# Diagnostic Assessment of Islamic Education Learning in *Merdeka* Curriculum: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Assessment is one of the important aspects of learning, not least in Islamic religious learning. Learning is both cognitive and non-cognitive. Assessment activities act as a measuring tool that races at each level of learner competence to improve learning outcomes and achieve learning objectives. Moreover, with the existence of the Merdeka Curriculum which emphasizes the interests, talents, and excellence of competencies possessed by students. Therefore, this study aims to determine the accuracy of diagnostic assessments in Islamic religious learning used in the Merdeka Curriculum. This research is a systematic literature review using the Google Scholar database and Semantic Scholar Search. Based on the findings, identifying the appropriate assessment carried out in the use of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic learning is a diagnostic assessment. In its application, the assessment has many results of consideration in measuring and improving the competence of students, so that there will be many solutions in directing students according to their ability level, especially in memorization and understanding. However, the implementation in the field still has several obstacles. This is the basis for the importance of further research to be carried out.

## Introduction

Education has an important role in improving the quality of human resources. One of the education that can be passed is participating in learning at school because schools are institutions that organize education in accordance with government policies (Widiawati et al., 2022). Formal education is an educational path that has been planned and systematized as a path to improve the ability of students. Meanwhile, learning is an important element in education because the success of education can be seen from learning activities. Learning activities are an educational process that provides opportunities for students to develop and improve the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of students (Wahyuni, 2023). In the context of learning, assessment is the application of various methods and assessment tools to obtain information on the competency achievements of students' learning outcomes. The results of

the assessment will answer how the learning outcomes and achievements of students so that educators know the extent to which the learning program has been successfully implemented (Nisrokha, 2018). Assessment is an activity to reveal the quality of the learning process and results, so it can be said that assessment is the application of using assessment tools to obtain as much information as possible about the success of students in mastering certain competencies (Rohim, 2021).

So far, the implementation of assessment tends to focus on summative assessment which is used as a reference to fill in the students' learning outcome report. Assessment results have not been used as feedback in improving learning. In the new learning paradigm in the independent curriculum, educators are expected to focus more on formative assessment than summative. So that the results of formative assessment can be used as a reference basis for improving the continuous learning process (Kemendikbudristek, 2021). Various policies emerged in order to maximize education through an independent curriculum with, National Standardized School Examinations held in competency and portfolio testing schools; National Examinations were changed to become minimum competency assessments and character surveys, and lesson plans only consisted of objectives, activities, and learning assessments, and zoning in new student acceptance regulations with more flexible adaptations to accommodate inequality of access and quality in various regions (Qona'ah, 2023). However, Islamic religious learning is still unable to accommodate the various competency assessments that have been compiled by the government. It can be found in cases in the field both at various levels of education that there are still difficulties for students in understanding the content of Islamic religious learning, especially for non-religious public schools. Islamic religious learning is more dominant in learning by relying on reading skills and strengthened by comprehension skills. Based on the quality portrait of expanding access to education in Indonesia, the results show that as many as 70% of students in Indonesia have not been able to achieve minimum competence in reading (Totok Suprayitno, 2019).

In fact, the purpose of independent learning can be interpreted as freedom in learning, including learning opportunities that are as free and comfortable as possible by paying attention to the natural talents of students. The hope is to increase students' learning achievement in exploring a learning content according to their ability level and especially their learning style (Qona'ah, 2023). An independent curriculum is a curriculum with a learning structure that gives learners space to explore ideas and develop competencies (Munir, 2023). Therefore, the focus in this independent curriculum is on the interests and talents of students, especially in exploring Islamic religious learning which can basically be emulated through the daily lives of students. Thus, as a bridge in knowing the extent of the usefulness of diagnostic

assessments in Islamic religious learning with an independent curriculum, it is important to conduct systematic review research. In addition, it is an important thing to do as a stepping stone in evaluating the assessments that have been carried out in the independent curriculum, especially in Islamic religious learning. The development of this systematic review is based on the extent to which diagnostic assessments can be used appropriately in Islamic religious learning based on an independent curriculum and how the application of diagnostic assessments in Islamic religious learning based on an Merdeka curriculum.

