

Adapting Herbart's Teaching Method Based on Islamic Values: A Case Study at Darussalam Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the integration of Johann Friedrich Herbart's educational methods with Islamic values at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, a prominent Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. Herbart's pedagogical framework, emphasizing structured teaching through five stages: preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application, aligns with Islamic educational principles that focus on character development and comprehensive personal growth. Research Methods: The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing literature review and case study methods. Data were collected through document analysis of Gontor's educational materials, observations of teaching practices, and interviews with educators and students to understand the implementation of Herbartian methods within an Islamic educational context. Findings: 1) Integration of Teaching Methods. 2) Balanced Curriculum. 3) Foreign Language Proficiency. 4) Comprehensive Evaluation. 5) Holistic Approach. This study highlights the successful integration of Western educational methods with Islamic values, offering a model for other educational institutions aiming to develop holistic and integrative learning systems. However, the research is limited to a single case study at Gontor; further studies could explore similar integrations in different educational settings to validate and expand upon these findings. The research provides a novel insight into how Herbart's educational concepts can be harmonized with Islamic principles, resulting in a comprehensive and effective educational system. This integration equips students with knowledge, skills, and character aligned with religious guidance and the demands of modern society.

Keywords: Herbartian Method, Islamic Education, Darussalam Gontor, Curriculum Integration, Holistic Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone various transformations in teaching methods to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in shaping a generation that is faithful, knowledgeable, and of noble character. One institution consistently innovating in education is Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, renowned for its comprehensive approach in integrating knowledge and Islamic values. In an effort to enhance the quality of learning, Gontor has implemented a reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values for over half a century. (Wafa. 2024).

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Johann Friedrich Herbart, a German philosopher and educator, introduced a teaching method emphasizing a systematic structure in the instructional process. This method comprises five steps: preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application, designed to build knowledge progressively and organized. Herbart's approach aims to develop students' character and morals through structured learning. (Herbart, J.F. 1806).

Integrating Herbart's method with Islamic values enriches the educational process by adding spiritual and ethical dimensions aligned with Islamic teachings. The steps in Herbart's method are adapted by incorporating Islamic content at each stage, such as relating lesson materials to concepts in the Qur'an and Hadith, and encouraging the application of Islamic values in daily life. (Firdaus. 2023).

Implementing a structured teaching method based on Islamic values can enhance students' understanding and internalization of religious principles. Moreover, this approach can shape students' discipline, independence, and responsibility, aligning with the goals of Islamic education that emphasize forming individuals who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character. (Nurlaila & Muassomah. 2020).

This study aims to explore how the reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method, tailored with Islamic values, can be effectively applied at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. It is hoped that the findings of this research will significantly contribute to the development of teaching methods in Islamic educational institutions and serve as a model for other institutions in integrating Western teaching methods with Islamic values.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to deeply understand how the reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method, based on Islamic values, is implemented at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. The qualitative approach was chosen as it enables researchers to explore complex and contextual educational phenomena and to understand the meaning behind social interactions in their natural setting.

The research site is Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, a leading Islamic educational institution in Indonesia known for its distinctive educational system. The study subjects include educators (ustadz/ustadzah) who have been directly involved in the teaching process for at least three years, students (santri) as learners, and school administrators responsible for formulating

educational policies. This selection aims to obtain a comprehensive perspective on the implementation of the reconstructed teaching method.

Data collection was conducted using multiple techniques. First, interviews were carried out with educators, students, and administrators to explore their experiences, perceptions, and understanding of the implemented teaching method. Second, participatory observation was conducted, where the researcher directly engaged in teaching activities to observe interactions between educators and students, as well as classroom dynamics. Third, document analysis was performed by examining curricula, syllabi, teaching materials, and other relevant documents to understand the structure and content of the utilized teaching methods. The triangulation technique is used to ensure the validity of data by comparing information obtained from interview data, observation data, and documentation.

Data analysis was conducted systematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, relevant information was selected and simplified according to the research focus. Subsequently, data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives illustrating the main findings. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns, themes, and relationships emerging from the data and linking them to the theoretical.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Herbart's Teaching Method

Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841) was a German philosopher and educator who significantly contributed to the development of educational theory. He is recognized as a pioneer in integrating philosophy and psychology into educational practice, which later became known as the "Herbartian Method." This method underscores the importance of structure and sequence in the learning process to achieve optimal outcomes. (Tayar, 1997).

