



EVALUATING THE STAKE MODEL IN IMPLEMENTING ISLAMIC EDUCATION (PAI) INSTRUCTION UNDER THE MERDEKA CURRICULUM AT SMAN 1 PAMBOANG

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the implementation of Islamic Education (PAI) learning within the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang using Stake's Countenance Model. The research gap lies in the limited empirical evaluation of PAI instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum, particularly concerning the formulation of specific learning objectives and the contextual relevance of learning activities. This study aims to assess the effectiveness of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation in PAI learning and to formulate recommendations for improvement. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis, focusing on the antecedents, transactions, and outcomes components of the Stake Model. The evaluation results indicate that teachers demonstrate strong understanding of learning outcomes and learning objective sequences, with average scores of 4.3 and 4.2, respectively. However, the formulation of learning objectives and the relevance of learning activities obtained lower average scores of 3.8 and 3.9, suggesting areas that require improvement. While the learning process supports students' holistic development, it still needs stronger contextualization and alignment with future-oriented learning principles. Learning outcomes show significant improvement, with an average score of 4.3. The study recommends strengthening teacher competencies through continuous professional development, conducting regular curriculum evaluation and refinement, and enriching learning resources. As a key contribution, this study provides an empirical application of Stake's Countenance Model in evaluating PAI learning within the Merdeka Curriculum, offering a structured evaluative framework that can be used by educators and policymakers to improve the quality, relevance, and sustainability of religious education in similar educational contexts.

Keywords: Learning evaluation; Merdeka curriculum; Stake's countenance model; Curriculum implementation

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Education (PAI) plays a crucial role in the Indonesian education system, particularly in shaping students' moral, spiritual, and social character. In response to rapid societal changes and shifting educational paradigms, the Indonesian government introduced the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes flexibility, autonomy, and student-centered learning. This curriculum provides schools and teachers with greater freedom to design learning experiences that are responsive to students' needs and contextual realities. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang thus presents an important opportunity to examine how PAI instruction adapts to these new curricular principles in practice.

Previous studies have highlighted both the potential and the challenges of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Syamsul Arifin (2022) found that teacher readiness remains a major obstacle, particularly in adapting instructional planning and assessment practices. Similarly, Lestari (2023) reported limitations in learning resources and infrastructure that hinder effective curriculum implementation in several schools. These findings suggest that, despite its conceptual strengths, the Merdeka Curriculum still encounters practical challenges at the school level, especially in terms of instructional execution and teacher capacity.

However, existing studies largely focus on general curriculum implementation issues and rarely examine PAI learning specifically through a systematic and comprehensive evaluation model. Empirical research that evaluates PAI instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum using an established program evaluation framework—such as Stake's Countenance Model, which integrates antecedents, transactions, and outcomes—remains limited. As a result, there is insufficient evidence-based understanding of how curriculum planning, learning processes, and learning outcomes in PAI are aligned and implemented in practice. This gap highlights the need for an in-depth evaluative study that moves beyond descriptive analysis toward a structured assessment of curriculum effectiveness.

Addressing this gap, the present study offers a novel contribution by applying Stake's Countenance Model to evaluate the implementation of PAI learning within the Merdeka Curriculum at the senior secondary school level. Unlike previous studies that predominantly assess curriculum implementation in general terms, this study provides an integrated evaluation of curriculum readiness, instructional processes, and learning outcomes in PAI. The explicit use of the Stake Model enables a holistic analysis that connects planning, implementation, and results, thereby offering a more comprehensive and systematic understanding of PAI learning quality under the Merdeka Curriculum.

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of PAI instruction within the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang using the Stake Model. Specifically, it seeks to: (1) identify the readiness of the school and teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum; (2) evaluate PAI learning processes conducted within the Merdeka Curriculum framework; and (3) assess student learning outcomes and the impact of curriculum implementation on the quality of PAI instruction. Through this evaluation, the study also identifies supporting and inhibiting factors and proposes recommendations for future improvement.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research question: “How effective is the implementation of PAI instruction within the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang when evaluated using Stake’s Countenance Model?” By providing empirical evidence and structured evaluation findings, this research is expected to contribute to curriculum development, instructional improvement, and policy formulation, particularly in strengthening the quality and relevance of PAI learning in the context of educational reform.

2. METHODS

This study employed an evaluative research design using a qualitative descriptive approach. The evaluation model applied was Stake’s Countenance Model, which consists of three main components: antecedents (context and planning), transactions (learning process), and outcomes (learning results). This model allows for a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Education (PAI) learning at SMAN 1 Pamboang by systematically examining curriculum planning, instructional practices, and learning outcomes.