## Method

This research is a systematic literature review. Systematic review is a research method in the identification, evaluation, and interpretation of all research results that are in accordance with the topic of discussion, both specific topics and phenomena of concern. So that the systematic review aims to provide a synthesis of various studies so that facts can be presented more comprehensively and balanced (Peserta didiknto, 2020). Systematic research is a structured and planned review of relevant previous articles, packaged in a narrative, and aims to develop existing theories (Rahmat et al., 2022). Data were obtained from published articles sourced from Google Scholar, Crossref, and Semantic Scholar Search within the time span of the implementation of the independent curriculum in Islamic religious learning. The keywords chosen were 'diagnostic assessment', 'Islamic religious learning', and 'independent curriculum'. Through all three, diverse sources and various levels of education were obtained.

## Results and Discussion

Based on the results of searching using a database with the keywords "diagnostic assessment", "Islamic religious learning", and "independent curriculum" within the scope of formal elementary, junior high, and high school education, several articles were found that were considered in accordance with the research raised, namely diagnostic assessment of Islamic religious learning in the Merdeka Curriculum. Table 1 is a list of articles from the screening results. Assessment is a systematically designed process in order to collect information about something, such as child development activities and the learning progress of learners. In assessment, there are measurement and assessment activities (Jamaris, 2010). Assessment is the process of collecting and processing information to determine the learning needs, development, and achievement of student learning outcomes. so the type of assessment based on its function is divided into 3 types, namely as a learning process, assessment for the learning process, and assessment at the end of the learning process (Kemendikbudristek, 2021).

**Table 1.** Data Screening Results

| Researcher | level | Results |
|---|---|---|
| Djayadin & Mubarakah, (2021) | Collage | Diagnostic assessment can be done in 3 domains of ability (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor). The cognitive aspect focuses more on learning readiness, interest in learning, and availability of learning facilities. Affective aspects lead to the way of acceptance, responding, and the process of expressing opinions and views. The psychomotor aspect is in the form of gestures, communication, and the mood of students. All three can be done to show learning outcomes in Islamic teaching. |
| Sukmawati, (2022) | JSH | Diagnostic assessment is carried out in the form of tracking students' abilities with questionnaires, giving religious test questions, and interviews. Results are mapped based on ability and coaching is conducted. Criteria are based on students' readiness to learn, interests, and learning profiles. |
| Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, (2022) | ES | Diagnostic assessment directs teachers to be able to assess continuously as a validator in checking the cognitive and non-cognitive state of students in providing appropriate learning that must always be monitored and evaluated. Diagnostic assessment is also part of anticipating students' learning loss. |
| Rahmadhani & Istikomah, (2023) | Collage | Diagnostic assessment is one of the solutions in planning learning that suits the needs of students, based on the characteristics of students with the hope that the progress of learning outcomes can be evaluated. |
| Zainuri & Purnamasari, (2023) | JSH | Diagnostic assessment is carried out in stages from recognizing the potential and needs of students, planning the preparation of the learning process, and grouping students according to ability levels, adjusting the order of the books that need to be learned that are racing against time, and then evaluated in accordance with the objectives of both learning and the vision and mission of the school. |
| Marbella, (2023) | JSH | Diagnostic assessment is carried out at the beginning of the semester with the results of the initial evaluation of talents, interests, learning styles, learner profiles. Assessment is done through cognitive during learning and non-cognitive during the learning process and the background of students. Teachers select an approach that is appropriate to the student's situation. |
| Paramansyah et al., (2023) | Collage | Diagnostic assessment can be realized in the form of cognitive questions in the form of essay questions and memorization of all Islamic religious material. On the other hand, the results of the dianostic assessment can direct educators to compete outside the institution and become overall evaluation material. |

