

From Knowledge Transmission to Character Formation: Deep Learning and the Multidimensional Role of Educators in Islamic Education

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Abstract

Contemporary education continues to grapple with a persistent and structurally embedded challenge: the dominance of surface-level learning approaches that prioritize information retrieval and cognitive replication over genuine understanding, reflective engagement, and ethical integration. This condition is particularly pronounced within Islamic educational settings, where an entrenched bifurcation between intellectual and spiritual development has long undermined the holistic vision that originally defined the Islamic scholarly tradition. The present study seeks to address this gap by critically analyzing and reconstructing the paradigm of educators within the framework of deep learning, drawing upon the triadic conception of the Islamic educator as mu'allim (transmitter of knowledge), murabbi (cultivator of character and personality), and mu'addib (guardian of moral and spiritual conduct). Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach grounded in systematic library research, utilizing content analysis of both modern educational theory and classical as well as contemporary Islamic educational literature. The findings indicate that an effective educator paradigm must be inherently integrative, repositioning teachers as transformative agents who operate simultaneously across cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of human development. Furthermore, the study identifies five foundational pedagogical principles essential to this integrated framework: meaningful learning, reflective learning, contextual learning, value-based learning, and holistic learning. The broader implications of these findings underscore an urgent need for the development of learning models that transcend academic effectiveness alone and are instead capable of cultivating character, expanding moral consciousness, and fostering a sustained sense of ethical responsibility in learners.

Keywords:

Deep Learning, Islamic Education, Educator Paradigm, Integrative Pedagogy, Transformative Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Over the course of recent decades, the discourse surrounding deep learning has steadily gained prominence within the global landscape of educational scholarship, driven by an increasingly shared recognition that meaningful education must go beyond the mere transmission of information toward the genuine transformation of learners' understanding, awareness, and values. Deep learning, as theorized by Biggs and Tang (2011), constitutes a learning approach that actively encourages learners to construct meaning through processes of critical analysis, sustained reflection, and contextual reasoning. This orientation demands engagement at higher cognitive levels—analytical, evaluative, and creative—rather than the superficial retention and reproduction of material. Yet despite growing enthusiasm for deep learning as a reform ideal, its practical implementation within educational institutions has encountered persistent obstacles, chief among which is the enduring prevalence of educator paradigms oriented toward surface learning, where the memorization of content and the mechanical reproduction of information continue to dominate classroom practice (Marton & Saljo, 1976).

Within the context of Islamic education, these challenges are rendered considerably more complex by the particular epistemological and axiological commitments that have historically characterized Islamic scholarly traditions. From its very origins, Islamic education has given prominence to deep, integrative forms of learning through concepts such as *ta'allum* (the intentional acquisition of knowledge), *tafaqquh fi al-din* (deep understanding of religious knowledge), and the cultivation of *'ilm* (knowledge), *hikmah* (wisdom), and *adab* (proper conduct and moral refinement) as inseparable dimensions of a unified educational purpose (Halstead, 2004). In this tradition, the figure of the educator is conceived not merely as a transmitter of information—a *mu'allim*—but also as a formative mentor responsible for the development of character (*murabbi*) and as a cultivator of *adab* in the broadest moral and spiritual sense (*mu'addib*) (Al-Attas, 1980). Nevertheless, the realities of contemporary Islamic educational practice tell a markedly different story: educators have been progressively reduced to the role of technical curriculum deliverers, focused predominantly on measurable academic outcomes at the expense of the spiritual and moral dimensions that once formed the very heart of Islamic pedagogy. This represents a profound and troubling disjuncture between the deep learning aspirations of modern educational theory and the unrealized potential of Islamic educational traditions to embody and advance precisely such an approach.

A substantial body of scholarship has demonstrated that the successful realization of deep learning depends in significant measure on the paradigms that educators hold regarding the nature, purpose, and practice of learning itself, as well as on their pedagogical competencies in designing and managing learning environments (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Hattie, 2009). However, these investigations have predominantly been conducted within Western educational frameworks and have not, for the most part, engaged

substantively with the conceptual resources offered by Islamic educational traditions. Conversely, scholarship within the field of Islamic education has tended to confine itself to normative and philosophical dimensions, without establishing operational connections to contemporary learning approaches such as deep learning (Cook, 1999; Tan, 2014). This dual absence reveals a significant gap in the scholarly literature: there is a pressing need for an integrative educational paradigm that bridges the conceptual terrain of deep learning and the rich tradition of Islamic education in a coherent and critically grounded manner.

In response to this identified gap, the present study undertakes a systematic effort to analyze the educator's paradigm in deep learning within the framework of Islamic educational traditions, with particular attention to how the educator's triadic roles—as *murabbi*, *mu'allim*, and *mu'addib*—might be reconceptualized and operationalized within a deep learning orientation. The study further seeks to identify the pedagogical principles that are most relevant to this integrative endeavor, with the ultimate aim of articulating a holistic and contextual learning model that is both academically rigorous and spiritually grounded.

