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# The Effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education Subjects in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum

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## ABSTRACT

This research is related to the lack of mutual collaboration between educators and students in the running of Islamic Education learning activities in the classroom because they have not been able to unite perceptions to achieve learning goals. Islamic Religious Education educators face challenges to implement within the framework of characteristics that include the development of soft skills and character, focus on essential materials, and flexible learning for students. The purpose of this research is to analyze and measure the effectiveness and strategies of Islamic Religious Education subjects in the Merdeka curriculum. This research used an analytical descriptive method with a qualitative approach using observation flow wrapped with interviews and questionnaire instruments totaling 20 question points containing 10 positive questions and 10 negative questions and 5 items of interview instruments to PAi subject educators at the school. This study shows positive results that there is an effect of the effectiveness of PAI subjects in the independent learning curriculum at Dharma Wanita Pare High School, seen from the results of the questionnaire instrument the majority of students answered agree and strongly agree on positive questions and vice versa for negative questions apply vice versa. This is the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) is accepted or approved while the null hypothesis ($H_o$) is not accepted or not approved.

**Keywords: Effectiveness of Islamic Education Subjects, Independent Learning Curriculum, Islamic Education Subjects**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education in schools is a conscious effort of guidance made by educators to students in order to achieve learning objectives. Educators will always guide and direct their students to become directed. But in the process, of course, there are various problems such as lack of one perception between educators and students in the learning process in one subject so that it hampers the educational process itself.

In learning Islamic religious education, this also applies, there are various problems related to the effectiveness of certain subjects. Educators prepare all the needs of the educational process of students but students do not receive according to the expectations of educators. Conversely, students come to school with high enthusiasm and motivation must be dashed because the delivery of learning is beyond the concept of the learner's expectations.

Subjects are components of a curriculum. If it is called a component, then if it is not effective it will interfere with and even hinder the process of achieving learning goals. In relation to the independent learning curriculum, of course, in the subjects there is religious education, whether it is Islamic religious education or others. In this study, it is more focused on the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects.

In the Independent Independent Curriculum, learners are given autonomy in choosing topics or learning projects that interest them. They can explore their own interests and talents and explore topics that are considered interesting and relevant. This curriculum emphasizes more on project-based learning, where learners are involved in real tasks or projects that require them to apply the knowledge and skills they learn.

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Merdeka Mandiri curriculum also gives learners the freedom to determine their own learning time and rhythm. They can learn at a pace that suits their own needs and learning style. In addition, this curriculum also encourages students to develop skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and creativity, which are considered important in facing real-world challenges.

The Merdeka Mandiri Curriculum approach aims to create students who are more active, independent, and have intrinsic motivation for learning. By giving freedom and responsibility to learners, it is hoped that they can develop their maximum potential and prepare themselves to face various challenges in the future.

Islamic education teachers as entities in schools are also required to be able to understand and implement the learning curriculum in Islamic education learning. Islamic education teachers face the challenge of implementing it within a characteristic framework that includes the development of soft skills and character, focus on essential materials, and flexible learning.

Thus, according to him, the time allocation is directed to develop soft skills and character of students through initial assessment and final assessment in several phases. Feisal gave tips so that GPAI's learning outcomes can meet the requirements, namely by encouraging teachers to provide varied learning, "schools need to find out and communicate intensely with parents." (Challenges of Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Education Learning (Directorate of Islamic Education).

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

### A. Research Background

This research was carried out in a series of research programs for the 2023 Social Work Lecture which was driven by lecturers and students of the Faculty of Islamic Religion, Islamic University of Jakarta, and Class of 2019. Researchers would describe the results and researched data that aimed to determine the role of the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in the Merdeka curriculum as described in the previous chapter, this researcher used qualitative methods to saw the natural conditions of a phenomenon. According to Sarosa (2012) qualitative research is research that tries to understand phenomena in their natural setting and context where researchers do not try to manipulate the observed phenomena. The research took place in June on June 7, 2023.

The results of this study were obtained through semi-open interview techniques and questionnaires conducted in depth to obtain information and data directly. Furthermore, researchers also used observation and documentation methods to found out more deeply and clearly and triangulate existing data have been analyzed. The analysis itself would focus on the effectiveness of islamic religious education subjects in the independent learned curriculum.

The first participant was an Islamic religious education educator at the school and the second participant was a student who has been actively participating in learning at this institution until now.

### B. Research Method

This researche used an analytical descriptive method with a qualitative approached by using an observation flowed wrapped in interviews and questionnaire instruments. Descriptive analytic is a method that serves to describe or provide an overview of an object to be studied through data or samples that have been collected as is without conducting analysis to make conclusions that apply to the public.