Assessment is an assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes and processes. In Islam, learning assessment can be seen in the Quran surah al-Baqarah verses 31-34, which is related to assessment in knowing the level of knowledge (*al-ilm*). Assessment must be carried

out in a sustainable manner, in surah al-Baqarah verses 31-34 contains two principles, 1) the principle of connecting the evaluation results obtained at one time with the previous results, 2) this principle is also connected to the process of providing learning to the evaluation carried out must be continuous. Between the provision of subject matter (input), evaluation (process), and results must be appropriate. While the purpose of the evaluation contained in surah al-Baqarah verses 31-34 is twofold, namely to answer the concerns of the angels because Allah wants to make humans leaders on earth; and secondly to measure the ability of Adam's knowledge treasury after Allah gave him teaching (Ramadhani et al., 2018) The verse reads,

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ٣١ قَالُوا سُبْحَٰنَكَ

لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ٣٢ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ قَالَ

أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ٣٣ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ

ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ٣٤

Meaning:

- And He taught Adam the names of all things, then presented them to the angels and said: "Name them to Me if you are indeed the true ones!"(31)

- They replied: "Glory to You, we know nothing but what You have taught us; indeed You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."(32).

- Allah said: "O Adam, tell them the names of these things". So when he had told them the names of the things, Allah said: "Have I not told you that I know the secrets of the heavens and the earth, and that I know what you bring forth and what you conceal?"(33)

- And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Bow down to Adam," so they bowed down except Iblis; he was reluctant and arrogant, and he was among those who disbelieved."(34)

The principles of assessment include, First, assessment is an integrated part of the learning process, facilitating learning and providing holistic information as feedback to educators, students, and parents as a guide in determining further learning strategies. Second, assessment is designed and implemented according to its function, with flexibility in determining the technique and time of implementation so as to achieve learning objectives effectively. Third, assessments are designed to be fair, proportional, valid, and reliable in explaining students' learning progress and determining the next steps. Fourth, the assessment report is simple and informative so that it provides useful information about learners' character, competence, and follow-up strategies. Fifth, assessment results are used by educators, learners, and parents as a reflection material in improving the quality of education (Kemendikbudristek, 2021).

Diagnostic assessment is an assessment that is carried out specifically in identifying the

abilities, strengths, and weaknesses of students so that it can be used as a reference in planning appropriate learning (Firmanzah & Sudibyo, 2021). In another sense, diagnostic assessment is a measurement procedure in determining the strengths and weaknesses of learners related to the topic of mastery of certain learning outcomes. According to Kumar, the benefits of diagnostic assessment include teachers can design learning; correct learning; and diagnostic assessment is a teacher's effort to find out student problems early (Suryadi & Husna, 2022). In the phasing process of diagnostic assessment specifically in Islamic religious learning includes several stages that are not only focused on cognitive but all three domains at once.

Stages in diagnostic assessment include, first, analyzing students' learning outcome reports (report cards) in the previous year. This analysis can begin with initial results such as understanding the hijaiyah letters or at a higher level students can be asked to read the Quran. Second, identifying competencies, in this case educators are able to develop their own level criteria so that it is possible to make special classes based on student levels. Third, compile assessment instruments to measure the competence of students, some instruments that can be used include written / oral tests, product / practice skills, and observation. At this stage, testing of 3 domains can be done so as to direct students' potential. Fourth, if necessary, it can explore learner information in various aspects, including family background, motivation, interest, learning infrastructure, and other aspects according to the needs of students. Fifth, conduct assessments and process the results. Sixth, the results of diagnosis are used as data/information in designing learning according to the achievement stage and characteristics of students (Kemendikbudristek, 2021). This series of stages is of course adjusted to the learning objectives. Another finding of the importance of diagnostic assessment in Islamic learning is found in the increasing trend of research. This tells us that diagnostic research is very helpful in assessing students' cognitive and non-cognitive abilities in Islamic religious learning, as shown in Fig. 1.
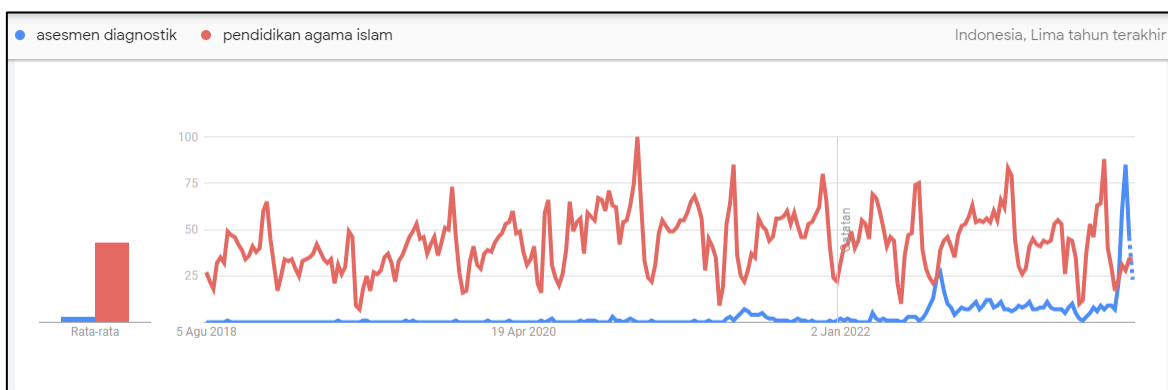