The study was conducted at SMAN 1 Pamboang over a period of three months to ensure sufficient time for data collection, observation, and analysis. The data sources comprised both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from seven informants, consisting of three PAI teachers, one school principal, and three students selected purposively to represent different learning experiences. Secondary data were collected from official documents, including curriculum guidelines, teaching modules, lesson plans, assessment records, and relevant literature related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in PAI learning.

Data collection was carried out through several techniques. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with PAI teachers, students, and the school principal to obtain in-depth information regarding curriculum planning, learning implementation, and assessment practices. Classroom observations were undertaken to examine the actual PAI learning process, including instructional strategies, student engagement, and learning interactions. In addition, document analysis was used to review teaching modules, learning objectives, assessment instruments, and other supporting documents relevant to PAI instruction under the Merdeka Curriculum. The indicators evaluated for each component are as follows:

Table 1. Evaluation Indicators

Component	Intent/Focus	Observation
Antecedents	Teaching Module	Teaching Module
Transactions	Learning Implementation	Learning Implementation
Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism Procedures for Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism Assessment Procedures for Learning Outcomes

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive technique. Data from interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents were analyzed narratively by organizing, categorizing, and interpreting the findings according to the antecedents, transactions, and

outcomes components. Questionnaire results were used to support qualitative findings by providing descriptive scores for each evaluation indicator.

To ensure data validity and trustworthiness, data triangulation was employed. Triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained from different sources (teachers, students, and the principal) and different methods (interviews, observations, questionnaires, and document analysis). This process helped to confirm the consistency and credibility of the findings and to minimize potential researcher bias.

The evaluation criteria for assessing the quality of PAI learning implementation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Evaluation Assessment Criteria

Score	Category	Description of Evaluation Criteria
5	Excellent	All evaluation criteria are fully met
4	Good	Evaluation criteria are mostly met (75% or more)
3	Fair	Evaluation criteria are partially met (50% or more)
2	Poor	Evaluation criteria are minimally met (25% or more)
1	Very Poor	Evaluation criteria are not met or met below 25%

The evaluation criteria for assessing the quality of PAI learning implementation are structured using a five-level scoring system. A score of 5 represents an "Excellent" category, indicating that all evaluation criteria have been fully achieved. A score of 4 falls under the "Good" category, where at least 75% of the criteria are met. The "Fair" category corresponds to a score of 3, showing that approximately half of the required criteria 50% or more have been fulfilled. A score of 2 is categorized as "Poor," reflecting that only 25% or more of the criteria have been met. The lowest score, 1, represents a "Very Poor" category, indicating that the evaluation criteria are either not met at all or are met at a level below 25%.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of learning at SMAN 1 Pamboang evaluated in this study focuses on three aspects: antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. Based on the data obtained through interviews, documentation, and observations, the following results were found:

Table 3. Evaluation Results of Antecedents, Transactions, and Outcomes Components

Component	Indicator	Score Average	Category	Description
Antecedents	Understanding Learning Outcomes (CP)	4.3	Good	Continue
	Formulating Learning Objectives (TP)	3.8	Fair	Needs Improvement
	Developing Learning Objective Flow (ATP)	4.2	Good	Continue
	Learning Design	4.5	Good	Continue

Transactions	Learning supports holistic development of students' competencies and character	3.8	Fair	Needs Improvement
	Relevant learning	3.9	Fair	Needs Improvement
	Future-oriented and sustainable learning	4.5	Good	Continue
Outcomes	Learning Achievement Results	4.3	Good	Continue

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning within the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang was evaluated using Stake's Countenance Model, which encompasses three core components: antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. Data were collected through interviews, classroom observations, documentation analysis, and questionnaires, allowing for triangulated and comprehensive evaluation. Overall, the findings indicate that while several aspects of PAI learning implementation function effectively, certain components still require systematic improvement to fully align with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Antecedents: Readiness and Foundational Aspects

The antecedents component examines teachers' readiness, curriculum planning, and instructional preparation prior to implementation. Four indicators were assessed: understanding of learning outcomes (CP), formulation of learning objectives (TP), development of learning objective flow (ATP), and learning design.

Teachers' understanding of learning outcomes (CP) achieved an average score of 4.3 (good), indicating a clear comprehension of expected competencies under the Merdeka Curriculum. This finding confirms that teachers possess a solid conceptual foundation for competency-based learning, which is essential for effective instructional planning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Piaget, 1964). Similarly, the development of learning objective flow (ATP) obtained an average score of 4.2 (good), suggesting that teachers are able to organize learning objectives in a coherent and sequential manner, supporting structured learning progression (Bruner, 1960).

In contrast, the formulation of learning objectives (TP) received a lower average score of 3.8 (fair). Teachers were found to rely heavily on pre-formulated objectives provided by digital platforms rather than developing context-specific objectives based on students' characteristics. This limits the flexibility promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum and reduces contextual relevance in learning design (Mager, 1997; Locke & Latham, 2002). Meanwhile, learning design achieved the highest average score of 4.5 (good), reflecting teachers' capacity to employ varied instructional strategies, media, and technology to support differentiated learning (Mayer, 2001; Tomlinson, 2001).

