

The Implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh Instruction within the Merdeka Curriculum at Islamic Elementary School

Aida Hayani¹, Akhmad Zulfikar Khabibullah², Moh. Farhan³, Putri Nabila⁴, Fifi Anti Mapika Sari binti Sukanto⁵

¹Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, Universitas Alma Ata Jalan Brawijaya No.99 Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 55183

²Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

Jalan Laksda Adiucipto, Papringan, Caturtunggal, Depok, Kabupaten Sleman, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

³Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang

Jalan Raya Kaligawe KM 4, Kelurahan Terboyo Kulon, Kecamatan Genuk, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

⁴Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, UIN Sultahanah Narasasiyah Lhokseumawe

Jalan Medan-Banda Aceh Km. 275, Buket Rata, Alue Awe, Kecamatan Muara Dua, Kota Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia

⁵Section of Islamic Studies, School of Humanities, Tun Hussein Onn University of Malaysia Parit Raja, 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia

Corresponding author : aidahayani@almaata.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has encouraged a paradigm shift from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered learning that promotes higher-order thinking skills, character development, and lifelong learning. Despite these expectations, Fiqh instruction in Islamic Elementary Schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) continues to encounter several pedagogical challenges. Consequently, an instructional approach that facilitates meaningful, reflective, and engaging learning experiences is required to optimize the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This study investigates the implementation of the Deeper Learning approach in Fiqh instruction and examines its contribution to improving learning quality at MIN Kota Lhokseumawe. Employing a qualitative field research design, participants were selected using purposive sampling, involving the principal, one Fiqh teacher, and students who were directly engaged in the implementation of Deeper Learning in classroom instruction. The collected data were analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, while the trustworthiness of the findings was established through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings demonstrate that Deeper Learning transforms conventional Fiqh instruction into an active learning process that encourages inquiry, collaboration, reflection, and contextual understanding. However, challenges remain, including differences in students' learning readiness, limited instructional media, and the need for continuous teacher adaptation to innovative instructional approaches. The study concludes that integrating Deeper Learning into the Merdeka Curriculum enhances not only students' conceptual understanding of Fiqh but also their critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and character development, making it a promising pedagogical approach for improving Islamic education at the elementary level.

Keyword: *deeper learning; fiqh instruction; islamic elementary school; merdeka curriculum*

ABSTRAK

Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka telah mendorong pergeseran paradigma dari pengajaran yang berpusat pada guru ke pembelajaran yang berpusat pada siswa yang mempromosikan keterampilan berpikir tingkat tinggi, pengembangan karakter, dan pembelajaran sepanjang hayat. Meskipun harapan-harapan ini, pengajaran Fiqih di Sekolah Dasar Islam (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah) terus menghadapi beberapa tantangan pedagogis. Oleh karena itu, pendekatan pengajaran yang memfasilitasi pengalaman belajar yang bermakna, reflektif, dan menarik diperlukan untuk mengoptimalkan pelaksanaan Kurikulum Merdeka. Studi ini menyelidiki penerapan pendekatan *Deeper Learning* dalam pengajaran Fiqih dan meneliti kontribusinya terhadap peningkatan kualitas pembelajaran di MIN Kota Lhokseumawe. Menggunakan desain penelitian lapangan kualitatif, peserta dipilih dengan menggunakan purposive sampling, yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, satu guru Fiqih, dan siswa yang secara langsung terlibat dalam penerapan *Deeper Learning* dalam pengajaran di kelas. Data yang dikumpulkan dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif yang terdiri dari reduksi data, tampilan data, dan penarikan serta verifikasi kesimpulan, sementara keandalan temuan ditetapkan melalui triangulasi sumber, triangulasi metode, dan pemeriksaan anggota. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik mengikuti model interaktif dari Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña, yang melibatkan kondensasi data, tampilan data, dan penarikan serta verifikasi kesimpulan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa *Deeper Learning* mengubah pengajaran Fiqih konvensional menjadi proses pembelajaran aktif yang mendorong penyelidikan, kolaborasi, refleksi, dan pemahaman kontekstual. Namun, tantangan tetap ada, termasuk perbedaan dalam kesiapan belajar siswa, media pengajaran yang terbatas, dan kebutuhan untuk adaptasi guru yang berkelanjutan terhadap pendekatan pengajaran yang inovatif. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa mengintegrasikan *Deeper Learning* ke dalam Kurikulum Merdeka tidak hanya meningkatkan pemahaman konseptual siswa tentang Fiqih tetapi juga berpikir kritis, kolaborasi, komunikasi, dan pengembangan karakter mereka, menjadikannya pendekatan pedagogis yang menjanjikan untuk meningkatkan pendidikan Islam di tingkat dasar.

