

Analysis of PAI and Budi Pekerti Teaching Materials on National Character in the Merdeka Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the teaching materials for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti in the Merdeka Curriculum related to the development of national character. The method used is a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis techniques on Islamic Religious Education and Budi Pekerti textbooks from primary to secondary education levels. Data were collected through documentation techniques which included identifying, recording, and classifying relevant information. Data analysis was conducted by following six phases of content analysis which include unitizing, sampling, recording, reducing, inferring, and narrating. The main findings of the study show that each phase in the Merdeka Curriculum progressively teaches national character values, such as respect for human dignity, love for the country, democracy, social solidarity, and a just and prosperous society. The PAI and Budi Pekerti teaching materials successfully integrate these values in the context of character education, which is expected to form a generation that is noble, responsible, and sensitive to differences. This research makes an important contribution to the development of more effective teaching materials to instill the spirit of nationalism among students.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, we cannot ignore the fact that our nation's character is experiencing a moral crisis. The decline of character in society affects various aspects of life, ranging from increased crime rates to rifts in social relations (Soetari, 2017). Therefore, character education is very important today. In the context of the life of the nation and state, national character values integrated in national education have a fundamental function in shaping superior character as a driver of superior civilization based on the values of moderation, tolerance and mutual respect for each other as citizens of the nation (A. Hasanah, 2022). As reflected in the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 which states that the purpose of education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

The formulation of the objectives of national education reflects an overview of the figure of Indonesian citizens who are expected and must be produced through the implementation of each educational program. Therefore, the formulation of national education goals is the basis for the development of cultural values of national character in schools based on Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution and Indonesian culture. Therefore, the development of values that lead to the

formation of national character obtained through various pathways, levels, and types of education, will encourage them to become members of society, children of the nation, and citizens who have superior personalities as expected in national education goals (Wibowo, 2020).

According to Agus Zaenal Fitri, character education can be applied through subjects (Fawzi et al., 2022). By using the approach in each subject in its learning activities, character values can be developed (Syarnubi et al., 2022). Learning materials related to norms or values in each subject need to be developed, explicit, linked to the context of everyday life (Tabrani ZA, 2019). Therefore, learning character values should not only be given in the cognitive direction, but touches on internalization and real practice in the daily lives of students at school and in society (Arifin, 2017). The cultivation of character education cannot just transfer knowledge or train a certain skill, but also requires a process (Syarnubi, 2020). In other words, character building is not something that can be done instantly. In the process of character building, it must go through activities that have been managed or arranged neatly and planned (Syarnubi, 2016). Character education is not only important, but absolutely necessary for every nation if it wants to become a civilized nation (Priatmoko, 2021).

The progress of a nation depends on its young generation, if a nation and state has a brilliant generation, the nation and state will become a developed country. The glory of the nation's children can only be measured by education, if education in a nation runs well, its generation will be good (Syarnubi, 2023). In Chapter 10, students are taught about the important role of Islamic values in building a just and prosperous modern society. Through the discussion of *"The Influence of Modern Islam for Indonesia"*, students gain an understanding of how the principles of justice and welfare in Islam are the foundation for creating social harmony and national progress. In addition, through the subtopic *"The Wisdom of Learning Modern Islamic Civilization"*, students are equipped with insights that emphasize the importance of applying these values in the life of the nation. By learning this, students not only understand the relevance of Islamic values in facing global challenges, but are also motivated to uphold the spirit of nationality in contributing to the development of a better society, but if a country has poor education, its generation will be destroyed (Syarifuddin et al., 2021). Many facts prove that developed nations are not because they have abundant natural resources, but because they have superior characters such as honesty, hard work, responsibility and others (Priatmoko, 2021).

Strengthening character education in the current context is very relevant to overcome the moral crisis that is happening in our country (Syarnubi et al., 2023). The crisis, among others, in the form of increasing promiscuity, rampant teenage violence, crimes against friends, teenage theft, cheating habits, and drug abuse, pornography, rape and deprivation, has become a social problem that until now has not been resolved completely. The consequences are quite serious and can no longer be considered a simple problem because these actions have led to criminal acts (Nuraeni & Yahya, 2021). In 2023 (as of September) KPAI has received 1,800 cases related to the fulfillment of children's rights (PHA) and special protection of children (PKA). The complaints are divided into 2 clusters, namely Fulfillment of Children's Rights (PHA) 86.7% and Special Protection of Children (PKA) cases as much as 31.3% (R.N, 2023).

