Using Artificial Intelligence and the FIRST Methodology to Develop Education in Islamic Sciences

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Abstract

In light of the unprecedented digital acceleration, developing Sharia science curricula and teaching methodologies has become essential to keep pace with digital advancements, artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and modern educational technologies that influence learning in Sharia colleges. This research explores integrating AI technologies with the FIRST methodology to enhance education in Sharia sciences. It examines how AI applications can be utilized to analyze Sharia texts, deduce rulings, and design innovative educational platforms based on intelligent interaction. Furthermore, the study highlights the role of the FIRST methodology in fostering deep learning by tailoring educational pathways to meet students' needs and enhancing group dynamics for a sustainable educational impact. The research adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to examine relevant theories and frameworks related to AI and the FIRST methodology, along with an experimental approach to assess the application of these tools in Sharia courses.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, FIRST Methodology, Islamic Studies, Deep Learning, Digital Education.

1. Introduction

With the rapid advancement of technology and the ongoing digital transformation, educational institutions, including Sharia colleges, must rethink their curricula and teaching methodologies. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in education marks a significant shift, enabling the development of advanced and effective educational content that enhances students' understanding of Sharia texts and their ability to derive legal rulings.

Meanwhile, the FIRST methodology serves as an innovative educational framework designed to promote deep learning by personalizing educational experiences, fostering collaborative interaction, and linking theoretical knowledge to practical applications.

This research aims to investigate the potential for integrating AI technologies with the FIRST methodology to enhance Sharia science education. Such an approach seeks to establish a sustainable learning experience that aligns with the demands of the digital era while preserving the integrity and authenticity of Sharia sciences.

This research seeks to explore the practical applications of artificial intelligence in analyzing Sharia texts and deriving legal rulings, while also examining the potential of the FIRST methodology in developing innovative educational pathways. Additionally, it seeks to present a practical model that integrates modern technology with educational frameworks to improve the learning process in Sharia sciences.

1.1 Research Importance

The significance of this research is evident in several key aspects:

1. The research explores the potential of artificial intelligence and the FIRST methodology in enhancing the teaching of Islamic sciences through innovative and effective approaches. This contributes to fostering deep and sustainable learning, enabling students to connect theoretical knowledge with practical application.

2. The research offers recommendations for educational institutions to adopt modern teaching strategies that align with ongoing technological advancements, ensuring a more dynamic and future-ready learning environment.

1.2 Research Questions

This research seeks to answer a set of questions:

1. How can artificial intelligence contribute to improving the analysis of Sharia texts?

2. How effective is the FIRST methodology in enhancing deep learning in the field of Sharia sciences?

3. How can artificial intelligence be integrated with the FIRST methodology to create innovative educational platforms?

4. How can the FIRST methodology be adapted to accommodate diverse cultural and educational contexts?

1.3 Research Objectives

1. Investigate the use of artificial intelligence in the field of analyzing Islamic texts.

2. Clarify the role of the FIRST methodology in improving the deep learning experience.

3. Develop an educational model that integrates artificial intelligence with the FIRST methodology to advance Islamic education.

4. Attempt to explore ways to adapt the FIRST methodology to suit diverse cultural and educational settings.

2. Previous Studies

Several previous studies have explored the application of artificial intelligence and the FIRST methodology across different fields. However, no studies have been found that specifically examine the integration of artificial intelligence and the FIRST methodology in the teaching of Islamic sciences.

3. Research plan

The structure of this research necessitated its division into an introduction, two main sections, and a conclusion that presents the findings and recommendations.

3.1 Section One: Research Terminology

1. The Concept of the "FIRST" Framework

The "FIRST" framework (Framework for Active Deep Learner eXperience) is a structured approach designed to enrich active and deep learning. It encompasses five key fields that collectively contribute to fostering a sustainable educational impact.