This research aims to find whether there is evidence of the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in the independent learning curriculum at Dharma Wanita 01 Pare High School.

### C. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection techniques in this study were carried out from primary data sources. Primary data is taken from educators and secondary data comes from students of class XI SMA Dharma Wanita 01 Pare by observing directly at the time of research implementation and also through research instruments, the research instruments used in this study are interview questionnaires and questionnaires.

For more details in this study using data collection techniques as follows:

1) Observation

Observations made by researchers are by observing and asking the educational pattern of an educator with students. Observation is used to collect data objectively if direct observation is made and by observing the data directly it will make it easier for researchers to analyze. This observation was conducted at SMAS Dharma Wanita 01 Pare which is located at SMAS DHARMA WANITA PARE Jl. Jend Ahmad Yani No.1 Pare, Kab. Kediri, Prov. East Java

2) Questionnaire

The questionnaire distributed is a closed questionnaire of 20 question items related to the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in an independent curriculum. This technique aims to collect data from respondents, by giving a set of written questions to respondents to answer. The questionnaire used is a questionnaire controlled by the researcher, namely a questionnaire whose answers are already available in 5 alternative answers. This study used a sampling method in the form of simple random sampling.

### D. Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis techniques in writing this research used narrative analysis. Data analysis techniques with narrative analysis are a type of qualitative method data analysis used to analyze stories or narratives that arise from qualitative data. In this technique, qualitative data is collected through interviews or narratives that are analyzed to understand the narrative structure and related meanings (Qualitative Data Analysis Techniques: Definition, Types, and Examples). This method focuses on how to convey ideas by collecting descriptions of an event and then organizing them into a story with a chronological approach. Therefore, the data is presented in the form of a narrative or description.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing the data on the influence of the effectiveness of Islamic education subjects in the independent learning curriculum at Dharma Wanita Pare High School, the researcher submitted a number of interview statements to the educators of Islamic Education subjects at Dharma Wanita Pare High School.
Among the list of questions asked are as follows:

1. In relation to the subject of Islamic religious education here, is it considered effective for changing the morals of students?

Answer: Islamic Religious Education at Dharma Wanita High School is effective. It can be seen from the behavior of students when meeting educators as a form of implementation of moral education to educators.

2. In relation to Islamic religious education learning materials, is the material presented in accordance with the direction of the applicable curriculum here?

Answer: Yes, on the other hand we evaluate educational activities, especially in Islamic religious education subjects so that they are more developed and effective for students.

3. In relation to the implementation of Islamic religious education learning, has it gone well?

Answer: In the process it has shown a good level, but there are some things that need to be improved such as the way of dressing, hair tidiness and the like.

4. Are the curriculum demands related to Islamic religious education subjects too burdensome for educators?

Answer: Educators consider it a challenge to develop and advance education in this high school.

5. What is the main target of Islamic religious education learning achievement at Dharma Wanita High School in the near future?

Answer: Maximizing the potential achievements of students both academically and non-academically in order to achieve the best achievements in schools around Pare.

*(Interview with one of the Islamic religious education teachers at Dharma Wanita Pare High School, June 7, 2023, Time 08.00-09.00 WIB)

Observation of secondary data is through students in the form of a questionnaire to 22 students with 20 items of positive question type statements and negative question variables.

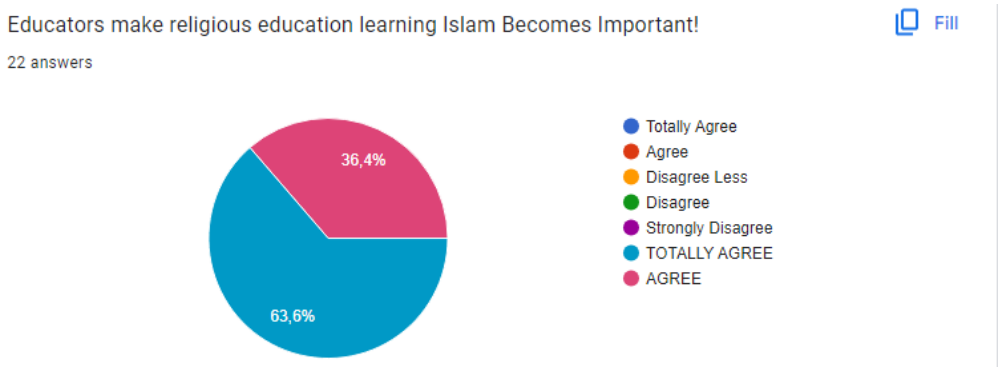
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Data regarding the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in the independent learning quirkulum at Dharma Wanita Pare High School were taken from the answers to questionnaires given to a sample of 11th grade students at Dharma Wanita Pare High School on Monday, Wednesday, June 7, 2023 which was carried out after educational counseling material by the resource person Drs Mugiyono, M.Pd.I. The yellow-colored questions are questions that describe the educator who describes the educator.

