

Implementation of Deep Learning Based on Islamic Educational Strategies in Student Character Development at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani

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ABSTRACT

Character education is one of the primary objectives of Indonesia's national education system and a fundamental goal of Islamic education. Along with the development of educational paradigms, the deep learning approach introduced by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education emphasizes meaningful, reflective, and applicable learning experiences rather than mere knowledge acquisition. In Islamic schools, this approach needs to be integrated with Islamic educational strategies to strengthen students' character development. This study aimed to analyze the implementation of deep learning based on Islamic educational strategies in developing students' character at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani. A qualitative case study approach was employed. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings showed that deep learning was implemented by integrating the principles of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning with Islamic educational strategies, including role modeling, habituation, advice, reflection, and the cultivation of a religious school culture. These strategies contributed to strengthening students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, honesty, social awareness, and independence. The main challenges identified were teachers' limited understanding of the deep learning concept and insufficient parental involvement in character education. This study contributes to the development of an integrated model combining deep learning and Islamic educational strategies for character education in Islamic junior secondary schools.



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INTRODUCTION

Education plays a strategic role in developing human resources who possess strong character, competence, and the ability to respond to changing times. In the Indonesian context, the national education system explicitly mandates that education should not only develop cognitive competencies but also foster character, noble morals, life skills, and civic responsibility, as stipulated in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003. Therefore, educational institutions are required to organize learning processes that not only transfer knowledge but also develop values, attitudes, and skills in an integrated manner (Azima et al., 2023; Fullan et al., 2018; Irfanuddin et al., 2025; Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah, 2025; Rahman, 2025; Shalahuddin & Syihabuddin, 2026).

In recent years, the Indonesian government has introduced the deep learning paradigm as a learning approach oriented toward conceptual understanding, critical thinking, reflection, and the application of knowledge in real-life contexts. This approach is based on three main

principles: mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning, which aim to create more meaningful, active, and enjoyable learning experiences. Deep learning no longer positions students as passive recipients of information but as active learners who construct knowledge through exploration, reflection, and collaboration (Abdurrochim et al., 2024; Aulia Nurul et al., 2025; Azizah et al., 2025; Cahyanto, 2025; Gustina et al., 2025; Khotimah & Arifin, 2025; Maulana, 2025).

This paradigm represents one of the directions of national education policy aimed at improving learning quality. The deep learning approach is expected to address learning practices that remain focused on memorization, content completion, and academic achievement alone. Instead, students are encouraged to understand concepts comprehensively, connect different areas of knowledge, and apply them in daily life so that learning can produce sustainable behavioral changes (Abdullah, 2017; Muhaimin, 2019).

From the perspective of Islamic education, the purpose of learning extends beyond cognitive mastery and is also directed toward the development of noble character as a manifestation of faith (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004; Lickona, 2018; Suyadi, 2020). Islamic education views human beings as individuals who should develop holistically through a balance of spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions. Therefore, the learning process should facilitate the internalization of Islamic values through various educational strategies, such as exemplary conduct (*uswah hasanah*), habituation (*ta'dib*), advice (*mau'izah*), motivation, supervision, and self-reflection. These strategies serve as important means for developing students' character in a sustainable manner.

The alignment between deep learning and Islamic educational strategies can be observed in their shared emphasis on meaningful learning experiences, reflection, and behavioral transformation. The principle of mindful learning encourages students' awareness of the learning process and personal development, while Islamic education promotes the concept of *muhasabah* as self-reflection for improving behavior. Similarly, meaningful learning aligns with efforts to connect religious knowledge with daily practices, ensuring that Islamic values are not only understood conceptually but also implemented through concrete actions.

Various studies have demonstrated that the implementation of deep learning positively influences conceptual understanding, critical thinking skills, learning engagement, and students' character development. The application of this approach in Islamic Religious Education has also been shown to increase student participation, strengthen the internalization of religious values, and create more reflective and contextual learning experiences.

However, most previous studies have focused on the effectiveness of deep learning in improving student learning outcomes, motivation, or learning activities in general educational settings. Research that specifically integrates deep learning with Islamic educational strategies for character formation within the madrasah environment remains limited. Furthermore, previous studies have primarily examined the implementation of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning principles without exploring in depth how Islamic educational strategies serve as a foundation for internalizing students' character values.