2. The axes of the "FIRST" Methodology

A distinguishing characteristic of the FIRST framework is the seamless integration of its five axes. The synchronized and interconnected implementation of these fields during the design and facilitation process significantly enhances the effectiveness of active and deep learning experiences.

The following explains the five axes of FIRST

1. Focus on Learner Behavior:

This axis focuses on learner behavior throughout the educational process, where engagement is fostered through interactive and guided learning, ultimately leading to goal attainment. Additionally, it involves tailoring educational activities to meet the diverse needs of learners, enhancing their preparedness for

learning, and encouraging active participation. Thus, this approach for achieving a more influential and effective educational experience.

2. Interaction in Positive Group Dynamics:

Facilitating constructive interaction among students is one of the basic pillars and a key factor that contributes to improving the learning experience. This is achieved by strengthening group dynamics to promote collaborative learning and teamwork, allowing students to acquire new skills collectively. Furthermore, it ensures more effective and meaningful educational outcomes by positioning students as active participants who engage positively with their peers. Such an environment fosters creativity, enthusiasm, and a strong desire for continuous learning.

3. Review through Active Reflection (RAR)

Reviewing learning activities through active reflection and critical analysis of learning activities provides an opportunity for students to enhance the learning experience, as consciously and deliberately analyzing learning experiences provides an opportunity to comprehensively evaluate performance and discover areas that need improvement. This method encourages students to reflect on previous experiences, learn from their mistakes, and link what they have learned to broader applied contexts, making the learning process more relevant and effective.

4. Sequencing Learning Activities

A well-organized sequence of learning activities plays a crucial role in maximizing educational effectiveness. The learning process begins with foundational activities that align with students' current skill levels and gradually advances to more complex tasks requiring deeper analytical abilities. This structured progression allows students to build their knowledge incrementally, making it easier to grasp fundamental concepts before tackling more challenging ideas. By moving from simple to advanced levels, students develop a comprehensive understanding, enabling them to recognize connections between different concepts and apply their learning more effectively.

5. Transference of Learning to Performance

Transforming learning into practical performance is one of the most important outcomes and outcomes that educational institutions seek to achieve. Also, bridging the gap between knowledge acquisition and practical application is a fundamental goal of education. By implementing learned concepts in real-life situations, students develop the ability to address real-world challenges and solve practical problems. Applying knowledge in professional and social contexts enhances critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and adaptability. This approach fosters a generation of learners equipped to make meaningful contributions to their communities and professions.

3. Definition of artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a contemporary concept that attributes intelligence to human-made systems, distinguishing it from human intelligence, which is inherently bestowed upon humans by God Almighty. AI is sometimes referred to as "machine intelligence" or "non-biological intelligence"(Abdel Nour Briber, 2024).

The term "intelligence" in the Arabic language refers to the trilateral root (Dhal, Kaf, and the weak letter) a single, consistent, measured root that indicates sharpness in something and penetration, (Ibn Faris, 1979) and its origin is the completion and perfection of something, (Al Kafwi, n.d) and in Tahdheeb al-Lughah: "Intelligence in understanding is to be a complete understanding that is quick to accept" (Al-Azhari, 2001). In Tahdheeb al-Akhlaq: "As for intelligence, it is the speed of the results and their ease for the soul" (Ibn Maskawayh, n.d).

In al-Kulliyyat: "Intelligence: the intensity of the soul's strength prepared to acquire opinions according to the language" (Al-Kafwi, n.d), and it is the newness of the heart, the speed of insight and nobility, and the plural is dhikaya, and dhikā yadhku and dhikā, and its origin is ignition and flame, and a smart man; Meaning: We are intelligent, and intelligence is the ability to understand or think.

As for the terminology: It is defined as a strong force of the soul prepared to acquire opinions; that is, conceptual and belief sciences, and this force is called the mind (Al-Barakati, 2003).

As for "artificial intelligence," it is the intelligence attributed to what a human being creates or programs into a machine, so that it becomes capable of simulating human intelligence, achieving what a human being achieves with the intelligence that God Almighty has given him (Abdul Nour Briber, 2024).