Kata Kunci: kurikulum merdeka; pembelajaran mendalam; pengajaran fiqih; sekolah dasar islam

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INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum represents a significant educational reform in Indonesia aimed at transforming learning from a teacher centered approach to a student-centered process. This curriculum emphasizes not only the achievement of academic competencies but also the development of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and character building to prepare students for the challenges of the

twenty-first century. Through greater autonomy in curriculum implementation, teachers are encouraged to design meaningful and contextual learning experiences that accommodate students' diverse learning needs and promote lifelong learning (1).

In Islamic Elementary Schools (*Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*), the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Fiqh, particularly on the topic of *ibadah* (Islamic worship), remains challenging. Fiqh

instruction is often dominated by memorization of legal rulings and teacher-directed explanations, limiting students' opportunities to develop conceptual understanding and apply Islamic teachings in authentic contexts. Consequently, many students are able to recall religious concepts but experience difficulties in relating them to their daily worship practices and moral behaviour. These conditions highlight the need for innovative instructional approaches that encourage active participation, reflective thinking, and meaningful learning experiences (2).

Kota Lhokseumawe before the study commenced. Classroom observations and informal discussions with the Fiqh teacher indicated that learning activities were still predominantly teacher centered, with instruction focusing mainly on explaining legal concepts and requiring students to memorize religious rules and procedures. Opportunities for students to engage in inquiry, collaborative learning, critical discussion, and reflective activities were relatively limited. As a result, although most students were able to recall Fiqh concepts correctly, many experienced difficulties in explaining the underlying wisdom (hikmah) of Islamic worship and applying these concepts to everyday situations. These preliminary findings indicate a gap between the student centered orientation promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum and the actual implementation of Fiqh instruction in the classroom. Therefore, an instructional approach that promotes deeper conceptual understanding and meaningful learning experiences is urgently needed. One instructional approach that has gained

increasing attention is Deeper Learning, which emphasizes students' ability to construct knowledge through inquiry, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and reflection. The framework is built upon three interconnected principles: Mindful Learning, which promotes self-awareness and reflective thinking; Meaningful Learning, which connects new knowledge with learners' prior experiences; and Joyful Learning, which creates an engaging and motivating learning environment. These principles are expected to strengthen students' conceptual understanding of Fiqh while fostering religious character and encouraging the practical application of Islamic values in everyday life (3).

Previous studies have demonstrated that Deeper Learning contributes positively to students' academic achievement, higher-order thinking skills, collaboration, and character development across various educational settings (4,6). However, empirical studies investigating the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction within the Merdeka Curriculum at Islamic Elementary Schools remain limited. Existing research has primarily focused on general classroom instruction rather than Islamic religious education, leaving a significant research gap regarding how Deeper Learning can be effectively integrated into Fiqh learning. Previous studies have demonstrated that Deeper Learning contributes positively to students' academic achievement, higher-order thinking skills, collaboration, and character development across various educational settings (4,6). However,

empirical studies investigating the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction within the Merdeka Curriculum at Islamic Elementary Schools remain limited. Existing research has primarily focused on general classroom instruction rather than Islamic religious education, leaving a significant research gap regarding how Deeper Learning can be effectively integrated into Fiqh learning. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction on the topic of ibadah at an Islamic Elementary School, focusing on its implementation process, supporting and inhibiting factors, and its contribution to improving the quality of learning within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Previous studies have consistently reported that Deeper Learning improves students' academic achievement, higher-order thinking skills, collaboration, and character development across various educational contexts (4,6). Nevertheless, these studies have predominantly been conducted in general education settings and have focused mainly on science, mathematics, or social studies. Research examining the implementation of Deeper Learning in Islamic Religious Education, particularly in Fiqh instruction at the *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* level, remains scarce. Moreover, existing studies generally evaluate learning outcomes without explaining how the three dimensions of Deeper Learning Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning are enacted in classroom practice or how they support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Consequently,

evidence regarding the pedagogical processes, contextual challenges, and enabling factors influencing the successful implementation of Deeper Learning in Islamic education is still limited.