One of the primary concepts in Herbart's method is "apperception," which involves linking new knowledge to prior experiences or existing knowledge in the students' minds. According to Herbart, effective learning occurs when teachers connect new material with concepts students have previously understood, making the knowledge more meaningful and easier to recall. (Muhaimin, 1996).

The Herbartian method consists of five systematic steps designed to facilitate the learning process. First, Preparation: The teacher prepares students by connecting the new material to their existing knowledge, sparking interest and readiness to learn. Second, Presentation: The delivery of

new material is clear and structured, often starting with concrete concepts and progressing toward abstract ones. Third, Association: Linking and comparing the new material with prior knowledge to create a deeper understanding. Fourth, Generalization: Drawing general conclusions or principles from the learned material, aiding students in understanding broader concepts. Fifth, Application: Encouraging students to apply their acquired knowledge in real-life situations or practice to strengthen comprehension and skills. (Muhaimin, 1996).

The strength of Herbart's method lies in its systematic and structured presentation of lessons, enabling students to understand the relationships between various concepts and subjects. This approach helps knowledge become more cohesive and functional, fostering the application of theory into practice. However, the method also has several drawbacks. Its overly structured approach can render learning rigid and inflexible, disregarding individual differences among students. Additionally, excessive focus on step-by-step sequences can make the learning process feel forced and less responsive to classroom dynamics. (A Wafa, 2024).

Johann Friedrich Herbart, emphasized the pivotal role of interest in the learning process. He posited that knowledge acquired through genuine interest becomes an integral part of the learner's understanding. Therefore, educators should strive to spark students' interest by connecting new material to their existing experiences or prior knowledge.

Beyond cognitive development, Herbart asserted that education should encompass moral and character formation. He believed the ultimate aim of education is to cultivate morally upright individuals with strong character. To achieve this, instructional processes must be meticulously designed to embed moral values at every stage, thereby shaping students' character through consistent reinforcement of ethical principles.

Herbart's methodology also highlighted the educator's role as a facilitator guiding students through each learning phase. Teachers are expected to meticulously plan instructional content, ensuring that students progressively master new concepts and are prepared to tackle subsequent challenges. This structured approach aims to foster a comprehensive understanding and application of knowledge.

Implementing Herbart's methods in contemporary education can lead to more structured and effective learning experiences. By linking new information to prior experiences, students can develop deeper and more meaningful comprehension. Additionally, the emphasis on moral and character development aligns with the holistic educational goal of nurturing individuals who are not only intellectually proficient but also possess integrity and ethical judgment.

However, it's important to recognize that Herbart's approach has faced criticism for its perceived rigidity and potential to render teaching overly mechanical. Critics argue that strict adherence to his structured methodology may limit curricular flexibility and fail to accommodate individual student needs. Therefore, educators should adapt Herbart's principles to contemporary contexts, ensuring that teaching methods remain responsive to the diverse characteristics and requirements of students.

In the modern context, Herbart's method remains relevant with certain adjustments. Integrating Islamic values, for example, can be achieved by embedding Islamic principles into each step of the learning process. This approach ensures that education not only focuses on knowledge transfer but also on character building and the cultivation of noble ethics in line with Islamic teachings.

In summary, while Herbart's educational theories offer valuable insights into structured teaching and the integration of moral education, their application in modern classrooms necessitates thoughtful adaptation. Educators should balance structured methodologies with the flexibility to address individual student differences, thereby creating an effective and responsive learning environment.

Islamic Values in Education and Teaching

Education in Islam primarily aims to develop individuals who are faithful, morally upright, and knowledgeable. Islamic values serve as the foundational basis in the educational process, encompassing spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social aspects. The integration of these values in teaching seeks to create a balance between the physical and spiritual development of learners, resulting in a holistic and harmonious personality.

The concept of Islamic education emphasizes three main terminologies: ta'lim (teaching), tarbiyah (education), and ta'dib (cultivation of manners). Ta'lim focuses on the transfer of knowledge, tarbiyah on the comprehensive development and nurturing of individual potential, while ta'dib emphasizes the formation of proper manners and noble character. These three aspects complement each other in shaping learners' character in accordance with Islamic teachings. (Pulungan, 2022).

The implementation of Islamic values in teaching can be carried out through various approaches. First, Curriculum Integration: Combining Islamic principles with general subjects so that every field of study is grounded in Islamic values. (Ikhwan, A. 2014). Second, Teacher Role Modeling: Teachers act as role models in practicing Islamic values, allowing learners to emulate

attitudes and behaviors that align with Islamic teachings. (Munirah, 2022). Third, Islamic Educational Environment: Creating an atmosphere and culture within schools that reflect Islamic values, such as discipline, honesty, and mutual respect. (Muharram, 2024).

