration suggests an ideological negotiation between maintaining cultural continuity and responding to structural pressures that threaten indigenous ecological and food systems.

The findings indicate that Educational Conservatism and Educational Intellectualism emerged as the dominant ideological orientations among respondents, with mean scores of 15.2 and 14.33, respectively. This dominance suggests that education practitioners tend to value stability, tradition, and rational reasoning when conceptualizing education within indigenous contexts. Such orientations reflect a concern that rapid or externally imposed educational changes may disrupt established cultural and ecological systems.

From an analytical perspective, this ideological tendency cannot be interpreted merely as resistance to change. Rather, it reflects a strategic response to prolonged experiences of marginalization, land conflict, and ecological uncertainty faced by indigenous communities. In this context, conservatism functions as a protective mechanism aimed at safeguarding customary knowledge, territorial authority, and sustainable relations with the environment.

Next, the general liberal ideology group. First, Educational Liberalism: In terms of educational liberalism, respondent number 3 again stands out with a score of 22, indicating strong support for the view that education should be more open and inclusive. This view, which emphasizes the importance of individual freedom in learning, is also supported by several other respondents, although most fall between scores of 1 and 17, indicating a more cautious or moderate stance. Second, Educational Liberationism: The highest scores for liberationism indicate that some respondents strongly support education as a tool for social liberation.

Respondent 3, with a score of 24, clearly embodies the perspective that education serves as a tool for social change. However, most respondents showed lower scores, ranging from 7 to 15, indicating a more moderate or neutral stance. In terms of educational anarchism, Respondent 3 again exhibited strong support for complete freedom from traditional educational structures and authorities, though several respondents recorded negative scores, reflecting substantial rejection of this view. Regarding general liberalism, while Respondent 3 and some others demonstrated relatively high support, the majority remained in a moderate range, suggesting an appreciation for liberal values in education without strong commitment. The Table 1 below presents the ideological tendencies of the 30 respondents:

Table 1. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Respondents' Educational and General Ideological Tendencies

<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Educational Intellectualism	14,33	6,38
Educational Conservatism	15,2	6,05
Educational Liberalism	14,93	5,93
Educational Liberationism	14,8	6
Educational Anarchism	12,96	7,67
General Conservatism	12,4	4,64
General Liberalism	9	3,88

Source: Processed by the researcher, 2024

Based on the table results, we can see the ideological tendencies of indigenous education observers. These questions were designed to explore respondents' views on six educational ideologies: Educational Fundamentalism, Educational Intellectualism, Educational Conservatism, Educational Liberalism, Educational Liberationism, and Educational Anarchism. Two additional categories, General Conservatism and General Liberalism, were also calculated to provide a more comprehensive picture.

### **Negotiating Change: Liberal and Liberationist Tendencies**

Despite the dominance of conservative and intellectualist orientations, the data also reveal significant openness toward Educational Liberalism and Educational Liberationism. The relatively high mean scores for these ideologies (14.93 and 14.8) indicate that respondents do not reject change outright but instead negotiate it selectively.

This ideological hybridity suggests that education practitioners are navigating a complex terrain in which they seek to balance cultural continuity with the need for adaptation. Rather than embracing radical transformation or anarchic educational models,

respondents appear to support gradual, context-sensitive reforms that enhance autonomy and critical awareness without dismantling customary structures.

Overall, the respondents' ideological tendencies indicate that Educational Conservatism and Educational Intellectualism dominate their perspectives, with mean scores of 15.2 and 14.33, respectively. This suggests that many respondents value educational approaches grounded in traditional values and rational, evidence-based reasoning, possibly reflecting concerns about rapid or radical changes in education. At the same time, Educational Liberalism and Educational Liberationism also garnered significant attention, with mean scores of 14.93 and 14.8, indicating a concurrent desire for greater flexibility, student autonomy, and inclusivity within the educational system. Conversely, Anarchism scored lower, with a mean of 12.96 and a relatively high standard deviation of 7.67, highlighting that opinions on highly unstructured or rule-free educational approaches remain diverse; while most respondents recognize the necessity of structure, some are more open to freer, less formally constrained models of education.