This study addresses these gaps by providing an in-depth investigation of the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction on the topic of ibadah within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum at an Islamic Elementary School. Unlike previous studies that primarily measured learning outcomes, this research explores the instructional processes, teacher practices, student learning experiences, and contextual factors that facilitate or hinder the implementation of Deeper Learning. The novelty of this study lies in integrating the three core dimensions of Deeper Learning Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning as an analytical framework for examining Fiqh instruction in Islamic Elementary Schools. Furthermore, the study offers empirical evidence on how Deeper Learning contributes not only to students' conceptual understanding of Islamic jurisprudence but also to the development of religious character, reflective thinking, collaboration, and authentic worship practices within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

The study is particularly urgent because the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum depends not only on curriculum reform but also on teachers' ability to transform classroom pedagogy into meaningful learning experiences. Without effective instructional approaches, the curriculum's objectives of fostering critical thinking, learner autonomy, and

character development may not be achieved. Considering the strategic role of Fiqh education in shaping students' religious understanding and daily worship practices, identifying an effective pedagogical model for implementing Deeper Learning is essential for improving the quality of Islamic education in Indonesian Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction on the topic of *ibadah* at an Islamic Elementary School, focusing on its implementation process, supporting and inhibiting factors, and its contribution to improving the quality of learning within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a field research design to explore the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction on the topic of *ibadah* within the Merdeka Curriculum. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and practices in natural educational settings. This approach is appropriate for examining how Deeper Learning is implemented in classroom activities and how it influences the teaching and learning process (7).

The study was conducted at MIN Kota Lhokseumawe, an Islamic Elementary School that has implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. The research site was selected purposively based on its adoption of the curriculum and its relevance to the objectives of the study. The research was conducted over a three month period, from

February to April 2026. During this period, the researcher carried out six classroom observation sessions and conducted semi-structured interviews with the principal, the Fiqh teacher, and selected students.

The participants consisted of one principal, one Fiqh teacher, and 24 fifth-grade students who were directly involved in the Fiqh learning process. Participants were selected using purposive sampling because they were considered capable of providing rich and relevant information regarding the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction (8). The principal and the Fiqh teacher were selected as key informants due to their roles in curriculum implementation and instructional planning. The student participants were selected based on three criteria: (1) they actively participated in Fiqh learning under the Merdeka Curriculum, (2) they attended all observed learning sessions, and (3) they were willing to participate after obtaining permission from the school and their parents or guardians. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two participants, namely the principal and the Fiqh teacher, while six students representing high, medium, and low learning achievement (two students from each category) were also interviewed to obtain diverse perspectives on the learning process. Classroom observations focused on one Fiqh teacher and the 24 students during four instructional meetings on the topic of *ibadah*. Document analysis included the Merdeka Curriculum teaching module (*Modul Ajar*), lesson plans, students' worksheets, assessment instruments, classroom observation notes,

and school policy documents related to curriculum implementation. No questionnaire was administered because the study employed a qualitative field research design that relied on interviews, observations, and document analysis as its primary data sources.

Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were conducted to examine instructional practices, teacher–student interactions, and the implementation of the three core dimensions of Deeper Learning, namely Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning. The observation guideline focused on classroom activities, students' participation, collaborative learning, reflective practices, contextual learning experiences, and teacher facilitation during Fiqh instruction. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, the Fiqh teacher, and selected students to explore their experiences, perceptions, supporting factors, and challenges related to the implementation of Deeper Learning. The interview protocol included questions concerning participants' understanding of Deeper Learning, classroom implementation, perceived benefits, challenges encountered, and suggestions for improving Fiqh instruction. Furthermore, document analysis included lesson plans, teaching modules, learning materials, and other relevant school documents to complement and validate the research findings. The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which

consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (9). These analytical procedures were carried out continuously throughout the research process to identify patterns, generate themes, and develop meaningful interpretations of the findings.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking were employed. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different participants, whereas method triangulation was achieved by comparing data collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis. In addition, member checking was undertaken by returning the preliminary findings to selected participants for confirmation, thereby enhancing the credibility and dependability of the study (10). This study adhered to ethical principles in educational research. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school principal, and informed consent was secured from all participants. For student participants, parental or guardian consent was obtained through the school. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary, that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequences, and that all personal information would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of classroom observations, interviews, and instructional documents indicates that the

implementation of Fiqh instruction at MIN Kota Lhokseumawe has generally reflected the principles of Deeper Learning within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum. The document analysis revealed that the teacher had prepared instructional planning through the development of a *Modul Ajar*, Learning Objectives, Learning Objective Flow, learning materials, and assessment instruments that emphasized active student participation, contextual learning, and character development. The learning objectives were designed not only to develop students' cognitive understanding of Fiqh concepts but also to strengthen critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. According to the Fiqh teacher, lesson planning intentionally incorporated reflective activities and contextual problems to encourage students to understand the wisdom (*hikmah*) underlying Islamic worship rather than merely memorizing legal rulings.

The implementation of learning also demonstrated substantial alignment with the characteristics of Deeper Learning. Classroom observations showed that the teacher adopted the role of a facilitator who guided students through questioning, collaborative discussions, demonstrations of worship practices, and reflective learning activities. The instructional process encouraged students to actively construct knowledge by connecting Fiqh concepts with authentic situations encountered in their daily lives. Although the teacher did not explicitly apply a formal Deeper Learning model, the sequence of learning

activities consistently reflected its pedagogical principles. The learning process began with motivating students through contextual questions related to worship practices, followed by the exploration of authentic problems, collaborative discussions, demonstrations, group presentations, reflective evaluation of the meaning of worship, and concluding feedback. This instructional sequence enabled students to move beyond procedural understanding toward deeper conceptual comprehension and practical application of Islamic teachings.

The assessment process likewise reflected the principles of Deeper Learning. Rather than relying solely on written tests, the teacher employed formative and authentic assessment through classroom observation, oral questioning, group discussions, demonstrations of worship practices, reflective responses, and performance assessment. These assessment strategies enabled the teacher to evaluate not only students' mastery of Fiqh concepts but also their critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and religious attitudes. Such assessment practices are consistent with the competency-based orientation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes holistic student development encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

The successful implementation of Deeper Learning was further supported by the availability of instructional resources and learning media. During classroom observations, the teacher utilized the *Modul Ajar*, Fiqh textbooks, the Qur'an, students'

worksheets (LKPD), PowerPoint presentations, instructional videos demonstrating worship practices, whiteboards, LCD projectors, and authentic learning resources available within the school environment.

These media facilitated contextual and interactive learning experiences, although interviews also revealed limitations in the availability of innovative digital learning media. Consequently, teachers were required to maximize existing resources creatively to maintain meaningful and engaging learning activities. Overall, the findings indicate that the instructional planning, classroom implementation, learning process, assessment practices, and supporting media have substantially aligned with the principles of Deeper Learning. Nevertheless, continuous improvement remains necessary, particularly in strengthening teachers' pedagogical competence, expanding the use of interactive instructional media, and further developing authentic assessment practices to optimize the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Fiqh instruction.

The findings revealed that the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction on the topic of *ibadah* at MIN Kota Lhokseumawe was reflected through three interconnected dimensions: Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning. These dimensions were observed during classroom instruction and supported by interviews with the principal, the Fiqh teacher, and students.

Mindful Learning

Mindful Learning was implemented by encouraging students to reflect on the meaning and purpose of Islamic worship before performing practical activities. The teacher initiated learning through reflective questions and contextual discussions that encouraged students to understand not only the procedures of worship but also the values underlying each religious practice. Classroom observations indicated that students became more engaged in learning and demonstrated greater awareness of the importance of applying Islamic teachings in their daily lives.

