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DEEP LEARNING-BASED RAUDHATUL ATHFAL CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION FOR STRENGTHENING EARLY CHILDHOOD ISLAMIC VALUES

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis transformasi implementasi kurikulum Raudhatul Athfal berbasis pembelajaran mendalam dalam penguatan nilai-nilai keislaman anak usia dini di RA Ar Rum Medan Marelان. Fokus penelitian diarahkan pada perubahan perencanaan kurikulum, pelaksanaan pengalaman belajar, strategi internalisasi nilai keislaman, asesmen perkembangan anak, serta faktor pendukung dan penghambat implementasinya. Penelitian dirancang menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui observasi kegiatan pembelajaran, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan kepala RA, guru, dan orang tua, serta analisis dokumen kurikulum, modul ajar, media pembelajaran, dan catatan perkembangan anak. Data dianalisis melalui proses kondensasi data, penyajian data, penarikan kesimpulan, dan verifikasi, sedangkan keabsahannya diperkuat melalui triangulasi sumber, teknik, dan waktu. Secara analitis, penelitian ini menguji transformasi kurikulum melalui keterpaduan pembelajaran berkesadaran, bermakna, dan menggembirakan dengan penanaman keimanan, ibadah, akhlak, kasih sayang, tanggung jawab, dan kepedulian sosial. Hasil akhir penelitian diharapkan menghasilkan model implementasi kurikulum RA yang tidak hanya menekankan pembiasaan ritual, tetapi juga membantu anak memahami, mengalami, dan merefleksikan nilai-nilai Islam dalam kehidupan sehari-hari.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Mendalam; Kurikulum Raudhatul Athfal; Nilai Keislaman; Anak Usia Dini; Transformasi Kurikulum*

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the transformation of deep learning-based curriculum implementation in strengthening Islamic values among young children at Raudhatul Athfal Ar Rum, Medan Marelان. The study focuses on changes in curriculum planning, the implementation of learning experiences, strategies for the internalization of Islamic values, assessments of children's development, and the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting implementation. This study

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employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through observations of learning activities, semi-structured interviews with the principal, teachers, and parents, as well as analyses of curriculum documents, teaching modules, instructional media, and children's developmental records. The data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification, while the trustworthiness of the findings was strengthened through source, methodological, and time triangulation. Analytically, this study examines curriculum transformation through the integration of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning with the cultivation of faith, worship practices, moral character (*akhlak*), compassion, responsibility, and social awareness. The study is expected to produce a model for implementing the Raudhatul Athfal curriculum that not only emphasizes the habituation of religious rituals but also enables children to understand, experience, and reflect upon Islamic values in their everyday lives.

Keywords: Deep Learning; Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum; Islamic Values; Early Childhood; Curriculum Transformation

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education constitutes a strategic foundation for the development of children's cognitive, socio-emotional, moral, and spiritual capacities. In the context of Raudhatul Athfal, the curriculum is directed not only toward academic readiness but also toward the cultivation of faith, religious practices, noble character (*akhlak*), responsibility, and concern for others. The development of thematic learning grounded in Islamic values enables religious principles to be integrated into diverse learning experiences rather than being treated merely as separate subject matter or memorization activities (Hayati, 2021). Research conducted in Islamic early childhood education institutions indicates that Islamic values can be integrated through curriculum planning, thematic learning, play-based activities, habituation, teacher role modeling, and the evaluation of children's development (Rahmatullah et al., 2022; Ningtyaz et al., 2025). Accordingly, the Raudhatul Athfal curriculum should ideally provide experiences that enable children to recognize, internalize, and practice Islamic values in their daily lives.

Although Islamic value education has become a defining characteristic of Raudhatul Athfal, its implementation may still be dominated by the memorization of supplications, short Qur'anic chapters, ritual prayer recitations, and the repetition of moral rules. Memorization and habituation remain important; however, they are insufficient when not accompanied by contextual experiences, simple dialogue, role modeling, play, and reflection appropriate to children's developmental stages. Religious and moral education becomes more meaningful when children experience it through storytelling, role-play, sharing activities, exploration of nature, hygiene practices, and



authentic social interactions (Rahiem et al., 2020; Rahmawati & Sumedi, 2020). Studies in early childhood education have also demonstrated that the relationship between play and learning must be intentionally designed so that play continues to provide space for children's initiative while simultaneously contributing to specific developmental and learning objectives (Pramling Samuelsson & Björklund, 2023; Størksen et al., 2023).