A number of recent studies have begun to explore the intersection of deep learning and Islamic education. Firnanda et al. (2025) examined the psychological dimensions of meaning internalization within this intersection, though without specifically addressing the educator's role. Hasanuddin and Rohmad (2025) investigated practical implementation in Indonesian secondary schools, yet remained at the level of operational description without engaging with the deeper philosophical foundations that such integration requires. Rochyati (2025) highlighted opportunities for digital-based innovation in this space, while Unzylayka (2026) offered a comparative analysis of the transformative educational philosophies of John Dewey and Paulo Freire, a contribution that remains to be integrated with the specific conceptual resources of Islamic educational traditions. Wiandani et al. (2025), for their part, positioned deep learning as a generational paradigm for contemporary learners, yet without centering the educator as the primary agent of this transformation.

The distinguishing contribution of the present study lies in its commitment to an integrative synthesis that simultaneously engages deep learning theory and Islamic educational tradition from within the specific lens of the educator's paradigm. Unlike prior studies, which have tended to address these dimensions in isolation or in partial relationship, this research undertakes a holistic reconstruction of the educator's role as *murabbi*, *mu'allim*, and *mu'addib*—not as discrete functions but as a unified and mutually reinforcing set of responsibilities. In doing so, the study not merely adopts the language of deep learning but actively develops it within a more encompassing Islamic epistemological perspective that is holistic, contextual, and transformative in its orientation.

The scholarly significance of this research is twofold. First, it enriches the theoretical foundations of Islamic education by developing learning theories and frameworks that are responsive to the challenges and demands of the contemporary era. Second, it contributes

to a reconceptualization of educator professionalism by offering a new paradigm that genuinely integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions within a coherent and practically relevant model. Its practical implications are equally significant: the findings are intended to serve as a substantive reference for Islamic educational institutions in the design of curricula and learning strategies that are meaningful, transformative, and enduring.

The novelty of this study resides in the formulation of an educator paradigm grounded in the integration of deep learning theory and Islamic educational tradition, one that repositions educators not merely as facilitators of academic learning but as agents of transformation across the domains of knowledge, values, and consciousness. This paradigm insists upon the cultivation of higher-order thinking skills in a dynamic and reciprocal relationship with the development of spiritual character, thereby envisioning a learning process capable of producing individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also morally mature and spiritually grounded.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical foundation of this study rests upon the integration of two major conceptual frameworks: deep learning theory as developed within contemporary educational scholarship, and the conception of the educator as elaborated within the Islamic educational tradition. Deep learning is understood, at its theoretical core, as an approach that prioritizes substantive cognitive engagement, in which learners do not passively receive information but rather actively construct understanding through processes of analysis, synthesis, and reflection upon knowledge. Biggs and Tang (2011) articulate this clearly: deep learning occurs when learners approach material with the genuine intention of understanding it in its depth and complexity, when they connect new knowledge with existing conceptual frameworks, and when they are capable of transferring that understanding across diverse contexts and problem situations. This conception aligns closely with constructivist learning theory, which positions learners as active agents who build knowledge through interaction with their environment and with other minds (Bruner, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978).

Within this theoretical orientation, the role of the educator undergoes a fundamental reconceptualization. No longer is the teacher primarily an authority who dispenses information; rather, the educator functions as an architect of learning environments—spaces that are structured to invite exploration, sustain dialogue, and cultivate critical reflection. Saridudin (2025) affirms that the effectiveness of learning is substantially determined by the educator's capacity to manage meaningful pedagogical interactions, including the provision of formative feedback and the cultivation of genuine relational engagement with learners. This understanding implies that the educator's paradigm in deep learning must be oriented toward a fundamental transformation of role: away from teacher-centered transmission and toward learner-centered facilitation, with the holistic development of students' thinking capacities and self-awareness as its primary horizon.

The Islamic educational tradition, for its part, conceives of the educator in terms that are considerably more comprehensive and multidimensional. Within this tradition, the educator is not merely a mu'allim—a teacher who transmits knowledge—but simultaneously a murabbi, a mentor responsible for the sustained and holistic nurturing of the learner's moral and intellectual personhood, and a mu'addib, a cultivator of adab who shapes the learner's capacity to conduct themselves with propriety, wisdom, and moral seriousness (Lubis et al., 2024). The concept of ta'allum in Islamic thought captures this expansive vision: learning is conceived as a process of internalizing knowledge that is inseparable from the formation of character and the deepening of one's relationship with the divine. In this light, learning from an Islamic perspective is intrinsically aligned with the principles of deep learning, particularly in its emphasis on the construction of meaning, reflective engagement, and the transformation of the self.

The overarching framework of this research is grounded in the conviction that there exists a meaningful and productive common ground between the deep learning paradigm in contemporary education and the Islamic educational tradition, particularly in their shared orientation toward meaningful, holistic, and transformative learning. However, the realization of this common ground requires a deliberate reconstruction of the educational paradigm—one that is capable of maintaining and integrating cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions within a coherent educational vision. This paradigm positions educators as agents of transformation who not only develop learners' higher-order thinking capacities but also guide them in building an awareness of values, an understanding of adab, and a consciousness of their moral and spiritual responsibilities (Azima et al., 2025; Gustina, 2025; Syuhada et al., 2025). It is within this theoretical space that the present study seeks to make its contribution, using this integrated framework as the conceptual foundation for examining how the educator's paradigm in deep learning can be meaningfully contextualized and enriched within the tradition of Islamic education.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach grounded in systematic library research (*studi kepustakaan*), a methodology chosen in light of the study's fundamental orientation toward conceptual exploration, theoretical analysis, and the critical synthesis of ideas drawn from a diverse range of scholarly sources. Given that the research questions concern the nature of educational paradigms and the theoretical integration of deep learning with Islamic educational traditions, an empirical field-based approach would be neither appropriate nor sufficient; instead, the study requires the kind of careful interpretive engagement with scholarly literature that is characteristic of rigorous library research. This approach does not preclude critical or analytical depth; rather, it directs such depth toward the examination, comparison, and synthesis of credible scholarly sources rather than toward the collection and analysis of field data.