Yellow colored questions are questions that describe educators in educating students. While yellow-colored questions are the dimensions of students' understanding in understanding the learning delivered by educators.

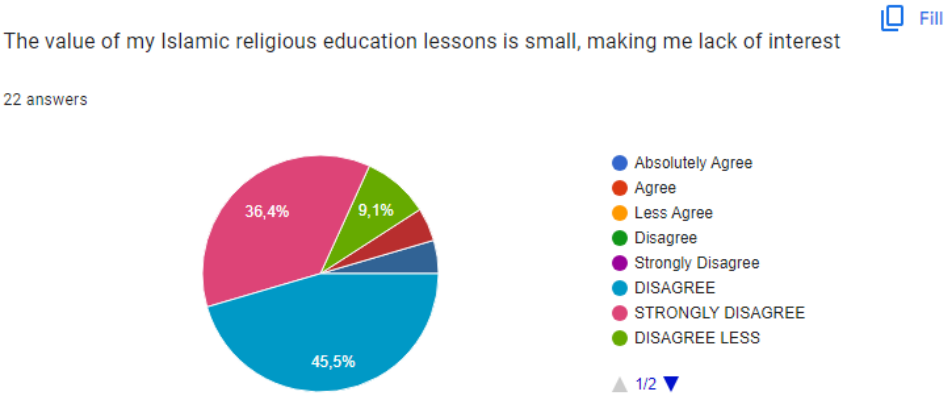
In the first point statement (Positive Question) about the importance of educators in learning PAI from a total of 22 respondents, 14 (63.6%) respondents answered strongly agree and 8 (36.4%) respondents answered agree. The following is the data tabulation:

**Fig. 1 Diagram of positive questions for respondents regarding educators**




Quoted from the diagram above, it is known that educators are an important key in the success of PAI learning in the classroom. As stated by the researcher that educators are a component of education, if one component is missing then the process will be disrupted until it fails.

**Fig. 2 Negative question diagram for respondents regarding educator**



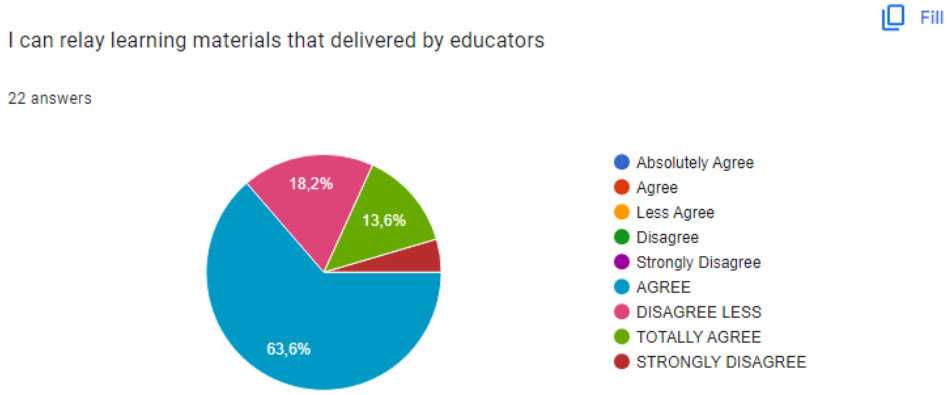

In the second point statement (Negative Question) about the disinterest of students because of the small value in PAI learning from a total of 22 respondents, 8 respondents answered strongly disagree and 10 respondents answered disagree.

From the data above, it is known that whatever the results of students' PAI scores do not make students uninterested in learning PAI at the School,

In relation to students' understanding of Islamic Religious Education learning on (positive question), the following data results were found:

