THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DEEP LEARNING–BASED SKI INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE INTEGRATED WITH THE LOVE CURRICULUM ON THE MUGHAL DYNASTY MATERIAL AT MA MA'ARIF AL-ISHLAH BUNGKAL

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of deep learning–based Islamic Cultural History (SKI) instruction integrated with a Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) in teaching the Mughal Empire at MA Ma'arif Al-Ishlah Bungkal. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the study involved Islamic Cultural History teachers, students, and the school principal as key informants. Data were collected through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, and were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that teachers conceptualize deep learning as meaningful instruction that emphasizes critical thinking and moral reflection, which is integrated with love-based values to foster a warm and humanistic classroom climate. The instructional modules were designed to include reflective activities, historical figure analysis, in-depth discussions, and the integration of Qur'anic verses and hadith. Learning activities were conducted interactively and focused on value internalization rather than rote memorization. Students demonstrated increased learning motivation, confidence in expressing opinions, empathy, and the ability to comprehend the moral values embedded in historical narratives. Institutional support further strengthened the implementation of this love-based, values-oriented learning approach. The study concludes that the integration of deep learning and a Love-Based Curriculum is effective in character formation through Islamic Cultural History instruction and has strong potential for application to other subject areas within the madrasah curriculum.

Keywords: *Islamic History Education, Deep Learning Approach, Compassion-Based Curriculum, Mughal Dynasty, Character and Values Education*

Introduction

Learning Islamic Cultural History (Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam/SKI) plays a strategic role in shaping students who not only understand historical chronology but are also able to internalize the moral, spiritual, and humanitarian values embedded in Islamic historical events (Rahman, U. F. W., Kustati, M., & Sepriyanti, 2025). In practice, however, SKI instruction in many madrasahs remains predominantly memorization-oriented and text-based, leading students to perceive history merely as a collection of factual information devoid of meaning. This condition hinders students from deriving life lessons and emulating the exemplary character of Islamic historical figures. In fact, SKI is inherently rich in values such as justice, simplicity, tolerance, love of knowledge, and public welfare, all of which are highly relevant to the character development needs of contemporary learners (Husin, M. M., & Jasiah, 2025; Khair, M., & Hidayati, 2025).

The Merdeka Curriculum calls for learning that is more meaningful, contextual, and student-centered. In this regard, the deep learning approach and the Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC) are particularly relevant, as they encourage students to think critically, develop profound value comprehension, and experience humanistic learning processes (Fatmawati, 2025; Wafa, A., Syarifah, S., & Nadhif, 2025; Wijaya, A. A., Haryati, T., & Wuryandini, 2025). Deep learning guides students to interpret historical events as sources of moral inspiration rather than merely cognitive knowledge, while KBC emphasizes an atmosphere of compassion, empathy, appreciation, and emotional safety in the learning process (Aliyah, S. R., & Norlianti, 2025; Barkah, A. S., Nasution, R. R. B., Rahmawati, S., & Lasut, 2025; Kurniawan, 2025; Syafi'i, 2025). The integration of these two approaches enables SKI learning to become more engaging, to touch students' affective dimensions, and to foster warm teacher–student relationships, allowing historical values to be internalized naturally (Hamdan, M., Mardianto, M., & Salminawati, 2025; Ika, Y., & Efendi, 2025).

Within this context, the present study focuses on the implementation of the SKI Teaching Module Chapter II, "The Mughal Dynasty," at MA Ma'arif Al-Ishlah Bungkal, which was designed by integrating deep learning principles and the Love-

Based Curriculum. The Mughal Dynasty material was selected due to its rich humanitarian and exemplary values, such as Akbar's religious tolerance, the principles of just governance, and the strong commitment to the pursuit of knowledge demonstrated by the Mughal sultans. This study aims to examine how teachers understand and apply these two approaches, how the learning process is carried out, and how students' responses and character development evolve after participating in learning grounded in values of love and deep understanding.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, as it aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation process of SKI learning based on deep learning and the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) in the topic of the Mughal Dynasty. This approach enabled the researcher to explore meanings, learning experiences, classroom dynamics, and students' character development as the learning process unfolded within its natural context (Laili, 2025; Nugraha, Maharani, Zainuri, & Hamzah, 2025; Wathon, 2024). The study was conducted at MA Ma'arif Al-Ishlah Bungkal, Ponorogo, involving the Grade XI SKI teacher as the key informant and 24 Grade XI students as the primary informants who directly experienced learning using the value-based teaching module.