An interesting aspect of the study's results is that when looking at the scores for General Conservatism and General Liberalism, there is a fairly clear balance. The average for General Conservatism was 12.4, while for General Liberalism it was 9. This indicates that overall, respondents tended to fall in the middle of the spectrum, with a preference for neither ideology nor being extreme. They combined conservative and liberal values in their views on education, reflecting flexibility in the face of change and development in the education system. The analysis suggests that respondents had a fairly balanced view between maintaining traditional values and opening up space for more progressive educational approaches. The dominant conservatism and intellectualism indicate that many still value

a logical and structured framework in education. More specifically, this can be seen in the goals of education and schools, as well as the characteristic features of their ideologies, in the following Table 2:

Table 2. Comparative Characteristics and Educational Goals of Educational Conservatism and Educational Intellectualism

Aspect	Educational Conservatism	Educational Intellectualism
<b>Overall Goals of Education and Schools</b>	Preserve established social patterns; value institutions, traditions, and cultural processes that have stood the test of time; transmit necessary knowledge and skills for successful participation in the existing social order.	Recognize, preserve, and transmit truth; teach students how to reason; convey enduring wisdom from the past.
<b>General Characteristics</b>	Knowledge as a means to realize social values. Rational adaptation guided by historical precedent. Education as socialization into established systems. Centered on existing traditions and social institutions. Cultural stability is prioritized over the need for change. Operates within a closed cultural system, accepting gradual change under stable circumstances. Guided by beliefs proven reliable over time, practical ideas were	Knowledge as an end in itself; truth is an intrinsic value. Human nature is universally capable of transcending existing conditions. Traditional intellectualism emphasizes reasoning and speculative wisdom. Education provides guidance toward general understanding. Centered on history, with Western intellectual traditions dominant. Philosophical stability prioritized over change. Operates within a closed

beliefs proven reliable over time, practical ideas were prioritized over purely theoretical ones. Social assimilationism: dominant institutions and social processes take precedence over specific religious, philosophical, or ethnic traditions.	prioritized over change. Operates within a closed ideological system, based on self-evident truths derived from reasoning. Decisions grounded in intellectual reflection. Cultural assimilationism is oriented toward absolute religious or philosophical principles rooted in Western intellectual traditions.
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Source: Comparative Ideologies<sup>49</sup>

While Liberalism and Liberationism suggest they are not completely opposed to change and innovation, overall, these results reflect a diverse and balanced perspective, with respondents not leaning too heavily toward either extreme ideology. They tend to combine various ideological approaches in their views, perhaps due to the complexity and challenges of the ever-changing world of education. More details can be seen in the following Table 3:

Table 3. Comparative Educational Goals and Ideological Characteristics of Educational Liberalism and Educational Liberationism

Aspect	Educational Liberalism	Educational Liberationism
<b>Overall Goals of Education and Schools</b>	Promote effective personal behavior. Provide information and skills necessary for independent and effective learning. Teach students to solve practical problems individually and in groups using scientific-rational methods.	Encourage necessary social reform by maximizing personal freedom in schools while emphasizing human dignity and humanization. Help students recognize and respond to essential social change. Provide information and skills for effective independent learning. Teach practical problem-solving

		individually and collectively based on scientific-rational methods.
General Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge is a tool to solve practical problems.</li> <li>- Individuals are unique, deriving satisfaction from expressing themselves in changing conditions.</li> <li>- Emphasizes effective thinking (practical intelligence) and personal problem-solving skills.</li> <li>- Education focuses on developing personal effectiveness.</li> <li>- Centered on individual and group problem-solving.</li> <li>- Cultural change occurs indirectly through effective practice and small-scale continuous change.</li> <li>- Based on scientific and rational proof.</li> <li>- Intellectual authority resides in knowledge verified experimentally or democratically.</li> <li>- Social pluralism and individual psychology emerge to pursue personal interests in dynamic situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Knowledge is a tool to achieve essential social reform.</li> <li>- Humans are cultural products, fulfilling themselves along pathways defined by social systems.</li> <li>- Objective analysis and evaluation of existing social policies and practices.</li> <li>- Education represents the full realization of each individual's potential.</li> <li>- Future-oriented, emphasizing changes affecting established social systems.</li> <li>- Based on open experimental inquiry.</li> <li>- Determines awareness of socio-economic issues.</li> <li>- Intellectual authority lies with those who understand capitalism's pathological consequences.</li> <li>- Assimilationism focuses on constructive, goal-oriented objectives.</li> </ul>