The deep learning approach offers a transformation from learning oriented toward the reproduction of knowledge to a learning process that is mindful, meaningful, and joyful. Mindful learning positions children as active participants who demonstrate attention to and awareness of the activities in which they engage; meaningful learning connects new knowledge with real-life experiences; whereas joyful learning creates a safe, positive, and motivating learning environment (Feriyanto & Anjariyah, 2024; Andayanie et al., 2025). In early childhood education, deep learning can be realized through simple projects, environmental exploration, interactive storytelling, collaborative play, and reflective conversations. Hamidah et al. (2025) demonstrated that deep learning pedagogy can be implemented in early childhood classrooms through contextual and enjoyable activities supported by teacher adaptability, institutional support, and parental involvement.

A number of studies have examined thematic learning based on Islamic values, the integration of Islamic values into STEAM education, curriculum management in Islamic early childhood education, and the implementation of deep learning at the preschool level (Hayati, 2021; Rahmatullah et al., 2022; Hamidah et al., 2025; Ningtyaz et al., 2025). However, based on this mapping of previous research, further investigation is required to specifically connect deep learning with the transformation of Raudhatul Athfal curriculum implementation in strengthening Islamic values. Previous studies have tended to examine particular components separately, whereas the interconnections among curriculum planning, learning experiences, value internalization, authentic assessment, teacher competence, institutional culture, and family partnerships have rarely been analyzed as an integrated process of transformation. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the transformation of deep learning-based curriculum implementation at RA Ar Rum, Medan Marelan, and its implications for strengthening Islamic values among young children.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The transformation of the Raudhatul Athfal curriculum is not limited to changes in documents, themes, or instructional tools; it also encompasses a paradigmatic shift in educational objectives, processes, learning experiences, and the assessment of children's development. A transformative RA curriculum should position children as active



subjects who learn through play, observation, experimentation, interaction, and reflection in forms appropriate to their developmental stages. Hayati (2021) explains that thematic learning programs grounded in Islamic values should be systematically designed by considering learning objectives, children's characteristics, instructional contexts, strategies, teaching materials, and assessment instruments. Meanwhile, Rahmatullah et al. (2022) demonstrate that Islamic values can be integrated into all components of learning through Islamic-themed activities, tarbiyah imaniyah or faith-based nurturing, the use of instructional media, and the connection of learning materials with the Qur'an and Hadith. Thus, the transformation of the RA curriculum requires the integration of Islamic values from the planning stage through evaluation, rather than limiting them to memorization activities or religious routines.

Deep learning is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning processes. Mindful learning encourages children to participate fully, recognize simple learning objectives, attend to the learning process, and understand their feelings and actions. Meaningful learning connects new experiences with prior knowledge, the surrounding environment, and children's everyday lives. Joyful learning, meanwhile, creates a safe, positive, appropriately challenging environment that is free from pressures inconsistent with children's developmental needs. Within the Indonesian educational framework, deep learning also integrates intellectual, spiritual-moral, affective-aesthetic, and physical development through experiences of understanding, applying, and reflecting on knowledge (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, 2025). Rahmawati et al. (2025) emphasize that deep learning constitutes a systemic transformation requiring educator competence, inclusive learning environments, learning partnerships, and a learner-centered orientation. This approach is relevant to RA because it is consistent with the holistic development of young children.

In early childhood education, the depth of learning is not determined by the amount of material delivered or the complexity of concepts, but by the quality of children's engagement in experiencing, understanding, applying, and connecting knowledge to other situations. Play therefore becomes the primary medium for implementing deep learning in RA. Through play activities designed with pedagogical purposes, children can develop language, social competence, emotional regulation, creativity, problem-solving skills, and value-based understanding in an integrated manner. Størksen et al. (2023) found that a structured and age-appropriate play-based learning curriculum can support children's school readiness. Strasser et al. (2024) likewise demonstrated that the degree of playfulness in classroom activities is associated with children's engagement, sustained attention, warmth of interaction, and the quality of teacher communication.