Data were collected through several techniques, namely observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to directly examine how the teacher implemented the learning process, how student interactions occurred, and how reflection activities, discussions, and character analysis of historical figures were conducted during instruction (J W Creswell, 2014; Matthew B. Miles & Huberman, 1994; M. B Miles & Huberman, 1984). In-depth interviews were conducted with the SKI teacher to explore instructional planning, the teacher's understanding of deep learning and KBC, and the pedagogical strategies employed. Interviews were also conducted with selected students to capture their learning experiences, perceptions of the instructional process, and perceived changes in attitudes. Documentation, including teaching modules, students' reflective journals,

teachers' notes, activity photographs, and learning products, was used to strengthen data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data analysis was carried out using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, focused, and simplified data relevant to the research focus, such as lesson planning, the implementation of deep learning and love-based instruction, and students' attitudinal development. Subsequently, the data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives to facilitate the identification of patterns and relationships among findings. The final stage involved continuous conclusion drawing and verification, namely an interpretive process to uncover the deeper meanings of the observed learning experiences. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings and to ensure that they accurately represent the actual learning conditions (John W. Creswell, 2015; M. B Miles & Huberman, 1984; Matthew B . Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014b, 2014a; Matthew B Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Result

1. Teacher's Understanding of Deep Learning, the Love-Based Curriculum, and Their Relevance to the Mughal Dynasty Topic

The SKI teacher demonstrated a strong and comprehensive understanding of deep learning as a process of critical, reflective, and meaningful thinking in the study of history. The teacher emphasized that SKI instruction should not be limited to the memorization of historical facts but should guide students toward discovering moral values embedded in each historical event. The Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) was understood as an approach that fosters compassion, respect, emotional safety, and empathy in the learning process (Afryansyah & Sirozi, 2025; Zain & Akbar, 2025). The Mughal Dynasty topic was considered highly relevant to both approaches, as it contains values of tolerance, love of knowledge, simplicity, justice, and respect for diversity. This interpretive framework served as the foundation for the development of the teaching module and the instructional strategies employed.

2. Planning and Development of the Deep Learning– and Love-Based SKI Teaching Module

The teacher designed the SKI teaching module by analyzing learning competencies, selecting value-based learning activities, and developing materials that emphasize critical understanding. The module did not merely present historical chronology but also incorporated activities such as in-depth discussions, character analysis, storytelling, case studies, meaning-making writing tasks, and reflective exercises. Reflection was positioned as a core component, enabling students to articulate moral lessons, internalized values, and desired personal changes. The teacher also integrated Qur'anic verses, such as Qur'an 49:13 (Al-Hujurat), and prophetic traditions emphasizing compassion to reinforce spiritual and moral values within the learning process. As a result, the module was comprehensive in addressing cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of learning.

3. Learning Implementation: Interactive, Reflective, and Empathy-Based Practices

The learning process was implemented through a dialogical and humanistic approach. Lessons were initiated with historical videos, value-oriented apperception activities, or triggering questions designed to stimulate deep thinking. Core learning activities included group discussions, analysis of historical contexts, role-playing, reflective writing, and activities such as "letters to historical figures." The teacher deliberately avoided rote memorization and instead encouraged students to engage with Mughal historical figures on personal and moral levels. Closing prayer sessions, informal conversations, and reflective journaling ensured that learning extended beyond the cognitive domain to encompass emotional and spiritual dimensions. These strategies fostered a learning environment characterized by warmth, mutual respect, and emotional safety.

4. Students' Responses, Learning Experiences, and Attitudinal Development

Students expressed highly positive responses toward SKI learning based on deep learning and love-based values. They perceived the lessons as more engaging, comprehensible, and relevant to their daily lives. Students became more confident in expressing opinions, demonstrated greater empathy, and showed increased

respect for their peers' perspectives. Observable attitudinal changes included improvements in politeness, care for others, discipline, emotional regulation, and the ability to learn with emotional calmness. Students' reflections indicated an understanding of values such as justice, simplicity, tolerance, and moral resilience. Learners who were previously passive gradually became more active in discussions, reflective writing, and emotional engagement with historical learning.