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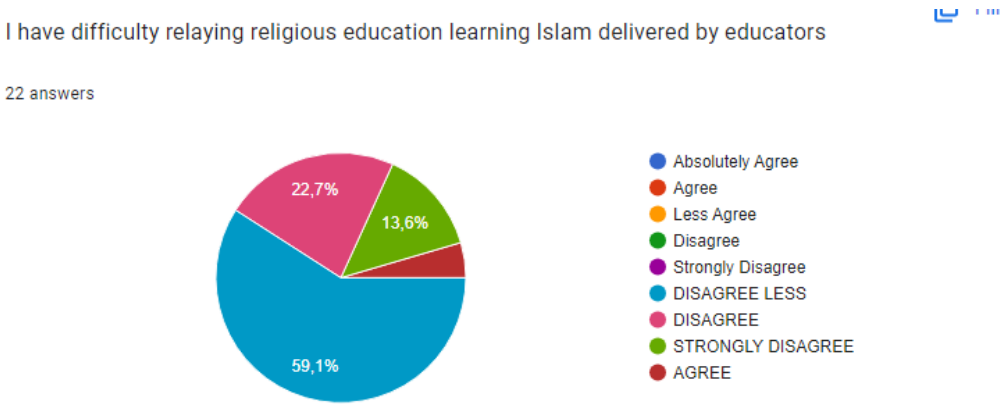
**Fig. 3 Diagram of positive questions for respondents regarding lesson comprehension**




It is known that 14 students agree with a percentage of 63.6% being able to convey back the learning material that has been conveyed by the educator, meaning that the educational process runs effectively.

While negative questions about students' understanding of learning understanding found the following data:

**Fig. 4 Diagram of negative questions for respondents regarding learning comprehension**

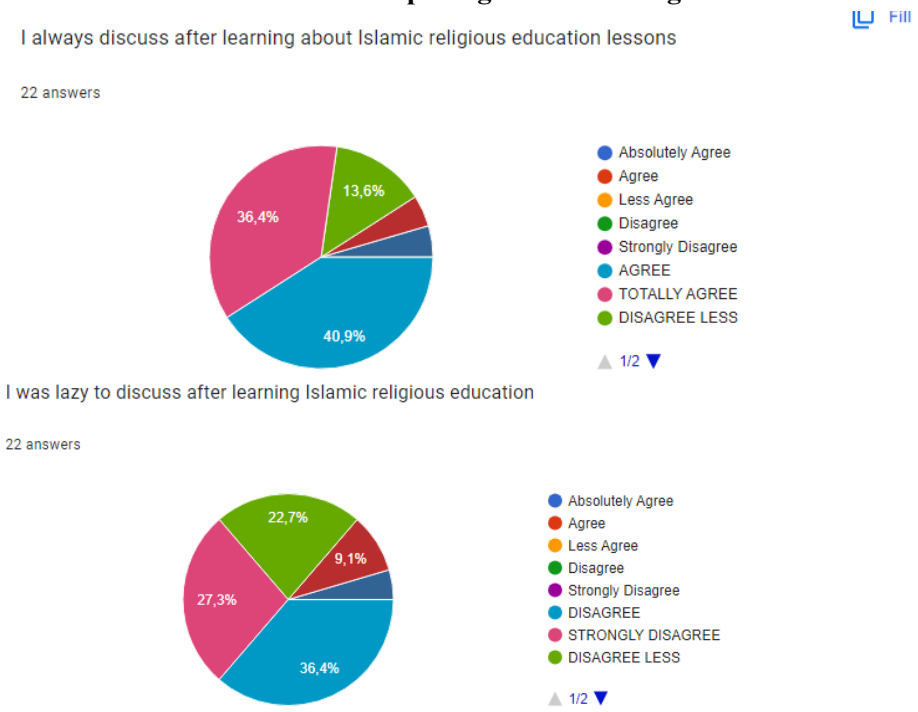



From the diagram above, it is known that more students are able to convey back the learning outcomes than difficulties. This means that learning material is successfully conveyed from educators to students.

In relation to the creativity of students which is the main demand of the independent learning curriculum, researchers try to ask positive and negative questions related to this. Then the following data is known:

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**Fig. 5 Diagram of positive and negative questions for respondents regarding learners' creativity in deepening understanding**




In the positive question index, it was found that 8 (36.4%) learners strongly agreed and 9 (40.9%) out of a total of 22 learners agreed that they always discuss after PAI learning takes place to develop students' critical thinking.

On the negative question index, it was found that 6 (27.3%) learners strongly disagreed and 8 (36.4%) out of a total of 22 learners disagreed that they always discuss after PAI learning takes place to develop learners' critical thinking.

From the data exposure obtained that the majority of students want and implement discussions after PAI learning is over to improve their critical thinking at Dharma Wanita Pare High School.

Similarly, researchers found that in statements or questions with positive weights they tend to respond well and vice versa if the statement or question has a negative weight then they respond with disagreement.

From the results of data analysis, both from observations of interviews with one of the Islamic religious education subject educators and observations of the second students showed a positive response which is certainly in accordance with the facts in the field. Researchers made observations found that the habit of takdzim to the teacher was found in this Dharma Wanita Pare High School. This means that the implementation of Islamic religious education learning in Dharma Wanita High School runs effectively.