The data sources employed in this study are drawn from two categories: primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include canonical scholarly works in both modern educational theory and Islamic educational philosophy, most notably the foundational texts of Biggs and Tang on teaching for quality learning; Hattie's meta-analytic research on visible learning; Fullan, Quinn, and McEachen's framework for deep learning; and the regulatory framework established by the Indonesian Minister of Basic and Secondary Education Regulation No. 13 of 2025 concerning the curriculum for early childhood, primary, and secondary education. On the Islamic educational side, primary sources include the seminal works of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, Ismail Razi Al-Faruqi, Fazlur Rahman, and Muhammad Atiyah Al-Abrasyi. Secondary sources comprise accredited national and international journal articles, conference proceedings, and other relevant scholarly publications that address the roles of educators, the dynamics of learning paradigms, and the epistemological dimensions of knowledge integration in Islamic education.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature review process involving the identification, classification, and purposive organization of relevant sources in relation to the research focus. The retrieval of sources was accomplished through targeted searches across the major academic databases—Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar—ensuring that the materials consulted meet recognized standards of scholarly credibility and relevance. Each source was subsequently evaluated according to three criteria: its thematic alignment with the research questions, the depth and sophistication of its discussion, and its contribution to the conceptual framework under development.

The analytical technique employed is content analysis within a descriptive-analytical and critical framework, conducted in three sequential stages. The first stage, data reduction, involved the careful filtering and selection of information most pertinent to the study's focus—specifically, the conceptual terrain of deep learning and the educator's paradigm within Islamic educational traditions. The second stage, data presentation, entailed the organization of conceptual findings into coherent thematic patterns, enabling the synthesis of insights from the two primary frameworks. The third stage, conclusion-drawing, involved a sustained process of critical interpretation through which the relationships between the analyzed concepts were examined and an integrative educational paradigm was formulated.

To safeguard the validity and reliability of the findings, the study employs source triangulation, a strategy that involves the systematic comparison of references drawn from different scholarly traditions, authors, and perspectives, with the aim of achieving a comprehensive and balanced understanding of the issues at stake. This was complemented by a critical evaluation of each source's credibility, taking into account its year of publication, the reputation of the journal or publisher, and the relevance of its content to the research focus. Through this combination of systematic methodology and critical rigor,

the study aspires to produce an analysis that is not only conceptually deep and thematically coherent but also methodologically sound and scientifically accountable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Educator's Paradigm from the Perspective of Deep Learning

The educator's paradigm within the framework of deep learning can no longer be adequately understood as a matter of expanded pedagogical freedom—the liberty to select from a wider repertoire of strategies, media, or assessment instruments. While such freedom is an important enabling condition, it does not by itself generate the conditions for deep learning unless it is undergirded by a more fundamental epistemological transformation in how educators conceive the very nature and purpose of learning (Jasmansyah et al., 2025). Within a deep learning framework, the success of the educational encounter is not primarily a function of the teacher's technical ingenuity but of their capacity to design learning experiences that are genuinely meaningful, reflective, and capable of transforming learners' understanding. In this light, the popular claim that “the key to deep learning lies in teacher creativity” deserves critical scrutiny, as it risks reducing a complex and philosophically weighty educational paradigm to the level of methodological novelty, stripping it of the philosophical depth that gives it its transformative power (Purwoko et al., 2026).

At the conceptual heart of deep learning is a fundamental reorientation of educational purpose: away from the transmission of knowledge as a static body of content and toward the active construction of meaning through sustained engagement, critical questioning, and reflective synthesis. Within this reconceived educational space, the teacher is no longer the central authority on knowledge but rather an architect of learning experiences—designing environments and interactions that enable learners to develop integrated understandings that connect knowledge, experience, and reflection in productive ways. However, common practice continues to reveal a significant gap between this aspiration and the reality of classroom life: the teacher's role as a “learning resource” continues to be understood in essentially traditional terms, as the primary and often exclusive provider of information, even in contexts where multiple supplementary resources are nominally available. This situational tension brings into relief a fundamental contradiction between the demands of deep learning and the persistence of pedagogical practices oriented toward content delivery rather than meaning construction. When diverse learning resources—whether technological, environmental, or media-based—are deployed as little more than instruments for conveying information, they serve the logic of surface learning rather than that of deep learning.

From a critical perspective, the fundamental issue does not lie in the availability or diversity of learning resources but in the interpretive and integrative frameworks that teachers bring to bear on those resources. Learning materials, environments, and technologies are not neutral instruments; they must be incorporated into a reflective

pedagogical framework capable of facilitating meaningful dialogue between knowledge and lived reality. This requires that teachers' competence in managing learning resources extend well beyond the technical and into the genuinely pedagogical—grounded in a deep and responsive understanding of how different learners engage with and construct knowledge. Without this deeper pedagogical grounding, even the most diverse and technology-rich learning environments risk reinforcing the very superficiality, mechanism, and instrumentalism that deep learning seeks to overcome (Gustina, 2025; Syuhada et al., 2025).