Source: Comparative Ideology<sup>50</sup>

The ideological orientations identified in this study are closely linked to indigenous communities' roles as environmental

guardians and agents of food security. Conservative and intellectualist tendencies emphasize continuity in ecological practices, such as land stewardship and traditional agricultural systems, while liberal and liberationist perspectives introduce possibilities for reflective adaptation in response to environmental pressures and land conflicts.<sup>51</sup>

The educational model for communities should be grounded in an ideology of consciousness as the core of the educational process, applicable both to adult education and schooling. This aligns with notion of liberation education, which emphasized humanization through dialogue and reflection on lived realities.<sup>52</sup> Specifically, in adult education,<sup>53</sup> the process of raising awareness is continuous and contextually adapted<sup>54</sup> to the dynamics of indigenous communities.<sup>55</sup>

The first stage begins with the realities experienced by the community, such as land conflicts, environmental issues, or food security, addressed through dialogues with community members regarding their everyday challenges. In contrast, school-aged education develops a contextual learning model<sup>56</sup> while also promoting scientific knowledge according to generally relevant conservative ideologies,<sup>57</sup> with institutional methods and approaches guided by liberal principles. Adult education dialogues are conducted in a participatory manner.

The second stage, codification, involves representing existential human experience within the context of a phenomenon. Generative concepts are prepared, and codification functions as an object of knowledge, which is then decoded into new creative codifications, explicitly fostering critical thinking directed toward action. Therefore, this process not only fosters critical consciousness but also operationalizes praxis, where learners decode their socio-political realities to formulate collective actions for change.<sup>58</sup>

The third stage situates education within real-world contexts. For example, when indigenous communities reside in their territories and face land conflicts,<sup>59</sup> these tangible contexts serve as a framework for understanding objective reality.<sup>60</sup> Finally, in the theoretical context, educators and learners in discussion groups codify their environment to identify causality.<sup>61</sup> At this stage, the further the effort to acquire knowledge, the deeper the understanding of reality becomes. By adopting this ideology of liberation, it is expected that communities can achieve autonomous and practical empowerment. External actors serve solely as facilitators and mediators, encouraging the community to become intelligent, critical, and capable of challenging dominant ideologies.

From a Freirean perspective, the ideological configuration observed in this study reflects an emergent form of critical consciousness rather than passive acceptance of dominant educational paradigms. While conservatism provides cultural grounding, liberationist tendencies open space for dialogical reflection on lived realities such as land dispossession, ecological degradation, and food insecurity.

In line with Freire's concept of praxis, education within indigenous communities is not positioned as a neutral transmission of knowledge but as a process through which learners critically interpret their social and ecological conditions and collectively formulate strategies for action. The role of educators, therefore, shifts from authoritative instructors to facilitators of dialogue who mediate between tradition and transformation.

## **Conclusion**

This study concludes that observers of indigenous education predominantly hold conservative and intellectualist ideological orientations, which reflect a strong commitment to preserving customary values, institutional stability, and rational knowledge

transmission. These orientations should not be interpreted as resistance to educational change; rather, they function as protective mechanisms aimed at maintaining indigenous authority over customary territories, ecological stewardship, and food security in the face of ongoing structural and socio-environmental pressures.

At the same time, educational practices at the institutional level tend to exhibit a more liberal ideological orientation, emphasizing personal development, inclusivity, and problem-solving through scientific and rational approaches. The findings indicate that the interaction between conservative individual ideologies and liberal institutional orientations does not produce ideological tension, but instead forms a complementary configuration that enables adaptive and context-sensitive educational practices within indigenous communities.

This convergence of ideological orientations provides a foundation for the development of contextualized emancipatory education. In line with Paulo Freire's concept of liberation education, education for indigenous communities can function as a dialogical and praxis-oriented process that strengthens critical awareness, reinforces indigenous agency, and supports the sustainability of ecological and food systems rooted in local wisdom. Consequently, emancipatory education grounded in indigenous lived realities offers a viable framework for advancing socially just, ecologically resilient, and culturally grounded indigenous education models.

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