Based on these conditions, a research gap can be identified. Previous studies have generally examined deep learning as a pedagogical approach, whereas this study focuses on integrating deep learning with Islamic educational strategies in the formation of students'

character within madrasahs. Therefore, this study not only describes the implementation of learning but also explains how Islamic educational values are internalized through learning activities to develop students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, honesty, social awareness, and independence.

The novelty of this research lies in developing an implementation model that integrates deep learning with Islamic educational strategies as a comprehensive approach to character formation in Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs). This integration is expected to enrich Islamic education studies and provide an alternative character education model that aligns with the direction of national education policy.

Based on this background, this study aimed to analyze the implementation of deep learning based on Islamic educational strategies in developing students' character at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani, identify supporting and inhibiting factors affecting its implementation, and describe the contribution of this approach to students' character development.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was selected to examine the implementation of deep learning based on Islamic educational strategies in students' character development at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani within its natural context. The case study design enabled an in-depth exploration of the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes of learning activities in the madrasah.

The research was conducted at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani. The location was selected purposively because the madrasah had implemented learning activities that integrated Islamic educational values and character habituation programs.

Research subjects were selected using purposive sampling to identify informants with relevant knowledge regarding the implementation of learning activities (Creswell, 2018; Miles et al., 2020). The informants included the head of the madrasah, deputy head of curriculum, Islamic Religious Education teacher, other subject teachers involved in learning activities, homeroom teachers, and several students as supporting informants.

The data consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and observations of learning activities and school culture. Secondary data were collected through document analysis, including teaching modules, learning plans, character habituation programs, school discipline documents, madrasah vision and mission documents, and student activity records.

Data were collected through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to examine the implementation of deep learning and character development activities within the school environment. Interviews were conducted to explore teachers' experiences, perceptions, and strategies in implementing learning activities, while documentation was used to support and validate findings from observations and interviews.

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation. Member checking was also conducted with several key informants to confirm the accuracy of the research interpretations.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis was conducted throughout the research process until data saturation was achieved, providing a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of deep learning based on Islamic educational strategies in students' character development.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Deep Learning Planning Based on Islamic Education Strategy

The results of the study show that teachers at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani have begun to integrate the principles of deep learning into the learning planning process. This can be seen from the preparation of teaching modules that are not only oriented towards achieving academic competence, but also contain the goal of forming student character.

In each learning tool, teachers formulate learning outcomes that integrate aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Religious values, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, and social care are included as part of the learning objectives.

Teachers also design learning activities that encourage students to observe, discuss, reflect, problem-solve, and make decisions based on Islamic values. Thus, learning not only focuses on delivering material, but also provides a meaningful learning experience.

The observation results showed that teachers had applied the principles of mindful learning through the provision of perception, clear delivery of learning objectives, and reflection activities at the end of learning. Students are encouraged to understand the reasons why they study a material and how it relates to daily life.

Implementation of Deep Learning in the Learning Process

The implementation of learning shows that teachers use various active learning strategies that involve students directly in the learning process.

In the early stages of learning, the teacher begins the activity by reading prayers, reciting the Qur'an, and relating the subject matter to Islamic values. The activity aims to build learning readiness as well as instill religious character.

Furthermore, the teacher presents contextual problems that are close to the lives of students. For example, in moral material, students are asked to analyze cases regarding honesty, responsibility, and the wise use of social media based on Islamic teachings.

Teachers play more of a role as a facilitator than as the main source of information. Students are given the opportunity to discuss, express opinions, look for references, and present learning results.

The principle of meaningful learning appears when students connect learning materials with personal experiences and social conditions in the surrounding environment. Learning becomes more relevant so that students can more easily understand the meaning of the values learned.

Meanwhile, the principle of joyful learning is realized through the use of group discussion methods, educational games, creative presentations, simple project-based learning, and providing positive feedback to students

Implementation of Islamic Education Strategy in Character Building

Research has found that character formation is not only done through classroom learning, but also through an integrated school culture.