Learning Islamic religious education in a school can provide significant benefits for students. Here are some sentences that explain the effectiveness of Islamic religious education learning in schools:

1. Effective learning of Islamic religious education in schools can help students understand the moral and ethical values espoused in Islam. This will shape their characters to be responsible, honest, and respectful individuals.

2. With effective Islamic religious learning, students will have a better understanding of religious teachings, including the basic principles, beliefs and worship practices in Islam. This will help them strengthen their religious identity and develop a deeper relationship with Allah SWT.

3. Effective Islamic religious learning can also improve students' understanding of Islamic history, culture and civilization. They will learn about important figures in Islam, relevant historical events, as well as Islamic contributions in science, art and architecture. This will open their minds to the rich heritage of Islamic civilization.

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4. In addition, effective Islamic religious learning in schools can help students understand and appreciate diversity in Islam. They will learn about different opinions in religion, schools of thought in Islam and the importance of interfaith tolerance. This will help create an inclusive atmosphere in the school that respects students' religious diversity.

5. Effective Islamic religious learning also provides opportunities for students to participate in social and humanitarian activities that are based on Islamic values. They can engage in charity work, community service or humanitarian projects to help them develop an attitude of empathy, compassion and concern for others.

Thus, effective Islamic religious education learning in schools makes an important contribution to shaping students' character, strengthening religious identity, enhancing understanding of Islamic religion and culture, and promoting inclusive attitudes and social care based on Islamic values.

The implications of effective learning of Islamic religious education in schools are as follows:

1. Strengthening Moral Values: Effective Islamic religious learning can help students gain a deeper understanding of moral and ethical values in Islam. They will learn about concepts such as honesty, justice, loyalty and kindness. This has an impact on building the character of students who have integrity, responsibility, and concern for others.

2. Increased Religious Awareness: Effective Islamic religious learning helps students strengthen their religious identity. They will learn about the principles of Islamic teachings, worship practices and underlying values. This enhances their understanding of Islam as their own religion, helping them to face challenges and maintain the integrity of their faith in a diverse society.

3. Development of Tolerance and Acceptance: Effective Islamic religious learning encourages students to respect and understand the diversity within Islam. They will learn about different schools of thought and opinions within the religion, as well as the values of tolerance and respect for the beliefs of others. This helps to create an inclusive climate in schools, where students respect each other's religious differences and build harmonious relationships.

4. Increased Understanding of Islam: Effective Islamic religious learning provides students with a better understanding of Islamic history, culture and civilization. They will learn about the contributions of Islam in science, art, literature and architecture. This helps raise students' awareness of the heritage of Islamic civilization and broadens their perspective of the world.

5. Development of Social Awareness: Effective Islamic religious learning encourages students to participate in social and humanitarian activities that are based on Islamic values. They will learn about the importance of doing good, helping others, and taking care of the environment. This helps students develop an attitude of empathy, social concern and charitable activities that benefit society.

The implications of effective Islamic religious education learning in schools include strengthening moral values, increasing religious awareness, developing tolerance, increasing understanding of Islam, and developing social awareness. These all contribute to the formation of students who have strong characters, deep religious understanding, inclusive attitudes, and concern for others.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research on the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in the Merdeka curriculum at Dharma Wanita Pare High School, it can be concluded as follows:

First, there is a fairly good effectiveness between Islamic religious education subjects in the applicable curriculum which is implemented in morals/behavior in the school environment of Dharma Wanita Pare High School.

Second, the magnitude of the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in the independent learning curriculum at Dharma Wanita Pare High School is the average response from respondents during interviews and questionnaire respondents from students show answers in accordance with the expectations of researchers. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected while the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted or approved. So it is concluded that the effectiveness of Islamic religious education subjects in the independent learning curriculum at Dharma Wanita High School is quite effective. This means that there is a high/strong influence.

Third, Strategies that need to be done for the effectiveness of the subject can be done by preparing learning materials and materials that are appropriate and targeted according to the conditions of each student.

This can be started from the diagnostic assessment of the independent learning curriculum. Another thing that needs to be dealt with is character-based learning with reference to Rosulloh SAW and his Companions in socializing and in the world of education. Like that, it will slowly make students imitate the concept of learning in the style of Rosul and his Companions. The next strategy is monitoring the attitudes and behavior of students at school and evaluating them every month. and if students are at home can coordinate with the parents of students. This is effective for monitoring changes in the attitudes and behavior of students towards a better direction.

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