This paradigm shift is equally evident in how the teacher's role as facilitator must be rethought. In conventional usage, facilitation is often understood simply as assistance—helping learners navigate a learning process that the teacher has largely pre-designed and controlled. But within the framework of deep learning, facilitation carries an altogether more demanding and epistemically ambitious meaning. The facilitator must be capable of creating a dialectical space in which learners are genuinely encouraged to question received assumptions, reflect critically on their own understanding, and construct new knowledge in a process that is substantively self-directed. Facilitation in this sense is not primarily a psychological or motivational enterprise; it is an epistemic one, demanding of the teacher a capacity to manage productive uncertainty, to hold open multiple interpretive perspectives simultaneously, and to position their own limitations as a resource rather than an obstacle in the collaborative learning process.

The teacher's role as mentor and guide adds a relational dimension to this picture that is equally indispensable to the realization of deep learning. Longstanding mentoring traditions within Islamic educational practice—most prominently the tradition of the halaqah as a space of sustained intellectual and spiritual guidance—contain substantial resources for the kind of reflective and transformative learning that deep learning advocates. Yet in many contemporary contexts, mentoring has been reduced to informal or supplementary activity that exists alongside, but is not integrated into, the central learning process. This is a significant loss, because within the deep learning paradigm the relationship between teacher and learner constitutes the relational foundation upon which trust, motivation, and genuine cognitive engagement are built. The mentor, properly conceived, functions not as an advisor who pronounces on correct answers but as a dialogue partner who accompanies the learner in developing deeper insight into themselves and the world they inhabit (Aziz, 2022; Rochyati, 2025; Xie, 2021).

The teacher's role as coach highlights yet another dimension of this paradigmatic transformation: the imperative of individualized engagement. Deep learning requires that educators attend with genuine seriousness to each learner's unique constellation of potential, interests, and learning dispositions. This is a demanding and resource-intensive aspiration, and it is frequently constrained by structural realities—large class sizes, heavy administrative obligations, and institutional pressures oriented toward uniform performance measures. The persistence of these constraints is not incidental; it reflects deep

tensions between the relational and individualized demands of deep learning and the bureaucratic logics that govern most contemporary educational systems. This implies that the transformation of the educator's paradigm cannot be achieved through individual teacher effort alone but requires systemic changes at the institutional and policy level.

The teacher's role as evaluator also demands thorough reconceptualization within a deep learning framework. Assessment can no longer be understood primarily as a measurement tool—a means of determining what learners know or can reproduce at a given point in time. Rather, assessment must be reimagined as an integral dimension of the learning process itself: formative in nature, reflective in orientation, and participatory in design, such that it generates the kind of feedback that genuinely informs and advances learners' thinking. The dominance of summative, test-based assessment in most educational systems continues to represent one of the most significant structural impediments to the realization of deep learning. The evaluation paradigm must therefore shift from a focus on endpoints to a focus on process—enabling learners to understand and engage reflectively with their own learning journey as a dynamic and ongoing enterprise.

Taken together, these considerations establish that the educator's paradigm in deep learning demands a transformation that is holistic in scope, encompassing epistemological convictions, pedagogical practices, and relational commitments. Without this depth of transformation, innovations in strategies, media, and assessment tools will amount to superficial adjustments that leave the fundamental character of educational practice unchanged.

The Concept of the Educator in Islamic Educational Tradition: *Murabbi*, *Mu'allim*, and *Mu'addib*

The conceptualization of the educator within Islamic educational tradition resists the reductive tendencies of much contemporary educational discourse, which tends to define the teacher primarily in functional or technical terms. Within the Islamic framework, the figure of the educator encompasses a rich and differentiated spectrum of integral roles—as *murabbi*, *mu'allim*, and *mu'addib*—each of which gives expression to a distinct dimension of the educational endeavor: ontological, epistemological, and axiological, respectively. When these three roles are held in their proper relationship to one another, they constitute a comprehensive and transformative vision of what the educator is and does. The problem is that in contemporary Islamic educational practice, these concepts have increasingly come to be understood in fragmented and partial ways, thereby losing precisely the transformative power that comes from their integration. A critical re-examination of these concepts is therefore both timely and necessary, with the specific purpose of repositioning them within the context of deep learning in ways that are both theoretically coherent and practically consequential.

In the role of mu'allim, the educator functions as a transmitter and interpreter of knowledge. In classical Islamic scholarship, this role carried a weight and dignity that is easily obscured by modern reductions of the teacher to a curriculum deliverer. The process of ta'lim, which is at the heart of the mu'allim's work, demands not merely the communication of information but the cultivation of epistemological precision, the clarification of meaning, and the opening of the learner's mind to the depth and complexity of knowledge. Al-Abrasyi (1970) emphasizes that the teacher must possess high intellectual competence, not in the narrow sense of content expertise, but in the broader sense of the capacity to convey knowledge in systematic, contextually responsive, and genuinely comprehensible ways. In the context of contemporary education, however, the mu'allim's role has been largely reduced to that of an administrative executor of prescribed curriculum content. This impoverishment of the teacher's intellectual function aligns closely with the critique offered by Biggs and Tang (2011), who observe that much teaching practice remains organized around surface learning logics, in which knowledge is treated as an object to be memorized and reproduced rather than understood and internalized. The reconstruction of the mu'allim's role must therefore prioritize the formation of the cognitive structures and epistemological habits that enable deep learning, rather than merely efficient coverage of curriculum content.