**Fig. 1.** Image of diagnostic assessment trends in Islamic learning

The time for conducting diagnostic assessments can be adjusted as needed, such as at the

beginning of the school year, the beginning of the scope of material, and before compiling teaching modules independently. In this case, educators are given the flexibility to determine the assessment instrument according to the characteristics of the competency and the purpose of the assessment. So that educators get consideration in planning learning according to the competence of students from the results of the assessment results that have been carried out (Kemendikbudristek, 2021). Diagnostic assessments can be found in Asip Suryadi and Siti Husna's research which focuses on preparing for the implementation of the independent curriculum on the ability to read and write Arabic letters both separately and connected. The research was conducted at MTSN 28 Jakarta using written and oral test techniques. The implication of the diagnostic assessment results in this study aims to improve basic reading-writing-counting skills as a basis for designing learning in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum.

The results of Suryadi & Husna (2022) diagnostic assessment include 1) Most students can read and write Arabic letters at the fluent and not fluent levels, but there are still 7% of students who are not fluent in reading Arabic letters and 17% are not fluent in writing them. 2) Students' reading comprehension skills are still low. Nearly half of the students still the insufficient qualification. The other half ranged between adequate and good qualifications, and none had reached the excellent qualification. In the competency of writing Latin letters, most of them are good but there are still 10% whose writing is still difficult to read. It was found many mistakes regarding the use of letters, prepositions, and punctuation marks.

Arlen *et al.*, (2023). research conducted at Tanah Datar Junior High School explained that diagnostic assessment has an important role in the learning process in driving schools in the application of the independent curriculum. The difference between the independent curriculum and the previous curriculum is the diagnostic assessment. Diagnostic assessment can be carried out at the beginning of the learning process so that the basic abilities of students can be known. The assessments carried out are in the form of cognitive diagnostic assessments with Computerized Based Test (CBT) and non-cognitive diagnostic assessments carried out by counseling teachers in knowing the family background, motivation, interests, talents, and so on. In line with previous research, I Kadek Mustika's research explained that diagnostic assessment is very important as a mapping of students regarding learning styles, interests, readiness, and other aspects. It is used to improve the quality of learning by implementing differentiated learning, both content, process, and product (I Kadek Mustika, 2022).

## Conclusion

The diagnostic assessment of Islamic religious learning used in the independent curriculum is one of the appropriate ways of assessment. The application of diagnostic assessment plays an important role in the learning process, learning outcomes, and learning preparation in the independent curriculum application. Diagnostic assessment also helps educators to design learning so that learning objectives are achieved. The obstacle to diagnostic assessment is that teachers do not understand that diagnostic assessment can be used for various aspects of assessment (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor). This research can be used as a reference source to provide evaluations related to learning assessments in the independent curriculum and can also be used as a reference for developing further learning assessments.

## Declarations

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Author contribution** | : | AH is tasked with initiating the idea of studying and sorting out the types of assessments that are suitable for Islamic learning at various levels, processing information, and describing the results of the analysis |
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