These findings indicate that the joyful principle of deep learning does not merely involve providing entertainment; rather, it entails creating purposeful play activities that offer choices, stimulate imagination, and encourage children's active participation.

The strengthening of Islamic values in early childhood encompasses the dimensions of aqidah or Islamic faith, worship practices, personal akhlak, social akhlak, and environmental responsibility. These values cannot be adequately conveyed through verbal explanations alone; they must also be cultivated through role modeling, habituation, direct experience, storytelling, role-play, dialogue, and simple reflection. Rahmatullah et al. (2022) found that teachers in Islamic kindergartens and RA institutions integrated Islamic values into STEAM activities through Islamic themes, the introduction of Islamic faith and teachings, the use of instructional media, and references to the Qur'an and Hadith. Rahiem et al. (2020) demonstrated that dramatized storytelling can help children focus their attention, comprehend the meaning of stories, and learn moral values. Teachers facilitated this process through expressive reading, vocal intonation, bodily movement, costumes, props, and technology. Deep learning can therefore strengthen the internalization of Islamic values because children do not merely hear abstract concepts of goodness but are also given opportunities to experience, practice, and connect them with everyday life.

The implementation of Islamic values within the RA curriculum can be achieved through the integration of objectives, content, processes, assessment, and institutional culture. The integration of objectives involves incorporating the development of faith and akhlak into learning outcomes. Content integration connects learning themes with Islamic stories, Qur'anic verses, Hadith, nature, worship practices, and children's social experiences. Process integration is realized through play, exploration, simple projects, role modeling, habituation, dialogue, and positive reinforcement. Assessment integration, meanwhile, is conducted through authentic observation of children's behavior rather than merely evaluating their ability to memorize supplications or short Qur'anic chapters. Hayati (2021) emphasizes that Islamic learning programs should align their objectives, materials, strategies, and assessment procedures with children's developmental stages. Rahmatullah et al. (2022) also show that Islamic values can be connected with science, art, technology, mathematics, and themes derived from everyday life. Such integration positions Islamic values as a foundational framework permeating children's entire learning experience rather than as supplementary content separated from the main learning activities.

Previous studies have provided important foundations concerning thematic learning programs based on Islamic values, the integration of Islamic values into STEAM



education, moral education through storytelling, and play-based learning. However, these studies have generally examined individual learning components separately. Research that comprehensively analyzes the relationship among the transformation of curriculum planning, the principles of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning, the internalization of Islamic values, authentic assessment, institutional culture, teacher competence, and parental involvement remains limited. Furthermore, the application of the deep learning framework within the specific context of Raudhatul Athfal represents a relatively recent development in pedagogical policy and therefore requires empirical evidence derived from institutional-level practices. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the transformation of deep learning-based curriculum implementation at RA Ar Rum, Medan Marelan. The analysis focuses on identifying the forms of change, implementation processes, strengthened Islamic values, children's responses, developmental assessment practices, and the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting curriculum transformation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a single-case study design. The qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to develop an in-depth understanding of the processes, experiences, meanings, and interactions among the actors involved in transforming the implementation of a deep learning-based Raudhatul Athfal curriculum. The case study design was used because the phenomenon was examined within its real-life context and was bounded by a single educational institution, namely RA Ar Rum, Medan Marelan. Yin (2018) explains that a case study is appropriate for investigating a contemporary phenomenon when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly distinguishable and when multiple sources of evidence are required. The unit of analysis was the transformation of curriculum implementation, while the subunits of analysis comprised curriculum planning, learning implementation, the internalization of Islamic values, children's assessment, institutional culture, and partnerships with parents. Informants were selected purposively and included the head of the RA, classroom teachers, assistant teachers, and parents who understood and were directly involved in curriculum implementation. The children were positioned as participants whose activities and responses were observed rather than as formal interview informants.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations of learning activities, and document analysis. The interviews explored the informants' understanding of curriculum changes, deep learning strategies, the strengthening of Islamic values, assessment practices, and implementation constraints. Observations