The concept of the murabbi, by contrast, situates the educator within a fundamentally relational and developmental orientation. Rooted in the Arabic term tarbiyah, which connotes the sustained and nurturing growth of living things, the murabbi's role is one of comprehensive mentorship: responsibility for the holistic development of the learner's personality across intellectual, spiritual, and moral dimensions. Al-Attas (1997) articulates this with characteristic depth: education in Islam is not merely an intellectual enterprise but a process of shaping human beings who are capable of maintaining a living and dynamic balance between reason, spirit, and action. In contemporary educational practice, however, the tarbiyah dimension is systematically subordinated to the imperatives of quantitative academic achievement—grades, examination results, and measurable competency standards. Hattie's (2009) extensive research on the variables that influence learning outcomes provides striking empirical support for the centrality of the teacher-student relationship in determining the quality and depth of learning—a finding that resonates profoundly with the Islamic understanding of the murabbi's role. Yet modern educational systems continue to undervalue and underinvest in the relational dimension of teaching, resulting in pedagogical interactions that are increasingly formal, transactional, and ultimately unable to support the deep and sustained engagement that genuine learning requires.

The concept of mu'addib represents perhaps the most fundamental and yet most neglected dimension of the educator's role in contemporary Islamic educational discourse. Al-Attas (1999) argues with characteristic force that the cultivation of adab—properly

understood as the recognition and acknowledgment of the rightful place of all things within the comprehensive order of creation—constitutes the very heart of the Islamic educational enterprise. Within this framework, the educator as mu’addib is not simply a teacher of correct conduct in the behavioral sense; the mu’addib is engaged in the deep and consequential work of shaping the moral and spiritual consciousness of the learner, forming a person who knows not only what is true but also what is right, and who is capable of conducting themselves accordingly in all dimensions of life. In the majority of contemporary educational contexts, however, this dimension of the educator’s work has been reduced to “character education”—a set of normative lessons or institutional policies that exist alongside, but are not genuinely integrated into, the substantive learning process. Fazlur Rahman (1982) offers a sharp and historically informed critique of this tendency, arguing that modern Islamic education has progressively lost its ethical spirit precisely because it has sought to emulate Western educational systems without attending to the deep integration of values that must characterize any genuinely Islamic educational enterprise.

Considered critically and in their proper relationship to one another, these three concepts reveal a remarkable alignment with the foundational principles of deep learning. Fullan et al. (2018) articulate a vision of deep learning that extends well beyond content mastery to encompass character development, the cultivation of global competencies, and the formation of a coherent and responsible sense of self—a vision that resonates deeply with the Islamic conception of what education is ultimately for. This convergence suggests that the roles of mu’allim, murabbi, and mu’addib, if properly understood and integrated, constitute a conceptually robust and practically generative foundation for the realization of deep learning within the context of Islamic education. The primary challenge is not theoretical but practical and systematic: how can these three roles be integrated into concrete pedagogical practices that are coherent, sustainable, and capable of transforming educational culture?

Recent policy developments, including the Regulation of the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education No. 13 of 2025, have created new openings for the development of more flexible, learner-centered, and contextually responsive educational practices. However, as Al-Faruqi’s (1982) reflections on the integration of knowledge and values remind us, curricular flexibility without a strong and coherent pedagogical paradigm risks producing not freedom but fragmentation. Without the guiding framework that a reconstructed educator paradigm can provide, the flexibility afforded by policy reform is as likely to lead to inconsistency and superficiality as to genuine educational transformation.

Reconstructing the Educator Paradigm within the Framework of Deep Learning Based on Islamic Values

The reconstruction of the educator’s paradigm within a deep learning framework grounded in Islamic values is a task that demands considerably more than the terminological alignment

of two apparently complementary conceptual vocabularies. At its core, this reconstruction requires the transformation of educators' roles—as murabbi, mu'allim, and mu'addib—into pedagogical practices that are genuinely capable of producing learning experiences that are meaningful, reflective, and transformatively powerful. The failure of current practice in this regard is not incidental. In many educational settings, these three roles continue to be enacted in parallel rather than in integration, producing a fragmented educational experience that lacks the coherence required for genuine transformation. Yet deep learning, as Biggs and Tang (2011) insist, demands precisely this kind of integration: a coherent alignment of educational objectives, learning processes, and evaluation practices within a unified and purposeful framework.

In this reconstructed framework, the teacher's role is fundamentally redefined: from transmitter of knowledge to facilitator of meaning-making. The dominance of transmission-based teaching, which positions learners as passive recipients of pre-digested content, stands in direct contradiction to the active engagement that deep learning requires. Hattie (2009) demonstrates convincingly that learning effectiveness is substantially determined by the educator's capacity to make learning visible—to create conditions in which learners can see, understand, and reflect upon their own learning process. In the reconstructed framework proposed here, the teacher must therefore be capable of designing learning experiences that enable sustained reflection, genuine dialogue between learners, and the progressive integration of knowledge—not merely the efficient delivery of curriculum content, however well organized.