From a policy perspective, these findings suggest the need for targeted professional development programs that focus on strengthening teachers' skills in formulating contextualized learning objectives, while maintaining strong instructional design practices already in place.

Transactions: Teaching and Learning Processes

The transactions component evaluates the actual implementation of learning in the classroom, focusing on holistic development, relevance, and future-oriented learning.

Learning that supports holistic student development received an average score of 3.8 (fair). Although cognitive aspects were generally well addressed, affective and psychomotor dimensions were not consistently integrated. This finding indicates partial implementation of the holistic learning principles emphasized in the Merdeka Curriculum, which prioritizes character, values, and socio-emotional development alongside academic achievement (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2004).

Similarly, relevant learning obtained an average score of 3.9 (fair), reflecting limited contextual connections between learning activities and students' real-life experiences. This suggests that learning relevance remains an area for improvement, as contextual and authentic learning is essential for meaningful engagement and sustained motivation (Dewey, 1938; Newmann et al., 1992).

In contrast, future-oriented and sustainable learning demonstrated strong implementation, with an average score of 4.5 (good). Teachers effectively integrated critical thinking, ethical reflection, and future challenges into learning activities, aligning with principles of education for sustainability (Tilbury, 1995).

These findings imply that policy interventions should prioritize continuous teacher training focused on integrating holistic and contextual learning approaches, ensuring that future-oriented learning is balanced with students' immediate social and emotional needs.

Outcomes: Learning Results and Student Achievement

The outcomes component reflects the extent to which PAI learning achieves its intended goals. The results show an average score of 4.3 (good), indicating significant improvement in students' learning achievement, conceptual understanding, analytical abilities, and character development. Continuous assessment practices and constructive feedback contributed positively to these outcomes, supporting previous findings on the impact of formative assessment on student achievement (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie, 2009).

Despite these positive results, the effectiveness of learning outcomes remains closely linked to the quality of planning and implementation. Strong outcomes are supported by clear learning designs and future-oriented instruction, while weaknesses in objective formulation and contextual relevance may limit long-term impact.

From a policy standpoint, these results highlight the importance of aligning assessment practices with curriculum planning and instructional processes to ensure sustainable improvement in learning quality.

Overall, the evaluation indicates that the implementation of PAI learning within the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang demonstrates promising progress, particularly in curriculum understanding, learning design, and future-oriented instruction. However, challenges persist in the formulation of learning objectives, the integration of holistic development, and the

contextual relevance of learning activities. These challenges reflect broader national issues during the early stages of curriculum reform.

Therefore, policy recommendations derived from this study emphasize the need for continuous professional development, structured curriculum monitoring, and strengthened support systems to enhance teacher capacity and ensure that PAI learning under the Merdeka Curriculum is both meaningful and sustainable.

4. CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning within the Merdeka Curriculum at SMAN 1 Pamboang using Stake's Countenance Model, examining the antecedents, transactions, and outcomes that shape the overall learning process. The findings reveal that while several components of the curriculum are functioning effectively, others still require significant improvement to fully realize the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum.

In the antecedents component, teachers demonstrated strong understanding of learning outcomes, effective development of learning objective flows, and well-designed instructional plans. These strengths indicate a solid foundation for curriculum implementation. However, the formulation of learning objectives remains an area of concern, as many teachers still rely on pre-existing objectives rather than developing context-specific goals tailored to students' needs.

The transactions component shows mixed results. Future-oriented learning is well implemented, reflecting the teachers' ability to integrate global issues, critical thinking, and sustainable values into classroom activities. Conversely, efforts to promote holistic student development and ensure contextual relevance of learning still require enhancement. Teachers need additional professional development to better integrate character education, socio-emotional learning, and real-world contexts into their teaching practices.

In the outcomes component, student learning outcomes demonstrate meaningful improvement, indicating that the curriculum implementation contributes positively to academic achievement and students' understanding of PAI concepts. Consistent assessments and constructive feedback appear to play an important role in supporting these gains.

Overall, this study concludes that SMAN 1 Pamboang has successfully implemented several key aspects of the Merdeka Curriculum in PAI learning, particularly in curriculum planning, instructional design, and future-oriented learning. However, improvements are needed in the formulation of learning objectives, integration of holistic development, and enhancement of contextual relevance. Continuous professional development, curriculum monitoring, and enriched learning resources are essential to support these improvements.

The findings contribute to the growing body of research on the Merdeka Curriculum and highlight the need for ongoing efforts to strengthen teacher capacity, refine learning practices, and ensure that PAI learning remains meaningful, relevant, and responsive to the challenges of the 21st century.

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