5. Institutional Support, Challenges, and the Impact of Learning Implementation

The madrasah principal provided full support for innovative SKI instruction through the provision of facilities, teacher training, coaching-based supervision, and the cultivation of a friendly and religious school culture. This institutional environment facilitated the development of warm, value-oriented learning practices. The main challenges faced by the teacher included time constraints and students' varying capacities for reflective thinking. These challenges were addressed by modeling reflective responses, implementing brief reflection activities, and consistently habituating value-based practices. The impact of the learning approach was evident in strengthened teacher–student relationships, a more positive classroom climate, and the development of students' empathetic, communicative, polite, and confident character traits. The madrasah viewed this approach as having strong potential for broader implementation across SKI topics.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the integration of deep learning and the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) in SKI instruction on the Mughal Dynasty topic successfully fostered meaningful, humanistic, and character-oriented learning. The teacher's profound understanding of deep learning—viewing history as something to be interpreted rather than memorized—served as a strong pedagogical foundation (Khotimah, D. K., & Abdan, 2025). This perspective aligns with Lickona's theory of values education, which emphasizes that character education should focus on moral understanding, moral feeling, and moral action. Linking historical content to students' lived experiences rendered the learning process more relevant and

facilitated the internalization of values such as justice, simplicity, love of knowledge, and tolerance embedded in the history of the Mughal Dynasty.

The planning of the teaching module demonstrates that the teacher went beyond organizing historical content by incorporating reflective activities that encouraged students to develop self-awareness of the moral values being learned. This approach is consistent with value-based education, which emphasizes providing learners with opportunities to interpret learning experiences in a personal and meaningful way (Adiba, Zahruddin, & Bahrissalim, 2023; Nursasongko, Kristiawan, Hadi, Meta, & Vasudevan, 2025). The integration of Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions reinforced the spiritual foundations of values embedded in Islamic history. Learning activities such as in-depth discussions, storytelling, character analysis, and "letters to historical figures" functioned as effective means of bridging students' cognitive and affective domains. From the perspective of social constructivist theory, these instructional strategies created spaces for students to construct understanding through interaction and self-reflection.

Students' highly positive responses indicate that a love-based learning approach is effective in creating a safe and enjoyable classroom climate. Learners became more confident in expressing their opinions, demonstrated greater empathy, and exhibited more respectful attitudes toward peers and teachers. This finding resonates with Noddings' concept of caring pedagogy, which posits that strong emotional relationships between teachers and students form the foundation for deep learning engagement (Nel Noddings, 2016). Supportive madrasah conditions, including a religious school culture and instructional supervision, further strengthened the successful implementation of SKI learning grounded in deep learning and love-based values. Challenges such as time constraints and differences in students' readiness highlight the need for gradual adaptation in educational innovation. Nevertheless, overall, this approach proved effective in enhancing the quality of SKI instruction and generating tangible impacts on students' character development.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the implementation of SKI learning based on deep learning and the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) in the Mughal Dynasty topic was effective and had a significant impact on students' cognitive, emotional, and character development. The teacher demonstrated a strong understanding of the importance of interpreting history in a meaningful way, enabling students not only to acquire historical facts but also to discover the moral and spiritual values underlying historical events. The teaching module, designed in a reflective, integrative, and contextual manner, successfully facilitated dynamic learning experiences that were relevant to students' lives.

The learning process was implemented through interactive, humanistic, and value-rich activities, including discussions, character analysis, reflective practices, instructional videos, and love-based learning activities. Students' responses indicated increased learning motivation, greater confidence in expressing opinions, enhanced empathy, improved politeness, and better emotional regulation. Institutional support from the madrasah, in the form of a religious school culture, learning facilities, and innovative policies, played a crucial role in the successful implementation of this approach. Challenges such as limited instructional time and variations in students' reflective capacities were addressed through habituation, modeling, and flexible instructional strategies.

Overall, the integration of deep learning and the Love-Based Curriculum demonstrates strong potential for broader application across other SKI topics as a pedagogical model that connects historical learning with character formation. This approach not only enhances students' understanding of history but also fosters the development of empathetic, critical, and Islamic character-oriented learners.

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