The reconceptualization of the murabbi's role calls for a deliberate and systematic strengthening of the relational and affective dimensions of educational practice. In current institutional practice, mentoring is frequently marginalized—reduced to supplementary guidance activities that sit at the periphery of the formal learning process rather than at its center. Yet within the tradition of Islamic education, tarbiyah is understood as a comprehensive, ongoing, and constitutive process—not an optional supplement but a fundamental dimension of what education is and does. Fullan et al. (2018) corroborate this understanding from within the deep learning framework: genuinely deep learning must be capable of developing students' character, cultivating a sense of identity, and building the social competencies that responsible citizenship requires. The role of the murabbi is thus not merely relevant but essential within a deep learning framework—essential, in particular, for the cultivation of the authentic, trusting, and genuinely developmental pedagogical relationships that make transformative learning possible. The challenge is to find ways of operationalizing this role within educational systems that are structurally oriented toward bureaucratic compliance and measurable academic performance.

The reconstruction of the mu'addib's role presents the most demanding and potentially the most consequential dimension of this entire enterprise. Al-Attas (1997) maintains with sustained conviction that the formation of adab—the cultivation of the

human capacity to recognize, acknowledge, and act in accordance with the proper order of all things—constitutes the inmost core of Islamic education. Within this vision, the educator as mu'addib is engaged in the formation of civilized human beings: persons who are capable not merely of competent performance but of placing their knowledge and themselves within the comprehensive moral and spiritual order of existence. In contemporary educational practice, however, this dimension has been systematically displaced by the imperatives of cognitive achievement. Fazlur Rahman (2006) identifies this displacement as symptomatic of a broader failure of Islamic educational institutions to substantively integrate Islamic values into the lived fabric of educational practice, resulting instead in a merely nominal commitment to values that does not penetrate the actual dynamics of the learning process. Within the framework of deep learning, the recovery and reconstruction of the mu'addib's role is not peripheral but central: it corresponds precisely to the demand for learning that produces not only competencies but social awareness, ethical responsibility, and a coherent sense of moral agency. The mu'addib must therefore be reconstructed as an agent of value transformation who is present and active throughout the entire learning process, rather than a peripheral figure who intervenes occasionally in the realm of character education.

The curriculum policy framework established by Regulation No. 13 of 2025 creates important structural conditions for the development of this reconstructed paradigm, offering degrees of curricular flexibility and learner-centered orientation that were less available under previous regulatory regimes. Yet policy flexibility, as Al-Faruqi's (1982) reflections on the integration of knowledge and values remind us, must be guided by a coherent epistemological and pedagogical vision if it is to produce transformation rather than fragmentation. The integration of knowledge and values that Al-Faruqi advocates is not merely a conceptual desideratum; it must be operationalized concretely—in the design of instructional sequences, in the quality of pedagogical interactions, and in the structure of evaluation systems.

It is equally important to acknowledge that this reconstruction must be pursued with a clear-eyed awareness of the structural constraints that operate within real educational systems: the administrative burden carried by teachers, the challenges of individualized attention in large classes, and the institutional pressure to produce measurable outcomes within fixed timeframes. Without systemic changes that address these structural realities, the reconstruction of the educator's paradigm risks becoming an idealistic aspiration that is incapable of translation into sustainable practice. What is required, therefore, is an approach that is simultaneously conceptually rigorous and strategically pragmatic, capable of integrating the roles of murabbi, mu'allim, and mu'addib into teaching practice in ways that are both philosophically coherent and institutionally viable.

In sum, the reconstruction of the educator's paradigm within a deep learning framework grounded in Islamic values calls for a genuinely holistic integration: one that

brings cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions into a sustained and productive relationship. This paradigm positions the educator as an agent of transformation who does not merely transmit knowledge but actively participates in the shaping of learners' consciousness, character, and understanding of the meaning of their lives. Without this depth of integration, deep learning risks losing its ethical dimension and becoming merely a more sophisticated form of cognitive optimization, while Islamic education risks remaining trapped in the dualism between professed values and actual practice.

Integrative Pedagogical Principles Between Deep Learning and Islamic Education

The formulation of integrative pedagogical principles capable of bridging deep learning and Islamic education represents the critical practical horizon of this study's broader argument. Without this step, the reconstruction of the educator's paradigm remains at the level of conceptual vision, admirable in its ambition but disconnected from the realities of educational design and practice. The enduring dichotomy in educational discourse between modern, cognition-centered approaches and the value-grounded tradition of Islamic education has persisted, in large part, because the effort to construct a genuine functional synthesis between them has been insufficiently sustained and insufficiently rigorous. Yet as this analysis has sought to demonstrate, the common ground between deep learning and Islamic education is not superficial; it runs to the level of shared orientations toward meaning, reflection, transformation, and the formation of the whole person. The pedagogical principles that follow are designed to make this common ground operationally productive.