3.2 Section Two: Integrating Artificial Intelligence and the FIRST Methodology in University Education for Sharia Colleges

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) with the FIRST methodology can lead to significant advancements in teaching Sharia sciences. Both approaches contribute to enhancing the learning process, fostering a deeper understanding, and establishing connections between Sharia knowledge and contemporary issues.

1. Emphasizing Learner Behavior

Incorporating the learner behavior axis within university education in Sharia colleges plays a crucial role in fostering an interactive and impactful academic environment. This approach strengthens students' engagement with Sharia texts and aids in the development of their critical thinking and analytical skills in Sharia studies. This can be achieved through:

1.1 Developing structured educational activities that encourage students to engage with Sharia texts. These activities may include analyzing religious texts, examining modern Sharia-related issues using jurisprudential principles and evidence, facilitating group discussions that promote interaction and dialogue, and assigning students to prepare research projects on applied Sharia topics.

1.2 Implementing personalized learning strategies to tailor education to individual student needs. This involves assessing students' academic levels and identifying areas for improvement while considering the diversity within Sharia disciplines, such as jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, exegesis, theology, advocacy, and hisbah.

Student engagement can be significantly improved by utilizing digital tools such as e-learning systems (LMS), which facilitate interactive discussions on Sharia-related topics. Additionally, organizing open discussion sessions in classrooms allows students to voice their opinions and critically analyze Sharia texts using innovative approaches.

Artificial intelligence can further enhance the focus on learner behavior by leveraging advanced AI technologies that analyze students' learning patterns and tailor educational content to their specific needs. AI-supported Sharia education programs can be developed to adjust to each student's academic level, fostering personalized learning experiences. These programs not only enhance comprehension but also promote positive learning behaviors, ensuring a more effective and adaptive educational environment.

2. Interaction in Positive Group Dynamics

Encouraging positive student interactions plays a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience in Sharia studies. When students engage constructively with their peers, they contribute to a dynamic and creative learning environment that promotes deeper understanding, critical thinking, and thorough analysis of Sharia texts in a supportive and stimulating setting.

Cooperative learning and group activities help students develop new skills collectively. This can be achieved through structured discussions on contemporary Sharia issues, such as rulings on financial transactions or family matters, where students analyze legal texts to derive appropriate rulings and exchange diverse perspectives. Additionally, assigning group research projects on topics like the objectives of Sharia or jurisprudential differences fosters collaborative learning and teamwork.

Interactive workshops further enhance this process by encouraging students to work in teams to solve specific Sharia-related problems, present their solutions collectively, and engage in open discussions. Such activities facilitate the exchange of ideas, strengthen analytical skills, and deepen understanding of Sharia principles and evidence.

Artificial intelligence can further support student interaction in virtual learning environments through AI-driven collaborative platforms. Tools such as chatbots and intelligent discussion systems can enhance engagement, while AI-powered analytics can assess group interactions and provide recommendations to improve teamwork. This integration helps optimize the study of Sharia texts and jurisprudential issues by fostering meaningful discussions and effective collaboration.

3. Review through Active Reflection (RAR) in Sharia Education

Review Through Active Reflection (RAR) Implementing active reflection in reviewing educational activities within Sharia colleges can significantly enhance the learning process and develop students' analytical skills. This approach allows students to critically engage with Sharia texts, examine specific jurisprudential issues, and reassess their conclusions while exploring ways to refine their decisions based on legal texts and jurisprudential principles.

Providing continuous feedback and constructive comments on student performance is essential in this process. Encouraging students to reflect on their mistakes and view them as learning opportunities fosters a deeper understanding of Sharia concepts and strengthens their ability to apply them effectively in real-life situations.

Artificial intelligence further enhances this reflective review by offering advanced tools to analyze student performance. Smart learning platforms can deliver instant feedback on student responses, enabling them to assess their progress and make necessary improvements. Additionally, AI-driven algorithms can generate personalized recommendations based on students' learning patterns, supporting a deeper comprehension of Sharia texts and fostering continuous academic growth.