focused on opening activities, core play activities, exploration, teacher-child interactions, the habituation of worship practices, the use of instructional media, reflection, and developmental assessment. The documents analyzed included the RA operational curriculum, semester programs, teaching modules, anecdotal records, children's work, portfolios, and developmental reports. Data analysis was conducted concurrently through transcription, repeated reading, initial coding, the organization of codes into categories, theme development, and interpretation of the relationships among themes (Saldaña, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017). The trustworthiness of the findings was strengthened through source and methodological triangulation, repeated observations, member checking, thick contextual description, and the maintenance of systematic research records as an audit trail (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The identities of the children and informants were anonymized, and data collection was conducted only after institutional permission and parental consent had been obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Transformation of Curriculum Planning

The findings indicate that curriculum planning at RA Ar Rum, Medan Marelan, underwent a significant transformation following the implementation of the deep learning approach. This transformation was evident not only in changes to instructional documents and learning tools but also in a shift in teachers' paradigms regarding the design of children's learning experiences. Learning plans that had previously focused primarily on completing thematic content and memorizing religious materials were reoriented toward integrating children's developmental objectives, contextual learning experiences, and the strengthening of Islamic values. The head of the RA explained:

"Curriculum transformation is understood as a change in how teachers teach and how children learn. Children are no longer directed merely to memorize supplications or short Qur'anic chapters; instead, they are encouraged to understand the meaning of Islamic teachings through the learning experiences they encounter in their daily lives. They learn through play, discussion, environmental observation, and the direct practice of Islamic values in everyday situations" (Siti Hatizah, S.Pd., interview, 11 May 2026).

Furthermore, Islamic values were integrated into the entire range of learning activities, including morning reception, the habituation of exchanging Islamic greetings, collective supplication, maintaining environmental cleanliness, sharing food with peers, and participating in learning projects. Islamic values were therefore not taught exclusively during designated religious activities but were embedded throughout children's learning experiences (Siti Hatizah, S.Pd., interview, 11 May 2026).

2. Implementation of Mindful Learning

Mindful learning at RA Ar Rum was implemented by actively involving children in each stage of the learning process. Teachers acted as facilitators who guided children



in constructing knowledge through direct experience rather than functioning as the sole source of information. The Group B teacher explained:

"Each learning activity begins with a theme that is closely related to the children's lives. In the 'Mosque' theme, for example, the children were invited to observe a mosque near the school, discuss its functions, draw the shape of a mosque, participate in role-play as an imam and members of the congregation, and then engage in a simple reflection on their learning experience" (Siti Aisyah, S.Pd., interview, 30 May 2026).

Meanwhile, the Group A teacher stated:

"Learning is conducted through various exploratory activities, role-play, simple experiments, and storytelling. Teachers consistently connect the learning material with children's real-life experiences so that they can understand the relationship between what they learn and their everyday lives" (Zuzmaniar, S.Pd., interview, 13 June 2026).

These findings demonstrate that mindful learning increased children's attention, curiosity, and self-confidence during classroom activities.

3. Implementation of Meaningful and Joyful Learning

The findings indicate that meaningful learning was realized by connecting instructional content with children's real-life experiences. Teachers did not merely teach supplications as material to be memorized; they also encouraged children to recite a supplication before eating, share food with their peers, and understand why Allah loves those who are willing to share. The principle of joyful learning was reflected in the use of educational games, simple projects, environmental exploration, storytelling, and collaborative activities. Teachers explained that the children demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm because they perceived the activities as play, although they were simultaneously acquiring meaningful learning experiences. This finding was reinforced by an interview with a parent, who stated:

"The child often talks about the various projects conducted at school and feels happy to participate in learning because many of the activities involve play and direct practice" (Yusnita, interview, 27 June 2026).

Meaningful and joyful learning therefore enhanced children's emotional engagement, learning motivation, and active participation throughout the learning process.

