

## Subjects of Study in Islamic Religious Education

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### Abstract

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Islamic Religious Education (*Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI*) learning is essentially an interactive and systematic process that involves continuous interaction between educators and students in order to develop students' spiritual, intellectual, and moral potential. In this process, teachers play a crucial role not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as guides and facilitators who design and adapt learning strategies according to the diverse abilities, characteristics, and learning needs of students. Students, as the main subjects of learning, are not positioned merely as passive recipients of information, but as active participants who are encouraged to understand, internalize, and practice Islamic teachings in their daily lives. Islamic education views human beings as creatures endowed with innate potential (*fitrah*), including the natural capacity to recognize and believe in Allah SWT. This foundational perspective emphasizes that education should nurture and develop these inherent potentials in a balanced manner. Therefore, PAI learning is directed toward achieving harmony between knowledge, faith, and righteous deeds. Through this balanced approach, PAI is not solely oriented toward cognitive achievement but also toward the development of students' Islamic character, moral integrity, and holistic personality.



## 1. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a very crucial role in shaping the character and personality of students so that they become individuals who have faith, piety, and good behavior. In the context of national education, PAI not only functions as a means to teach religious knowledge, but also as a medium to form attitudes, ethics, and actions that are in line with Islamic values. Students as subjects in PAI learning are important elements that affect the success of the educational process. Therefore, it is very important to understand the characteristics, needs, and potential of students so that the implementation of PAI education can be carried out effectively and relevantly. (Duryat, 2021).

The subject of education in PAI does not only play the role of a receiver of information, but also as an individual who actively develops understanding through experience and social interaction. In the PAI learning process, it is hoped that students can internalize Islamic values by using learning methods that are reflective, dialogical, and practical. This is in line with the constructivist view that places students at the center of attention in learning activities. When students are actively involved in thinking, discussing, and applying practices, religious values are not only understood theoretically, but also applied in daily life.

In the Islamic education system, the individual who learns or the subject of education is seen as an entity that has the natural potential to grow towards the achievement of self-perfection. The fitrah includes the ability of mind, feelings, and bodies that must be controlled through the educational process to be in accordance

with Islamic values. As a result, the goal of education is not only to master knowledge, but also to develop character and ethical values.

Students. In a philosophical view, Islam views humans as creatures that have three main dimensions, namely physical, intellect, and spiritual. All three must be developed in a balanced manner in order to achieve self-perfection (*insan kamil*). In the Qur'an, human beings are described as *abdullah* (servants of Allah) and *khalifatullah filardh* (representatives of Allah on earth) who are entrusted to advance the world through knowledge and righteous deeds. Therefore, Islamic education is not only concerned with the aspect of knowledge, but also includes the emotional aspects and skills that are interrelated in forming the Islamic character. This is where it is important to view students as subjects in the learning process, not just as parties who receive information.

## **2. Methods**

In this study, a quantitative approach was used with a type of research in the form of library research combined with a thematic interpretation approach (*maudhu'i*). Literature research is a research method that focuses on data collection through the search and study of relevant written sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, and other academic works related to the research topic. Through this method, the researcher did not collect field data, but focused the analysis on secondary data that was already available in various literature.

The thematic interpretation approach (*maudhu'i*) is used to study the verses of the Qur'an related to a particular theme comprehensively and systematically.

Relevant verses are collected, analyzed, and interpreted in an integrated manner to obtain a complete and in-depth understanding in accordance with the focus of the research study. This approach allows researchers to see the relationship between the meaning between the verses and the context as a whole. Thus, this research is included in the category of literature research that aims to investigate, analyze, and evaluate various literature sources critically and objectively, so that it can produce conclusions that are valid and scientifically accountable (Ismail, 2023).

### **3. Results**

Islamic Religious Education Learning has a very strategic role in the national education system, especially in shaping the personality of students who have faith, piety, and noble character. Etymologically, education comes from the Greek language, which is the word *pais* which means person and *again* which means to guide. From this understanding, education or *paedagogie* is understood as a process of guidance given to individuals in order to be able to develop optimally. Conceptually, education is a conscious and planned effort made by educators to guide the physical and spiritual development of students towards the formation of a main personality. Therefore, education is seen as a fundamental aspect that determines the quality of the young generation. From an Islamic perspective, the concept of education is known through three main terms, namely *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib*, although in contemporary educational practice the term *tarbiyah* is more widely used in the Arab world (Akbar, 2021).

Learning is essentially a process that is systematically designed to organize and create a conducive learning environment so that it is able to encourage students to learn actively. Learning is not only interpreted as the delivery of material, but also as a process of providing direction, mentoring, and support to students in the process of seeking knowledge. The role of teachers in learning is very important, especially as a facilitator and director who is able to adapt learning strategies to the characteristics of students. Differences in abilities, speed of understanding material, and students' backgrounds require teachers to design flexible and adaptive learning approaches. If learning is understood as a process of self-transformation, then learning is a planned effort to produce meaningful changes in aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of students.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System explains that learning is a process of interaction between educators, students, and learning resources that takes place in a learning environment. This definition emphasizes that learning is a system that involves various components that interact with each other to achieve optimal educational goals. Thus, the success of learning is highly determined by the quality of interaction between students, educators, and the use of available learning resources (Fransiska et al., 2024).

