

Analysis Of Islamic Religious Education And Character Education Policy In The Deep Learning Curriculum

Ahmad Zainal Muttaqien

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia

Email: ahmad.zainal.muttaqien24047@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id

Abstract

This article analyzes the policy of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Character Education within the context of a deep learning–based curriculum, which emphasizes deep, critical, reflective, and contextual learning. This analysis employs a qualitative approach through literature studies on national education policies, curriculum theory, and the relevance of PAI and Character Education values to 21st-century learning paradigms. The findings reveal that applying deep learning principles in PAI strengthens character formation, enhances understanding of religious meaning, and promotes the authentic application of moral values in students' daily lives. However, the implementation requires synchronization between national curriculum policies, teacher competencies, and technological support aligned with Islamic values.

Introduction

The curriculum is a strategic instrument for achieving national education goals. In the 21st century, learning paradigms have shifted from surface learning to deep learning, which requires students to think critically, creatively, collaboratively, and communicatively. Through the *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom to Learn) policy, the Indonesian government has encouraged educational transformation toward more meaningful and contextual learning.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Character Education play a fundamental role in shaping students to be faithful, pious, and morally upright. Therefore, the integration of deep learning principles in PAI must be analyzed in

terms of policy, implementation, and challenges encountered in practice. The policy of PAI and Character Education within the deep learning curriculum is a strategic effort to enrich the learning process—not only to provide religious knowledge but also to instill deep moral and ethical values consistent with Islamic principles. This curriculum is designed to shape a young generation that is not only academically competent but also morally responsible and strong in character.

Literature Review

1. PAI and Character Education Policy

Based on the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 37 of 2018 and the 2022 Merdeka Curriculum, PAI and Character Education aim to cultivate students' faith and piety through understanding and practicing Islamic values in daily life.

2. Concept of Deep Learning in Education

Deep learning in pedagogy is not a technological concept but a learning model that emphasizes deep understanding, connections between concepts, and self-reflection (Biggs & Tang, 2011). This model aligns with Islamic values such as *tafakkur* (reflection), *tadabbur* (deep understanding), and *amal saleh* (real action).

3. Integration of Islamic Values and Learning Technology

Technology-based PAI learning—such as AI tools, e-learning, and digital media—can support deep learning by providing interactive and contextual learning experiences, as long as it adheres to Islamic ethical guidelines.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative policy analysis approach using literature review methods. Data were collected from educational policy documents, scientific journals, and relevant academic sources. The analysis was conducted in three stages:

1. Identifying relevant policies;

2. Analyzing alignment with deep learning principles;
3. Synthesizing recommendations for PAI implementation that adapts to technological and pedagogical development.

Results and Discussion

1. Curriculum Policy and Deep Learning Orientation

The Merdeka Curriculum provides flexibility for teachers to design project-based learning, which aligns with deep learning approaches. In PAI, this may take the form of religious social projects, such as *service learning* programs like environmental care activities based on Islamic values.

2. Relationship Between Islamic Values and Deep Learning Principles

Islamic values emphasize understanding, reflection, and real action. These align naturally with deep learning, which encourages students to think critically and apply knowledge in real-life contexts. For example, lessons on *amanah* (trustworthiness) can be developed through reflection on real cases within the community.

3. Implementation Challenges

Key challenges include:

- Teachers' readiness to understand and apply deep learning methods in PAI,
- Availability of technology-based learning media that uphold Islamic moral values,
- Synchronization between national policies and local school needs.

Strategies for Strengthening Implementation

To address these challenges, the following steps are essential:

- Providing professional training for PAI teachers on deep learning approaches,
- Integrating Islamic-aligned digital media into PAI learning,
- Developing adaptive curriculum policies that encourage innovation through project-based and spiritually reflective learning.

Goals and Basic Concepts

This curriculum emphasizes meaningful and enjoyable holistic learning through the development of intellect, emotion, spirituality, and physical engagement. Deep learning in this context focuses not merely on memorization but on internalizing religious values, including in interactions with people of different faiths.

Teacher Implementation and Competency Development

Implementation requires strengthening teacher competencies through programs such as Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy (LKLK), which fosters:

1. Personal competence—understanding one’s own religion comprehensively,
2. Comparative competence—understanding other religions to build harmonious relations,
3. Collaborative competence—working together regardless of differences.

Integration of Islamic Values

Values such as *adl* (justice), *ihsan* (benevolence), and *amanah* (accountability) are integrated into curriculum design to shape responsible global citizens. This approach also encourages moral development through the integration of spiritual, intellectual, and practical ethical dimensions.

Teaching Module Development

Deep learning–based teaching modules for PAI combine pedagogical depth with Islamic ethics and project orientation, such as designing simple AI applications guided by Islamic ethical principles. Modules include:

- Basic deep learning concepts,
- Practical implementation,
- Mini-projects with Islamic perspectives,
- Ethical discussions on technology from an Islamic viewpoint,
- Reflection and final evaluation.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges include insufficient teacher preparedness and limited infrastructure. Continuous training is required to ensure teachers understand deep learning concepts and their integration into PAI. However, these challenges also create opportunities to enhance Islamic education quality in Indonesia. Through deep learning, students not only acquire religious knowledge but also develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills relevant to real-life contexts.

Conclusion

The policy of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education within the deep learning curriculum has significant potential to strengthen character formation and deepen students' understanding of religious values. However, its implementation requires support in terms of policy alignment, teacher training, and digital learning infrastructure consistent with Islamic principles. With this approach, PAI can become a 21st-century learning model that emphasizes not only knowledge acquisition but also the moral and spiritual transformation of students.

References

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