The first principle is that of meaningful learning—an orientation that goes considerably beyond conceptual understanding toward the genuine internalization of meaning in its cognitive, ethical, and spiritual dimensions. Biggs and Tang (2011) ground their account of deep learning in precisely this principle: learning is deep when learners actively connect new knowledge with existing conceptual structures, when they engage with material with the intention of understanding it substantively, and when they are able to transfer that understanding to new and unfamiliar contexts. Within the framework of Islamic education, however, the concept of meaning carries additional dimensions that extend beyond the cognitive. Al-Attas (1980) argues that knowledge, properly understood, must lead to the recognition of truth and to the proper placement of all things—including the self—within the comprehensive order of existence. Meaningful learning, in this integrated understanding, is thus an enterprise that encompasses epistemological, ethical, and spiritual dimensions simultaneously. The critique of current educational practice is pointed: much of what passes for learning in contemporary settings stops at the level of information transfer without achieving the internalization of meaning that genuine understanding requires, thereby failing to foster the depth of awareness in learners that both

deep learning and Islamic educational traditions regard as constitutive of genuine education.

The second principle is that of reflective learning, which places the practice of reflection at the very center of the educational process. In deep learning theory, reflection is understood as the cognitive and metacognitive process through which learners evaluate their understanding, identify gaps and misconceptions, and construct more adequate knowledge frameworks (Hattie, 2009). Within the Islamic educational tradition, however, reflection carries a richer and more encompassing meaning: the practices of tafakkur (contemplation upon the signs of creation and the purposes of existence) and muhasabah (rigorous self-examination and moral self-reckoning) are understood as fundamental to the development not only of intellectual competence but of spiritual awareness and moral accountability. Fazlur Rahman (1984) emphasizes with particular force the importance of integrating rationality and spirituality in the educational process, arguing that their separation produces a truncated and ultimately distorted form of both reason and faith. An integrative pedagogy of reflection must therefore be designed to accommodate both intellectual and spiritual dimensions, creating spaces within the learning process where learners are invited to examine not only what they know and how they know it, but who they are and what they are called to become. Without this depth of reflection, learning tends toward the mechanical and the routinized, losing the transformative power that is its deepest justification.

The third principle is that of contextual learning, which insists upon the connection of knowledge to the lived reality of learners' lives and to the broader social and moral context in which those lives are embedded. Fullan et al. (2018) argue that deep learning must be organized around genuine relevance to real-world challenges and situations if it is to have lasting impact on learners' understanding and dispositions. Within the Islamic educational tradition, context is understood in terms that are simultaneously social and theological: the natural and social environment in which learners live is not merely a backdrop for the acquisition of knowledge but the arena in which the human being's role as steward and representative of the divine on earth (khalifah) is exercised. Al-Faruqi (1982) underscores the moral dimension of this contextual orientation, arguing that the integration of knowledge with the realities of life constitutes not merely a pedagogical strategy but a form of moral responsibility—a way of honoring the purpose for which knowledge exists. The critique of current practice on this dimension is sobering: much educational activity remains disconnected from the contexts of learners' actual lives, producing knowledge that is inert and untransferrable, incapable of informing action or shaping understanding in meaningful ways.

The fourth principle is that of value-based learning, which ensures that values are not merely taught as content but are woven throughout the fabric of the educational process as its living substance. Within the deep learning framework, values are conceptualized in terms

of global competencies—collaboration, empathy, creative problem-solving, and social responsibility—that are understood as essential dimensions of the holistic development of learners as persons and citizens (Fullan et al., 2018). Within Islamic education, values are grounded in a theological framework that gives them their ultimate significance and motivating force, particularly through the concept of *adab* as the comprehensive ordering of one's conduct in accordance with the recognition of truth. Al-Abrasyi (2001) identifies the formation of noble character as the primary and overriding purpose of education, a claim that insists on the inseparability of intellectual development and moral formation. The critique of contemporary practice is particularly sharp on this point: in the majority of educational settings, values are taught in isolated, segregated lessons that exist alongside but do not penetrate the actual dynamics of knowledge acquisition and skill development, with the result that they are rarely genuinely internalized. An integrative pedagogy of value-based learning must therefore ensure that values are not merely presented as content but are made actively present in every dimension of the learning encounter.

The fifth principle is that of holistic learning, which brings together cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of learners' development within a unified and mutually sustaining educational vision. Hattie (2009) demonstrates empirically that learning is most effective when it engages learners across multiple dimensions of their being—intellectual, emotional, social, and relational—rather than targeting cognitive development in isolation. Within the Islamic educational tradition, this holistic orientation is not a modern innovation but an ancient and constitutive commitment: the classical vision of Islamic education has always insisted upon the balance and integration of reason (*'aql*), heart (*qalb*), and action (*'amal*) as the mark of genuine human flourishing. The tendency of modern educational systems to separate these dimensions—and to privilege the cognitive at the expense of the affective and spiritual—produces learning that is technically competent but humanly incomplete, intellectually sophisticated but morally and spiritually underdeveloped. Holistic learning, as a pedagogical principle, demands that this separation be deliberately overcome, and that educational design attend with equal seriousness to all dimensions of the learner's being.