One student explained: *"I now understand not only how to perform worship correctly, but also why every act of worship has an important meaning in everyday life."* (Student S3).

The Fiqh teacher also stated: *"Students are encouraged to reflect on the wisdom behind every worship practice instead of merely memorizing religious rules."* (Teacher T1).

Meaningful Learning

Meaningful Learning was evident in the integration of Fiqh concepts with students' real-life experiences. Teachers presented contextual examples related to daily worship practices and encouraged students to solve simple religious problems collaboratively. Students actively participated in discussions and were able to explain the relevance of Fiqh concepts to everyday situations. This approach enabled students to construct knowledge through

experience rather than memorizing religious concepts.

One student commented: *"The examples provided by the teacher make it easier for us to understand how Fiqh is practiced in everyday life."* (Student S7).

Similarly, the teacher explained: *"Students understand the lesson better when it is connected with situations they actually experience."* (Teacher T1).

Joyful Learning

Joyful Learning was reflected in various interactive learning activities, including group discussions, demonstrations of worship practices, educational games, and collaborative problem-solving. These learning activities created a positive classroom atmosphere and encouraged active participation. Students showed greater enthusiasm during learning activities and demonstrated increased confidence in expressing their opinions and asking questions.

One student stated: *"Learning through games and discussions makes*

Fiqh lessons more interesting and motivates me to participate actively." (Student S12).

The principal also observed: *"Interactive learning activities have increased students' confidence and participation during Fiqh lessons."* (Principal P1).

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Several supporting factors contributed to the successful implementation of Deeper Learning, including teachers' pedagogical competence, supportive school leadership, collaborative classroom interactions, and the availability of learning resources. Meanwhile, several challenges were also identified, such as differences in students' learning readiness, limited instructional media, and the need for continuous teacher adaptation to innovative instructional approaches. Despite these challenges, teachers attempted to maximize available resources by applying flexible and contextual teaching strategies.

Table 1. Research Indicators for the Implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh Instruction

Theme	Findings	Representative Participant Quotation
Mindful Learning	Students reflected on the meaning of worship before practice and demonstrated greater religious awareness.	<i>"I now understand not only how to perform worship correctly, but also why every act of worship has an important meaning."</i> (Student S3)
Meaningful Learning	Fiqh concepts were connected with students' daily experiences through contextual learning.	<i>"The examples provided by the teacher make it easier for us to understand how Fiqh is practiced."</i> (Student S7)
Joyful Learning	Interactive learning activities increased students' participation and motivation.	<i>"Learning through games and discussions makes Fiqh lessons more interesting."</i> (Student S12)
Supporting Factors	Teachers' competence, school leadership, collaboration, learning resources.	<i>"The school supports teachers in implementing more interactive learning."</i> (Principal P1)
Inhibiting Factors	Different learning readiness, limited media, teacher adaptation.	<i>"Some students require more assistance because they learn at different paces."</i> (Teacher T1)

Based on the **Table 1** findings indicate that the implementation of Deeper Learning supports the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly in promoting student centered learning and meaningful educational experiences. The integration of Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning encouraged students to develop conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and religious character through active participation in Fiqh learning. These findings are consistent with the principles of Deeper Learning proposed by Fullan et al. (3), which emphasize reflective thinking, collaboration, and authentic learning experiences.

The implementation of Mindful Learning enabled students to understand the philosophical and spiritual meanings of Islamic worship rather than merely memorizing procedural steps. This finding supports previous studies demonstrating that reflective learning enhances students' self-regulation and learning engagement (4). Meaningful Learning facilitated students in connecting Fiqh concepts with real-life situations, enabling them to apply Islamic teachings in authentic contexts. This result is in line with constructivist learning theory, which explains that meaningful learning occurs when learners integrate new knowledge with their prior experiences (5). Similar findings have also been reported in previous studies on contextual learning (6,7).