4. Sequencing Learning Activities

Educational activities in Sharia studies should be designed to follow a structured progression, beginning with fundamental principles before advancing to more complex topics. This approach helps students establish a solid knowledge foundation while enhancing their analytical and comprehension skills.

In Sharia colleges, this progression is implemented by guiding students from introductory courses to specialized and advanced subjects. Typically, advanced courses require prior completion of foundational ones, ensuring that students develop a comprehensive understanding before moving forward.

To reinforce this gradual learning process, students can be assigned analytical tasks involving Sharia texts. They may start with clear and straightforward texts before engaging with those that require ijtihad (independent reasoning) and jurisprudential deduction. Research projects can also be structured progressively, beginning with introductory topics such as rulings on prayer and advancing to more intricate subjects like the objectives of Sharia or jurisprudential differences among Islamic schools of thought. Practical application can be further supported through simulation exercises, initially covering basic legal scenarios before expanding to contemporary issues, such as Islamic banking regulations or Sharia perspectives on scientific advancements.

This step-by-step learning method not only strengthens students' knowledge acquisition but also boosts their confidence and ability to tackle complex educational challenges effectively.

Artificial intelligence can further enhance this structured approach by designing adaptive learning pathways that gradually introduce students to more advanced topics in Islamic sciences. AI-powered smart learning systems can personalize educational activities based on each student's progress, ensuring a steady and comprehensive understanding of Sharia principles.

5. Transference of Learning to Performance

The effectiveness of Sharia studies in transitioning students from theoretical learning to practical application relies on their ability to develop cognitive competence, enabling them to analyze and address contemporary issues.

One way to achieve this is by engaging students in community-based initiatives that require the application of Sharia rulings. For example, they can participate in organizing awareness campaigns on Zakat, develop training programs to teach worship practices, or conduct field research on societal issues such as divorce and financial transactions, linking their findings to Sharia texts and jurisprudential principles.

Project-based learning serves as a powerful method for connecting theory with real-world application. It enhances students' critical thinking skills and prepares them to address community challenges through a scholarly and Sharia-compliant approach. This method plays a crucial role in developing well-qualified Sharia professionals who can effectively serve society, making the study of Sharia more practical and sustainable.

Artificial intelligence further supports this approach by offering realistic simulations that help students practice decision-making in Sharia-related matters. Additionally, AI can be leveraged to develop virtual

Sharia consultation systems, enabling students to engage with contemporary issues interactively and apply their knowledge in a practical context.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, applying the FIRST methodology in Sharia education plays a crucial role in enhancing the learning process. By focusing on the learner, fostering group interaction, structuring activities progressively, and bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application, this approach makes education more impactful and sustainable. It provides students with a well-rounded learning experience that enriches their understanding of Sharia, equipping them with both deep knowledge and practical awareness. This, in turn, prepares a generation of students capable of addressing contemporary challenges with a balanced Sharia perspective and innovative thinking. Integrating artificial intelligence with the FIRST methodology represents a strategic advancement in modernizing Sharia education. This combination can transform how students engage with Sharia texts, process knowledge, and apply their learning effectively in real-life situations. Through this integration, several key objectives can be achieved:

1. Enhancing Deep Understanding – AI-powered tools can simulate scholarly analysis and deduction, helping students develop a more profound grasp of Sharia texts.

2. Personalized Learning Experiences – AI can tailor educational content to meet the specific needs of each student, adapting to their academic level and progress.

3. Creating an Interactive Learning Environment – By promoting critical thinking, collaborative discussions, and the connection of religious teachings to contemporary issues, AI fosters a dynamic and engaging educational atmosphere.

By combining AI with the FIRST methodology, Sharia education can evolve into a more effective, adaptive, and future-ready system, empowering students to apply their knowledge with precision and relevance in today's world.

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