The first strategy is the example of the teacher. All teachers strive to show disciplined, polite, honest, and responsible behavior in carrying out their duties so that they become a real example for students.

The second strategy is habituation. Madrasah implements various routine activities such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an before learning, the culture of greeting and smiling, maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, and habituating time discipline.

The third strategy is to provide advice and strengthen values. Teachers provide guidance when they find student behavior that is not in accordance with Islamic values and relate each subject matter to the formation of morals.

The fourth strategy is reflection. At the end of the lesson, the teacher invites students to evaluate their attitudes, behaviors, and learning experiences obtained during the learning process.

The fifth strategy is collaboration between schools and parents through regular communication about the development of students' character so that the coaching process does not only take place at school, but also in the family environment.

Developing Student Character

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the implementation of deep learning based on Islamic education strategies has a positive influence on the development of students' character.

Religious character develops through increasing students' awareness in carrying out worship, reading the Qur'an, and maintaining manners towards teachers and friends.

The character of discipline can be seen from increased adherence to school rules, punctuality of learning, and completion of assignments according to schedule.

The character of responsibility is reflected in the ability of students to complete group and individual tasks independently.

The character of honesty develops through the habit of speaking honestly, doing tasks without cheating, and daring to admit mistakes.

The character of social care can be seen from the increase in cooperation between students, concern for friends who are experiencing difficulties, and involvement in social activities organized by madrasahs.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The success of the implementation of learning is influenced by several supporting factors, including the commitment of the madrasah head, teacher competence, religious school culture, the availability of character habituation programs, and the support of most parents.

On the other hand, the study also found some obstacles. Some teachers still need training on the concept of deep learning and its application in learning. In addition, the limitations of learning media, the variety of students' abilities, and the lack of optimal involvement of all parents are challenges in strengthening character formation in a sustainable manner.

Implementation of Deep Learning as a Value-Based Learning Approach

The results of the study show that the implementation of deep learning at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani is not only directed at the achievement of academic competence, but also at

the formation of students' character through the integration of Islamic values in the entire learning process. These findings show that deep learning has been applied as an approach that connects aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in an integrated manner.

The concept of deep learning places students as active subjects in building knowledge through the process of critical thinking, reflection, collaboration, and problem solving. Learning is no longer oriented to one-way delivery of material, but provides a learning experience that encourages students to understand the meaning of each concept learned. This approach is in line with the policy of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education which emphasizes the three main characteristics of deep learning, namely mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning.

The findings of the study show that teachers have developed learning that links the subject matter to the real experience of the students. This makes the learning process more contextual so that students are able to understand the relationship between learning materials and daily life. This condition reinforces the view that meaningful learning will result in more lasting behavioral changes than learning that is only oriented to memorization.

Thus, the implementation of deep learning in madrasahs not only improves the quality of the learning process, but also becomes an effective medium to internalize character values in students' lives.

Islamic Education Strategy as the Foundation for Character Building

This study found that the success of the implementation of deep learning was greatly influenced by the implementation of Islamic education strategies carried out consistently by teachers and all madrasah residents. These strategies include example, habituation, advice, reflection, strengthening religious culture, and cooperation with parents.

In the perspective of Islamic education, exemplification is the most effective educational strategy because learners tend to imitate the behavior they see firsthand. Teachers not only function as transmitters of knowledge, but also as educators who provide real examples of discipline, honesty, responsibility, and noble morals.

The findings of the study show that the culture of example at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani contributes to the formation of positive student behavior. Teachers consistently show a polite attitude, discipline, and responsibility in carrying out their duties so that they become models of behavior that can be emulated by students.

In addition to example, habituation is also an important strategy in character building. Routine activities such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an before learning, maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, greeting culture, and time discipline are forms of character learning that take place continuously. This habit strengthens the internalization of values because it is carried out continuously in daily life.

The results of this study strengthen the view that character education will be more effective if it is carried out through real experience rather than only through theoretical material delivery.

Integration of Deep Learning and Islamic Education Strategies in Character Building

The main findings of this study show that deep learning and Islamic education strategies are not two independent approaches, but complementary in shaping the character of students.

The principle of mindful learning encourages students to realize the purpose of learning as well as reflect on their development. In Islamic education, the process is in accordance with the concept of muhasabah, which is self-evaluation to improve behavior based on Islamic values.