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum serves as the foundation for integrating the Deeper Learning approach through three interconnected dimensions:

Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning. These dimensions are expected to facilitate an interactive Fiqh learning process that promotes students' critical thinking, religious character, collaboration, worship competency, and overall learning quality. The framework guided the data collection and analysis throughout this study. Another important finding concerns the implementation of Joyful Learning, which creates an engaging and motivating classroom atmosphere. Interactive discussions, collaborative group work, demonstrations of worship practices, educational games, and problem-based learning activities increase students' participation and learning motivation. This finding supports previous research indicating that enjoyable learning environments positively influence academic achievement, classroom engagement, and students' emotional well-being (8,9). Within Islamic education, joyful learning also contributes to reducing students' anxiety toward learning religious subjects and encourages active participation during classroom activities (10).

Furthermore, Joyful Learning created an engaging classroom environment through collaborative discussions, demonstrations, and educational games. These activities increased students' motivation and participation while fostering communication and collaboration skills. Previous studies similarly reported that enjoyable learning environments positively influence academic achievement and student engagement (8–10). The findings also emphasize the important role of teachers as facilitators of learning. Rather

than serving solely as knowledge transmitters, teachers guided students through inquiry, reflection, and collaborative learning activities. This pedagogical role is consistent with the implementation principles of the Merdeka Curriculum and previous studies on innovative teaching practices (11,13).

Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges remain, including differences in students' learning readiness, limited instructional resources, and the need for continuous professional development. Similar challenges have also been reported in previous studies on curriculum implementation and educational reform (14,17). The present study further indicates that teachers play a central role in facilitating Deeper Learning. Teachers no longer function solely as transmitters of religious knowledge but as facilitators who encourage inquiry, critical questioning, collaboration, and reflection. This shift is highly consistent with the pedagogical orientation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which encourages teachers to design differentiated and contextual learning experiences according to students' needs and characteristics (11). Previous studies similarly emphasize that teachers' pedagogical competence significantly influences the successful implementation of curriculum reform and innovative instructional approaches (12,13).

Despite these positive contributions, several challenges remain in implementing Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction. Differences in students' learning readiness, varying levels of motivation, limited instructional resources, and teachers'

readiness to implement innovative pedagogical approaches continue to influence learning effectiveness. These findings correspond with previous studies reporting that curriculum reform often requires continuous professional development, institutional support, and adequate learning facilities to ensure sustainable implementation (14,16). In addition, integrating Deeper Learning into Islamic education requires teachers to balance conceptual understanding, religious values, and practical worship skills simultaneously, making instructional planning more demanding than conventional teaching approaches (17).

Overall, this study demonstrates that Deeper Learning provides a promising pedagogical framework for improving the quality of Fiqh instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum. The approach facilitates not only the acquisition of religious knowledge but also the development of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and religious character. These competencies correspond to the educational vision of the Merdeka Curriculum and the broader goals of twenty-first-century education, which emphasize holistic student development rather than academic achievement alone (2,18,19).

Therefore, integrating Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning into Fiqh instruction has the potential to strengthen students' understanding of Islamic teachings while preparing them to become reflective, responsible, and lifelong learners (20).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction on the topic of *ibadah* supports the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum by creating a more student-centered, interactive, and meaningful learning process. The integration of Mindful Learning, Meaningful Learning, and Joyful Learning encourages students to develop a deeper understanding of Fiqh concepts while strengthening their religious character, critical thinking, collaboration, and active participation in learning. However, the successful implementation of Deeper Learning depends on teachers' pedagogical competence, students' learning readiness, and the availability of supporting learning resources. Therefore, continuous teacher professional development and innovative instructional strategies are needed to optimize the implementation of Deeper Learning in Fiqh instruction at Islamic Elementary Schools.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single research site (MIN Kota Lhokseumawe), which may limit the transferability of the findings to other Islamic Elementary Schools with different educational contexts and characteristics. Second, the study employed a qualitative approach that focused on exploring participants' experiences rather than measuring the effectiveness of Deeper Learning quantitatively. Therefore, future studies are recommended to investigate the implementation of Deeper Learning in different educational settings, involve multiple schools, and employ mixed-

methods or quantitative approaches to provide broader empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness in improving students' learning outcomes.

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