4. Strengthening Islamic Values

The strengthening of Islamic values constituted one of the principal outcomes of implementing the deep learning-based curriculum at RA Ar Rum, Medan Marelan. Islamic values were not taught as isolated subject matter but were integrated into all learning activities through habituation, teacher role modelling, direct experience, dialogue, learning projects, and simple reflection. The head of the RA explained:



"Islamic values are cultivated from the moment children arrive at school through welcoming activities, the habituation of exchanging greetings, collective supplication, maintaining cleanliness, sharing with peers, and participating in various learning projects" (Siti Hatizah, S.Pd., interview, 11 May 2026).

A teacher further explained:

"Children are not merely asked to memorize supplications. They are guided to understand the meaning of Islamic conduct through practices such as sharing food, helping friends, maintaining cleanliness, and respecting others. Changes in children's behavior can be seen in their habit of reminding their peers to exchange greetings, disposing of waste in the appropriate place, and queuing without being instructed by the teacher" (Zuzmaniar, S.Pd., interview, 13 June 2026).

Interviews with parents revealed the continuation of these habits in the home environment. One parent stated:

"The child has begun reminding family members to recite a supplication before eating, greeting others when entering the house, and participating more regularly in congregational prayer with the family" (Yusnita, interview, 27 June 2026).

An interview with a child participant also demonstrated a simple understanding of Islamic values. The child stated that:

"We should pray before eating so that Allah will love us, help a friend who falls down, say salam when entering the classroom, and share because Allah loves children who like to share" (Fatimah, interview, 30 June 2026).

These findings indicate that the implementation of the deep learning-based curriculum enhanced not only children's ability to memorize religious material but also their understanding and practice of Islamic values in everyday life.

5. Transformation of Children's Developmental Assessment

The findings demonstrate that the assessment of children's development at RA Ar Rum shifted from an emphasis on memorization outcomes toward authentic assessment that evaluated children's developmental processes more comprehensively. A teacher explained:

"Assessment is conducted through direct observation of children's activities, portfolio development, documentation of their work, and daily developmental records. It does not focus solely on their ability to memorize supplications or short Qur'anic chapters but also considers their behavior, social interactions, and application of Islamic values in everyday life" (Siti Aisyah, S.Pd., interview, 30 May 2026).

The RA supervisor likewise emphasized:

"Authentic assessment has begun to be implemented, although teachers' competence in developing more comprehensive assessment instruments still needs to be continuously strengthened" (Desi Yudiana, M.Pd., interview, 1 July 2026).



These findings indicate that assessment no longer merely measures academic achievement but also functions as a means of continuously monitoring children's religious character and their social, emotional, and moral development.

6. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The implementation of the deep learning-based curriculum at RA Ar Rum was supported by several important factors, including the leadership of the head of the RA in promoting instructional innovation, teachers' commitment to implementing child-centered learning, the institution's religious culture, and parental involvement in reinforcing Islamic values at home. The RA supervisor stated:

"Teachers have assumed the role of learning facilitators, while Islamic values are integrated naturally through habituation, role modelling, learning projects, and play activities" (Desi Yudiana, M.Pd., interview, 1 July 2026).

Nevertheless, the study also identified several challenges in the implementation process. The head of the RA explained:

"The greatest challenge is improving teachers' competence in designing learning experiences that are genuinely meaningful and actively involve children. Teachers also acknowledge that project-based learning requires more preparation time than conventional instruction" (Siti Hatizah, S.Pd., interview, 11 May 2026).

In addition, the RA supervisor emphasized the importance of strengthening teachers' competence in developing authentic assessment, improving communication between the institution and parents, and providing continuous professional development related to deep learning, project-based learning, learning reflection, and the assessment of children's development (Desi Yudiana, M.Pd., interview, 1 July 2026).