The principle of meaningful learning is realized through learning activities that connect the subject matter with the real lives of students. The teacher invites students to analyze various problems that they encounter on a daily basis and then relate them to Islamic teachings. Through this approach, students not only understand concepts theoretically, but are also able to apply them in social life.

Meanwhile, joyful learning creates a fun learning atmosphere so that students are more active in discussing, cooperating, and expressing opinions. This condition increases student involvement during the learning process while strengthening character formation through positive social interaction.

The integration of these three principles with Islamic education strategies results in a learning process that not only develops the ability to think at a higher level, but also forms the religious character, responsibility, honesty, care, discipline, and independence of students.

Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Deep Learning

The success of the implementation of deep learning at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani is influenced by several supporting factors.

First, the leadership of madrasah heads who have a commitment to improving the quality of learning and character education. The head of the madrasah plays a role in providing direction, academic supervision, and support for teacher competency development.

Second, teacher competence in designing active and contextual learning. Teachers are able to develop learning activities that directly involve students so that the learning process becomes more meaningful.

Third, the culture of religious schools that has developed consistently. A school environment that supports the habituation of Islamic values strengthens the successful implementation of character learning.

Fourth, parental involvement through communication between school and family. This synergy helps maintain the consistency of student character development in the home and school environment.

These findings show that the implementation of deep learning does not only depend on teacher competence, but also requires the support of the school system as a whole.

Implementation Inhibiting Factors

In addition to various supporting factors, the study also found several obstacles in the implementation of deep learning.

Some teachers still need to strengthen their understanding of the concept of deep learning and its application strategies in various subjects. This condition shows the need for continuous training so that teachers are able to design more innovative learning.

In addition, the limitations of learning media and supporting facilities cause some learning activities to not be carried out optimally. The difference in student characteristics and abilities is also a challenge in designing learning that is able to accommodate all students.

Another obstacle is the lack of optimal involvement of all parents in the character formation process. Some students still face differences in coaching patterns between the school environment and their families so that the internalization of values has not taken place optimally.

Research Implications

This research provides both theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretically, the results of the study strengthen the view that deep learning can be integrated with Islamic education strategies as an approach to character learning in madrasas. The integration expands the study on the implementation of deep learning which has been more developed in the aspect of improving learning outcomes.

Practically, this study provides recommendations to madrasah heads and teachers to develop learning tools that integrate the principles of mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning with Islamic education strategies systematically. Teacher professional development programs also need to be directed at improving competencies in designing learning that is contextual, reflective, and character-building-oriented.

Research Novelty

The novelty of this research lies in the development of an in-depth learning implementation model combined with Islamic education strategies as an integrated approach in shaping the character of students in madrasas.

Previous studies have generally examined deep learning from a pedagogical perspective or improved learning outcomes. This study shows that the effectiveness of deep learning will be more optimal if integrated with Islamic education strategies such as example, habituation, reflection, and strengthening the school's religious culture.

Thus, this study offers a conceptual model that places deep learning as a learning approach, while Islamic educational strategies function as a mechanism for internalizing character values. The integration of these two concepts is a scientific contribution that can be used as a reference for the development of character learning in madrasahs and religious-based schools.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of deep learning based on Islamic educational strategies at MTs Daruur Rahmah Sukatani contributed positively to students' character development. The implementation was carried out through learning planning that integrated the principles of mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning with Islamic educational strategies, including role modeling, habituation, advice, reflection, and the strengthening of the madrasah's religious culture.

The learning process was not only oriented toward achieving academic competence but also encouraged the internalization of Islamic values in students' daily lives. The integration of deep learning and Islamic educational strategies supported the development of students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, honesty, social awareness, and independence.

The implementation was supported by several factors, including the leadership of the madrasah head, teacher competence, a religious school culture, and support from the school

environment. However, limited teacher understanding of deep learning, variations in students' abilities, and suboptimal collaboration between schools and parents remained challenges that required further attention.

Conceptually, this study indicates that deep learning can be strengthened through integration with Islamic educational strategies, enabling learning processes that not only improve academic quality but also support sustainable students' character development.

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