The most recent curriculum framework, as articulated in Regulation No. 13 of 2025, creates important structural opportunities for the development and implementation of these integrative pedagogical principles through curriculum flexibility and explicit commitments to learner-centered approaches. However, as this study has sought to demonstrate, the realization of these principles requires a strong philosophical foundation; without it, the flexibility afforded by policy reform risks producing pragmatic inconsistency rather than principled transformation. The five integrative pedagogical principles formulated here are therefore designed to serve not only as a conceptual framework but as a normative guide for the thoughtful design and implementation of learning at every level of the educational system.

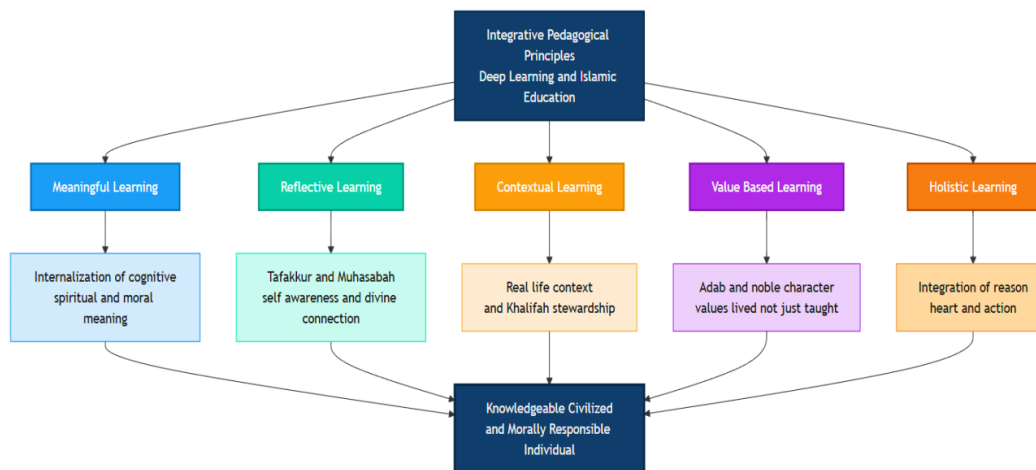


Figure 1. Integrative Pedagogical Principles of Deep Learning and Islamic Education

The relationship between these five principles and the broader transformative aspiration of this study is captured schematically in Figure 1, which represents the synthesis of deep learning and Islamic educational values through the concept of integrative pedagogy. The diagram makes visible what the analysis has sought to establish discursively: that each of the five principles is not a self-contained element but is intrinsically connected to and dependent upon the others, forming a holistic learning system in which no single principle can realize its full potential in isolation. Meaningful learning cannot be achieved without sustained reflection; value-based learning loses its force and relevance if it is not embedded within contextual situations that make values concrete and actionable; and holistic learning, in the fullest sense, requires the presence and integration of all five principles simultaneously. This diagram is therefore not merely descriptive but normative: it provides educators with a visual and conceptual framework for designing and evaluating learning that is genuinely integrative.

The implications of this integrative pedagogical framework extend into every dimension of educational practice. Curriculum design must become more flexible, responsive, and adaptive—capable of accommodating the diversity of learners’ contexts, needs, and potentials rather than imposing uniformity in the name of standardization. Learning strategies must be organized around activities that actively promote learners’ engagement, collaboration, and critical reflection rather than passive reception and memorization. Assessment must shift decisively from a predominantly summative orientation to a formative and process-oriented one, providing learners with the kind of rich, responsive, and constructive feedback that genuinely advances their development. Taken together, these transformations constitute the practical expression of an educational vision that is oriented not only toward academic achievement but toward the development of individuals who are knowledgeable, morally cultivated, and genuinely capable of taking responsibility for themselves and for the world they inhabit.

CONCLUSION

The analysis developed across this study leads to a set of conclusions that are both theoretically substantive and practically significant. The educator's paradigm in deep learning, considered from within the framework of Islamic educational traditions, is not adequately captured by any single role or function; rather, it demands an integrative and transformative reconstruction that holds the triadic conception of the educator as *mu'allim*, *murabbi*, and *mu'addib* in a productive and mutually enriching relationship. Within the framework of deep learning, these three roles must be actualized simultaneously and in genuine integration, as together they constitute the conditions for a learning process that develops not only cognitive competencies but also reflective awareness, moral character, and the spiritual values that give human life its deepest meaning and coherence.

The integration of deep learning principles with the values and commitments of the Islamic educational tradition generates, as this study has sought to demonstrate, a holistic and contextual pedagogical framework that is capable of transcending the persistent dichotomy between academic effectiveness and moral formation. The five pedagogical principles identified—meaningful, reflective, contextual, value-based, and holistic learning—constitute the operational foundation upon which this integrated framework can be translated into concrete educational practice. These principles do not stand in competition with one another; they form a coherent and mutually sustaining system, in which the strength of each is dependent upon and reinforced by the others.

This paradigm makes a distinctive contribution to educational scholarship and practice. It offers a learning model that is not merely academically effective but genuinely capable of forming individuals who are simultaneously knowledgeable, morally cultivated, spiritually grounded, and capable of exercising responsible agency in a complex and demanding world. In doing so, it affirms that the deepest aspirations of contemporary deep learning theory and the richest resources of the Islamic educational tradition are not in conflict but in profound and productive conversation—and that their integration constitutes one of the most promising avenues available to educators who seek to take both the intellectual and the moral dimensions of their vocation.

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