Discussion

The findings indicate that the transformation of curriculum implementation at RA Ar Rum, Medan Marelan, began with a shift in the orientation of instructional planning. Planning that had previously emphasized theme completion, mastery of memorized material, and the implementation of religious routines was gradually redirected toward learning experiences that connected children's developmental objectives, play-based activities, and the internalization of Islamic values. This change was evident in [name of document or teaching module], which included not only supplications, short Qur'anic chapters, and religious content but also activities involving observation, exploration, practice, conversation, and simple reflection. This finding is consistent with Hayati (2021), who emphasizes that thematic learning based on Islamic values in kindergartens and *Raudhatul Athfal* should systematically integrate objectives, materials, activities, media, and assessment. It also extends the findings of Rahmatullah et al. (2022), who demonstrated that Islamic values can be incorporated into all components of STEAM activities in Islamic kindergartens and RA institutions. Thus, the transformation at RA Ar Rum was not merely administrative, involving changes in the format of instructional



documents, but pedagogical, as it altered the way teachers designed children's learning experiences.

Mindful Learning in Strengthening Islamic Values

The second finding reveals that the principle of mindful learning was implemented through opening activities that helped children focus their attention, recognize their emotions, connect with previous experiences, and understand the simple purposes of the activities in which they participated. Teachers did not immediately provide instructions or answers but instead used questions such as [example of a teacher's question] to encourage children to express their prior knowledge and experiences. This practice is consistent with the concept of deep learning, which positions mindful learning as a process in which learners are fully engaged, understand the purpose of learning, and are able to regulate their attention and actions. Within the deep learning framework, mindfulness involves not only intellectual development but also the integrated cultivation of the heart, emotions, senses, and physical engagement. In early childhood contexts, such awareness appears in concrete forms, for example, when children understand why they should express gratitude, share with others, maintain cleanliness, or apologize. The findings suggest that the internalization of Islamic values becomes stronger when children are not merely instructed to perform virtuous actions but are also guided to recognize their meanings, emotional dimensions, and consequences. Mindful learning therefore bridges religious habituation and the emergence of children's early moral awareness.

Meaningfulness and Joy in Children's Learning Experiences

The subsequent findings indicate that Islamic values were more readily understood when they were connected to experiences closely related to children's everyday lives. Values such as cleanliness, compassion, responsibility, gratitude, and care were not conveyed only verbally but were practiced through activities such as [cleaning the play area, caring for plants, sharing food, helping peers, or other factual activities]. This condition demonstrates that meaningfulness emerges when children are able to connect Islamic teachings with concrete actions. At the same time, the use of storytelling, role-play, songs, visual media, group activities, and environmental exploration created a joyful learning atmosphere. These findings are consistent with Størksen et al. (2023), who demonstrated that a structured and developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum can support children's learning abilities. Strasser et al. (2024) likewise found that playfulness is associated with the quality of classroom interactions, children's engagement, relational warmth, and communication quality. The dialogue between the present findings and existing theory confirms that joyful learning is not merely entertainment. Rather, joy constitutes a pedagogical condition that enables children to feel secure, valued, engaged, and open to understanding and practicing Islamic values.



Internalization of Islamic Values through Experience, Role Modelling, and Storytelling

The findings demonstrate that the strengthening of Islamic values at RA Ar Rum occurred through a combination of habituation, teacher role modelling, Islamic storytelling, dialogue, direct experience, and positive reinforcement. The values identified included [faith, gratitude, worship, honesty, discipline, responsibility, compassion, cooperation, and environmental awareness – adjust according to the data]. An important finding is that children were not only able to recite moral and religious expressions but also began to demonstrate these values through their everyday conduct, such as [examples of behavior based on observation]. This result is consistent with Rahmatullah et al. (2022), who showed that Islamic values in early childhood education can be integrated through Islamic themes, instructional media, the introduction of faith, and the connection of activities with the Qur'an and Hadith. The finding also supports Rahiem et al. (2020), who explain that dramatized storytelling through intonation, expression, movement, and media can help children understand moral messages. However, the present study adds that storytelling and habituation become more profound when followed by opportunities for application and simple reflection. Accordingly, the internalization of values develops through the stages of recognition, experience, practice, and gradual habituation.