Islamic Religious Education, according to Zakiyah Daradjat, is a conscious effort to teach and explain Islamic teachings to students so that they are able to comprehensively understand religion. This education includes the Qur'an, hadith, monotheism, morals, jurisprudence, and Islamic cultural history. The ultimate goal

is to achieve a balance in human relationships with Allah SWT, with himself, with fellow humans, and with the surrounding environment. In the Outline of the Islamic Religious Education Teaching Program in public schools, it is explained that Islamic Religious Education is an effort that is carried out consciously and planned to prepare students to be able to know, understand, live, and believe in Islamic teachings, and is accompanied by an attitude of tolerance towards followers of other religions for the realization of harmony between religious communities and national unity (Ishak, 2021). Islamic Religious Education is also understood as a discipline that aims to foster Islamic faith and values so that they become part of students' attitudes and behaviors in daily life (Yansyah et al., 2024).

In the educational process, the subject of learning occupies a very central position. Learning subjects refer to learners who are actively involved in the learning process to acquire changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills through experience and interaction with the environment. Students are no longer seen as passive recipients of information, but as main actors who consciously strive to achieve learning goals. Ruwaida (2020) states that learning is a process of interaction between individuals and their environment that results in behavioral changes. Therefore, the learning process can only take place effectively if students have readiness, motivation, and active involvement in learning activities.

In the context of Islamic Religious Education, the role of students as learning subjects has a broader meaning. Students are not only required to understand the teachings of Islam cognitively, but also instructed to appreciate and practice Islamic values in their daily lives. Islamic religious education is oriented towards the

development of all human potentials which includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, so that students are expected to be able to achieve happiness in life in this world and in the hereafter. This is in line with the view of Zakiyah Daradjat which states that the goal of Islamic education is to develop all human potential in a balanced manner. Students are seen as beings who have fitrah, which is the basic potential to know and believe in Allah SWT, as affirmed in QS. Ar-Rum verse 30.

The Qur'an places humans as true learning beings, as reflected in QS. Al-'Alaq verses 1–5 describe the command to read as the initial stage of human education. In Islamic Religious Education, students play the role of seekers of knowledge, implementers of Islamic teachings, and spreaders of good values in the surrounding environment. Students have different backgrounds, abilities, and levels of religious understanding, so educators are required to apply diverse and contextual learning approaches. Islamic Religious Education has an important role in directing the moral and spiritual development of students through habituation and example.

Islamic Religious Education learning not only focuses on the cognitive aspect, but also emphasizes the formation of attitudes and behaviors that reflect Islamic values. This is in line with QS. Al-Mujis verse 11 which emphasizes the virtue of knowledgeable people, as well as QS. Thaha verse 114 which teaches the importance of seeking knowledge throughout life. Both verses show that science has a high position in Islam and serves as a means to increase faith and righteous deeds. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, learning is seen as a lifelong process and part of worship (Ilham, 2020).

Attitude is one of the affective aspects that is very influential in the learning process of Islamic Religious Education. Attitudes reflect an individual's tendency to accept or reject an object based on his or her judgments, feelings, and experiences. Thurstone, cited by Fahlevi et al. (2023) defines an attitude as a positive or negative tendency towards a psychological object, while Laksono et al. (2024) views an attitude as a feeling of pleasure, displeasure, or neutrality towards something. Attitudes can be formed and changed through repeated experiences, intellectual development, integration of experiences, and certain events that leave their mark on individuals (Rahmawati, 2022).

Attitude has an important function in individual life, including as a means of self-adjustment, self-defense mechanism, expression of values, and as a basis for assessing and understanding an object. In learning Islamic Religious Education, the formation of a positive attitude towards Islamic teachings is the main goal so that students not only understand the teachings theoretically, but also be able to internalize and practice them in daily life. Thus, Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in shaping learning subjects who are knowledgeable, faithful, and noble in character.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is basically a process that is designed in a structured way to organize and organize the learning environment so that students are motivated to actively develop themselves. The role of teachers as guides and facilitators is very important, while students are the main entities that are

active in learning, understanding, and applying religious knowledge. In the context of PAI, students not only receive knowledge intellectually, but also feel and apply Islamic values in their daily lives. The purpose of Islamic Religious Education is to create individuals who have faith, piety, good character, and have a balance between knowledge and action. In PAI, students are considered as creatures who have a religious nature, which is the natural potential to recognize and believe in Allah SWT. The PAI learning process must also pay attention to the differences in students' religious abilities, interests, and experiences. Therefore, teachers need to use a varied, humanistic, and contextual approach, as well as provide examples in attitudes and behaviors. Through proper guidance, students can develop morally, spiritually, intellectually, and socially, so that they are able to make Islamic values as a guideline for life in society. Thus, PAI learning is not only a process of knowledge transfer, but the formation of an Islamic personality as a whole. The subject of learning plays the role of seeker of knowledge, practitioner of Islamic teachings, and spreader of Islamic values, so that Islamic religious education really becomes a means of forming a kamil person who is balanced between faith, knowledge, and pious deeds.

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