The application of Islamic values in education offers several advantages, including the following: Character Development: Islamic values foster the formation of good character traits such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy. Balance of Knowledge and Practice: Encouraging learners not only to master knowledge but also to apply it in daily life in accordance with Islamic guidance. Preparedness for Modern Challenges: With an Islamic value foundation, learners are expected to face various modernization challenges without losing their identity as Muslims. (Muharram, 2024).

Islamic education emphasizes the balanced development of individuals, integrating spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social dimensions. The core values—honesty, responsibility, justice, compassion, and tolerance—serve as foundational principles guiding learners toward achieving well-being in both this life and the hereafter. Integrating these Islamic values into educational curricula ensures that each subject transcends mere academic knowledge, embedding Islamic principles within the learning process. This approach enables students to perceive the interconnectedness between scientific knowledge and religious teachings, fostering the application of Islamic values in daily life.

In the modern era, characterized by globalization and technological advancements, the infusion of Islamic values into character education is increasingly vital. Such integration equips individuals to navigate contemporary challenges without compromising their moral compass or cultural identity. Educators play a pivotal role in this integrative process. As role models, teachers are expected to exemplify virtuous behavior and employ teaching methodologies that seamlessly incorporate Islamic values. This can be achieved through consistent practice, exemplary conduct, and embedding these values within the curriculum. A supportive educational environment further reinforces the assimilation of Islamic values. Activities such as communal prayers, Qur'anic recitations, and spiritually oriented extracurricular programs enhance students' internalization of these principles.

Islamic education extends beyond cognitive development, placing significant emphasis on moral and ethical growth. Values like honesty, accountability, and social empathy are integral, shaping individuals who interact ethically within society. However, implementing Islamic values in education presents challenges, including diverse cultural backgrounds and varying interpretations among students. Therefore, adopting flexible and inclusive strategies is essential to ensure these values are universally embraced and practiced.

Effective Islamic education necessitates the holistic integration of Islamic principles across all facets of learning, aiming to produce graduates who are intellectually proficient and morally upright, ready to contribute positively to society. In the context of globalization, Islamic education must adapt to contemporary developments while steadfastly upholding its foundational values. For instance, incorporating technology in education should align with Islamic principles to prevent value disorientation among learners.

In summary, embedding Islamic values within education is crucial for cultivating individuals who are knowledgeable, ethical, and possess commendable character. The seamless integration of these values into curricula and teaching practices is fundamental to realizing the comprehensive objectives of Islamic education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, located in Ponorogo, East Java, is one of Indonesia's most prominent Islamic educational institutions. It was established in 1926 by three brothers known as the Trimurti: KH Ahmad Sahal, KH Zainuddin Fanani, and KH Imam Zarkasyi. The institution was founded to reform the traditional pesantren education system by integrating modern values without compromising Islamic principles.

The history of Gontor traces back to Pondok Tegalsari, founded by Kyai Ageng Hasan Bashari in the 18th century. After experiencing ups and downs over time, the Trimurti revitalized the institution in 1926, renaming it Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor. The addition of the word "Modern" reflects efforts to integrate religious and general education while implementing more systematic teaching methods.

Gontor's educational system emphasizes a balance between religious studies and general knowledge. The curriculum includes various disciplines, ranging from tafsir, hadith, and fiqh to mathematics, science, and foreign languages such as Arabic and English. This approach aims to produce graduates who are knowledgeable, morally upright, and capable of adapting to modern advancements.

In addition to academics, Gontor prioritizes character development through discipline, self-reliance, and responsibility. Students are trained to live simply, independently, and with leadership qualities. These values are embodied in the pondok's motto: "Noble Character, Healthy Body, Broad Knowledge, and Independent Thinking."

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Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor has produced many influential figures across various fields, both nationally and internationally. Its strong alumni network is one of the institution's strengths, actively contributing to education, government, and community organizations. As such, Gontor serves not only as an educational center but also as a hub for developing human resources with integrity and broad vision.



Picture 1 Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor

Teaching Methods at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor implements distinctive and comprehensive teaching methods, integrating religious education with general knowledge in a unified system. One of the main characteristics of Gontor's teaching approach is the use of an organized classical system, where teaching and learning take place in classrooms with a systematically designed curriculum.