Transformation of the Assessment of Children's Islamic Values

The findings also reveal a shift from assessment oriented toward memorization outcomes to authentic assessment that considers children's developmental processes, behavior, responses, and consistency of action. The ability to recite supplications, Qur'anic chapters, or religious expressions continued to be assessed; however, teachers also observed how children applied Islamic values when interacting with peers, completing tasks, maintaining cleanliness, or dealing with simple conflicts. Evidence of development was documented through [anecdotal records, checklists, portfolios, children's work, photographs of activities, or developmental reports]. This practice reinforces Hayati's (2021) view that assessment in Islamic thematic learning must be integrated with learning objectives, content, and activities. The finding is also related to Ningtyaz et al. (2025), who showed that integrating Islamic values into the early childhood curriculum requires an implementation framework, strengthened teacher competence, and systematic evaluation mechanisms. Nevertheless, the findings from RA Ar Rum indicate that value assessment in early childhood should not be used to label children as either good or bad. Rather, assessment should function as a means of understanding developmental processes, determining appropriate follow-up stimulation, and ensuring continuity in value reinforcement between the school and the family.

Supporting Factors, Constraints, and the Contribution of the Study

The final finding indicates that the success of curriculum transformation was influenced by the interconnected roles of the RA head's leadership, teacher readiness, the



learning environment, religious institutional culture, the availability of instructional media, and parental support. The main supporting factors included [insert findings], whereas the constraints involved [differences in teachers' understanding, limited time, inadequate facilities, class size, or discontinuity of habituation at home]. These constraints demonstrate that curriculum transformation cannot depend solely on individual teacher creativity but requires institutional policies, collaborative planning, professional development, periodic evaluation, and partnerships with families. This finding is consistent with Ningtyaz et al. (2025), who identify teacher training, an integrative thematic framework, and monitoring systems as essential components in integrating Islamic values into early childhood education. Based on the dialogue between the findings and the literature, this study proposes that the transformation of a deep learning-based RA curriculum is formed through the alignment of five elements: transformative planning; mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning; the contextualization of Islamic values; authentic assessment; and family partnership. This contribution distinguishes the present study from previous research, which has generally examined these components separately.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how students in the Qur'anic Studies and Exegesis (IAT) Department at Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara develop scientific consciousness within the context of Qur'an-science integration under the *Wahdah al-Ulum* paradigm. The findings demonstrate that scientific consciousness is a multidimensional construct comprising three interconnected dimensions: academic consciousness, practical consciousness, and ethical consciousness. These dimensions develop unevenly rather than simultaneously. Most students demonstrated positive epistemic awareness of the relationship between the Qur'an and science and generally perceived scientific knowledge as reinforcing religious belief. However, this awareness remained predominantly appreciative, while inquiry-oriented scientific practice and research integrity were less consistently internalized. The findings therefore suggest that recognizing the compatibility of science and religion does not automatically lead to methodological competence, inquiry-based behaviour, or ethical scientific practice.

The study contributes to the literature by proposing a conceptual framework that positions scientific consciousness as a broader construct than scientific literacy, scientific reasoning, or science-religion integration alone. Rather than focusing solely on scientific competence or institutional integration models, the framework explains how students progressively internalize scientific knowledge through epistemic understanding, practical engagement, and ethical responsibility. This perspective extends previous discussions of science-religion integration by demonstrating that successful integration depends not only on philosophical or curricular discourse but also on students' lived



academic experiences, research participation, and the cultivation of scholarly integrity. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of embedding inquiry-based learning, field observation, undergraduate research, scientific writing, and research ethics systematically within Qur'anic Studies curricula to strengthen students' scientific consciousness beyond conceptual appreciation.

This study is limited to a qualitative case study conducted within a single Islamic higher education institution, and the proposed framework should therefore be understood as an analytical model rather than a universally applicable developmental sequence. Future research may examine the transferability of this framework across different Islamic universities, compare diverse models of science-religion integration, and develop quantitative or mixed-method instruments to investigate the relationships between scientific consciousness, research experience, scientific identity, and academic integrity. Such studies would further refine the conceptual boundaries of scientific consciousness and contribute to strengthening science-religion integration within contemporary Islamic higher education.

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