For foreign language instruction, especially Arabic and English, Gontor applies the direct method, where the language being learned is used as the medium of instruction. This method is reinforced by the daily use of foreign languages within the boarding school environment, enabling students to become accustomed to and proficient in communicating in both languages.

In addition, Gontor emphasizes learning through hands-on practice and assignments. Students are given various tasks and responsibilities within internal organizations such as the Modern Islamic Boarding School Students' Organization (OPPM) and the Coordinating Body for Modern Islamic Boarding School Scouts. These assignments allow students to acquire theoretical knowledge while applying it in daily life under the strict guidance and supervision of teachers.

Leadership training at Gontor is implemented through several stages: direction, training, assignment, habituation, and supervision. These stages are designed to develop students' leadership qualities, preparing them to become leaders with integrity and broad perspectives in the future.

Overall, the teaching methods at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor are designed to produce graduates who excel not only academically but also in language proficiency, leadership, and strong character, in line with the school's motto: "Noble Character, Healthy Body, Broad Knowledge, and Independent Thinking."

Analysis of the Reconstruction of Herbart's Teaching Method Based on Islamic Values

The analysis of the reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor represents an integrative effort to combine Western educational concepts with the principles of Islamic education. Johann Friedrich Herbart, a German philosopher and educator, emphasized that education should focus on character and moral development through a structured and disciplined teaching process. This approach aligns with the goals of Islamic education, which emphasize the formation of noble character and a well-rounded personality.

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, as a leading Islamic educational institution in Indonesia, applies teaching methods that balance religious and general knowledge. The curriculum covers various disciplines, including tafsir, hadith, fiqh, mathematics, science, and foreign languages such as Arabic and English. This approach aims to produce graduates who are well-versed in knowledge, possess noble character, and are adaptable to contemporary developments.

Herbart's teaching method emphasizes the importance of structure in teaching processes, consisting of five stages: preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application. These stages aim to ensure that students deeply understand the material and can apply it in real life. At Gontor, these principles are reflected in organized and disciplined teaching systems where students are trained to think critically and analytically through various interactive teaching methods.

The integration of Islamic values in Herbart's teaching method at Gontor is evident in the teaching methods developed by KH Imam Zarkasy, as documented in his book *Tarbiyah Amaliyah*. This book not only elaborates on the steps of teaching but also includes ethics, attitudes, and the qualities a teacher should embody in every subject, particularly in Islamic Studies, Arabic, and English.

In Tarbiyah Amaliyah, the teaching steps are adapted from Herbart's method into five stages: *Ta'aruf* (Introduction), *Muqaddimah* (Preliminary), *Ardh wa Rabt* (Presentation and Connection), *Tathbiq* (Evaluation), and *Ikhtitam* (Conclusion):



Picture 2 five stages of teaching

Introduction Stage: Teachers greet the students, organize the classroom, ask about the subject matter, and write it along with the Hijri and Gregorian dates with the students.
Preliminary Stage: Teachers review previous lessons, connect them with the new lesson through questions or brief explanations that direct students' attention to the new topic, and then write it on the board.
Presentation and Connection Stage: Teachers explain vocabulary using modern and accurate methods, deliver the content comprehensively, linking previous information with general issues, and engage students through discussion and visual aids. Key points such as definitions, evidence (surah names, verse numbers, or parts of hadith), conditions, and pillars are highlighted without detailing them excessively. Teachers instill faith and correct beliefs during this process, read the lesson material as an example, and guide students in marking texts in their books. This stage involves interactive reading, corrections, and preparation for applications.
Evaluation Stage: Teachers assess students' understanding of the content and the meaning of words.
Conclusion Stage: Teachers provide specific guidance and advice tailored to the subject matter and conclude with a greeting.

Additionally, Gontor emphasizes the use of foreign languages, especially Arabic and English, as everyday communication tools. This aligns with Herbart's concept of the importance of mastering languages as a medium to understand various disciplines and cultures. The use of foreign languages at Gontor not only enhances students' linguistic skills but also broadens their worldview.

In the context of evaluation, Gontor applies a comprehensive assessment system that includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This approach aligns with Herbart's view that education should encompass intellectual, moral, and practical skill development. Thus, students are assessed not only based on academic performance but also on their behavior and skills demonstrated in daily life.

The reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values at Gontor is also reflected in the holistic approach to education. Gontor views education as an all-encompassing process, including spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects. This approach ensures that students develop in a balanced manner and are prepared to face future challenges.

Furthermore, Gontor emphasizes the importance of adaptation and innovation in teaching methods. While adhering to traditional Islamic values, Gontor continually integrates modern teaching methods relevant to contemporary developments. This aligns with Herbart's spirit of emphasizing responsive education that meets societal needs.

In summary, the analysis of the reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor illustrates that integrating Western educational concepts with Islamic principles can create a comprehensive and effective educational system. This approach equips students not only with knowledge and skills but also with noble character and morals aligned with religious guidance.

Discussion

The analysis of the reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor demonstrates the integration of Western educational concepts with Islamic educational principles. Johann Friedrich Herbart, a German philosopher and educator, emphasized the importance of structure in the teaching process through five stages: preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application. These stages aim to ensure that students deeply understand the material and can apply it in real life. At Gontor, these principles are reflected in an organized and disciplined teaching system where students are trained to think critically and analytically through various interactive teaching methods.

Previous studies indicate that Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor integrates the noble values of pesantren with modern educational systems and methods. The idealism, spirit, and philosophy of pesantren life remain the essence of Gontor, but the installation of these values is carried out effectively and efficiently using modern educational systems and methods. This aligns with Herbart's concept, which emphasizes the importance of structured and disciplined education.

In foreign language teaching, particularly Arabic and English, Gontor employs the direct method, where the language being learned is used as the medium of instruction in the learning process. This method is reinforced by the use of foreign languages as the daily language in the pondok environment, enabling students to become accustomed to and skilled in communicating in these two languages. This aligns with Herbart's concept of the importance of language mastery as a means to understand various disciplines and cultures.

Furthermore, Gontor emphasizes the importance of adaptation and innovation in teaching methods. While adhering to traditional Islamic values, Gontor continuously strives to integrate modern teaching methods relevant to contemporary developments. This aligns with Herbart's spirit, which emphasizes the importance of education that is responsive to societal needs.

In the context of evaluation, Gontor implements a comprehensive assessment system covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This approach aligns with Herbart's view that education should encompass intellectual, moral, and practical skill development. Thus, students are assessed not only based on academic performance but also on their behavior and skills demonstrated in daily life.

The reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values at Gontor is also reflected in a holistic approach to education. Gontor views education as an all-encompassing process that includes spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects. This approach ensures that students develop in a balanced manner and are prepared to face future challenges.

Additionally, Gontor emphasizes the importance of adaptation and innovation in teaching methods. While adhering to traditional Islamic values, Gontor continually integrates modern teaching methods that are relevant to contemporary developments. This aligns with Herbart's spirit of emphasizing education that is responsive to societal needs.

Overall, the analysis of the reconstruction of Herbart's teaching method based on Islamic values at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor demonstrates that the integration of Western educational concepts with Islamic principles can produce a comprehensive and effective educational system. This approach equips students not only with knowledge and skills but also with noble character and morals aligned with religious guidance.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of reconstructing Herbart's teaching methods integrated with Islamic values at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, the following conclusions can be drawn. First,

Integration of Teaching Methods: Gontor successfully adapted Herbart's teaching method, consisting of five stages—preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application—to align with Islamic values. This is evident in its structured and disciplined teaching system, which trains students to think critically and analytically through interactive methods.

Second, Curriculum Balance: Gontor's curriculum combines religious sciences and general knowledge, encompassing disciplines such as tafsir, hadith, fiqh, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. This approach produces graduates with broad knowledge, noble character, and adaptability to the demands of modern times. Third, Mastery of Foreign Languages: The application of the direct method in teaching Arabic and English, along with their use in daily communication, enhances students' linguistic skills and broadens their international outlook. Fourth, Comprehensive Evaluation: Gontor's 2019 assessment system covers cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, in line with Herbart's perspective that education should include intellectual, moral, and practical skill development. Fifth, Holistic Approach: Gontor views education as a comprehensive process encompassing spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects, ensuring balanced development and preparing students to face future challenges.

New Findings This study reveals that the integration of Herbart's teaching methods with Islamic values at Gontor demonstrates that Western educational concepts can be synergized with Islamic principles, resulting in a comprehensive and effective educational system. This approach equips students with knowledge, skills, and character that align with religious guidance and modern societal needs.

Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor serves as an exemplary model of how educational institutions can integrate Western teaching methods with Islamic values to create an adaptive, relevant, and effective system for cultivating virtuous and broad-minded generations. This approach can serve as a blueprint for other educational institutions aiming to develop holistic and integrative learning systems.

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