So to overcome the problems mentioned above is none other than through character education in schools, where all subjects can apply character education in learning. One of the subjects that become the source of character education is the subject of Islamic religious education and ethics. With the Character Education Program, it is expected that the character problems of the younger generation will be resolved, and can form a more qualified future generation, which is not only intelligent, but also has a personality.

However, in the process, the implementation of this character education curriculum is certainly not smooth, but experiences many obstacles (Syarnubi et al., 2024). The problem is that in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti (BP) textbooks, there is no clear mention of character education in the book, so that any character education presented or contained in the material in the PAI and BP books is not clearly known. Then another problem that arises is the assumption of some people that Islamic teachings only teach aqidah and worship issues such as

prayer, fasting, zakat and others, not teaching national character, even though this assumption is not necessarily true. As we know that Islam is a Kaffah religion that teaches all aspects of life, including moral or character issues, in this case, national character.

Although studies on nationality education in the education curriculum have been carried out, research that focuses on how PAI and Budi Pekerti teaching materials on nationality in the Merdeka Curriculum are still very limited. Most of the previous studies highlighted the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum or were more directed at aspects of religious rituals without linking deeply to the formation of national character. The Merdeka Curriculum, which offers an approach to the phases of student development, provides new challenges in integrating national values. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the research gap by exploring the extent to which the freedom of teaching in the Merdeka Curriculum is able to instill national values holistically in various phases of student development.

This research offers novelty by analyzing PAI and Budi Pekerti teaching materials on nationality based on the phases of student development in the Merdeka Curriculum. In the Merdeka Curriculum, learning is divided into phases that are adjusted to the stage of child development. Namely phase A (grades 1 and 2), phase B (grades 3 and 4), phase C (grades 5 and 6), phase D (grades 7,8 and 9), Phase E (Grade 10) and Phase F (grades 11 and 12). This research will examine how the values of national insight formulated by Balitbang, covering six fundamental and fundamental dimensions, namely: respect for human dignity as a creature of God Almighty; a common determination to live a free, independent, and united national life; love for the homeland and nation; democracy or popular sovereignty; social solidarity; and a just and prosperous society, will be conveyed in each phase. This is expected to be a reference in developing teaching materials that are more effective in instilling the spirit of nationalism.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis method. This method was chosen to examine in depth the content of teaching materials in the Islamic Religious Education and Ethics textbooks of the Merdeka Curriculum. Content analysis is an effective approach to identifying, analyzing, and interpreting messages contained in written data sources (Hasan Syaiful Rizal & Chasanah, 2023). The data source in this study is the PAI and Budi Pekerti textbooks of the Merdeka Curriculum, which covers primary to secondary education levels. The data in this study were collected through documentation techniques. This process involves identifying, recording, and classifying relevant information from textbooks. The focus of the documentation is on national values reflected in the teaching materials. Data collection was conducted in a systematic and structured manner to ensure that all relevant elements were thoroughly identified.

Data analysis was conducted based on the six stages of the content analysis procedure as proposed by Klaus Krippendorff. The first stage is unitizing, which is the process of determining the unit of analysis in the form of words, sentences, or paragraphs that are in accordance with the research focus. Furthermore, the sampling stage is carried out by selecting text samples that are considered representative for further analysis. The recording or coding stage was then applied to record and code relevant information based on the predetermined theme of national values. After that, the data that has been collected is reduced through the process of reducing, which is the simplification of information by filtering out irrelevant elements to make the analysis more focused. In the next stage, inferring, researchers draw conclusions based on patterns and relationships found in the data. The final stage, narrating, is the process of systematically compiling a narrative of findings to support the discussion and conclusions of the research. By applying this analysis procedure, this research is expected to provide a clear and comprehensive picture of the representation of national values in the Islamic Religious Education and Cultivation textbooks of the Merdeka Curriculum (Bakir, 2020).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Analysis of National Character Respect for Human Rights and Dignity as Creatures of God Almighty

Based on the analysis of the teaching materials for Islamic Religious Education and Budi Pekerti books in the independent curriculum, there is a progressive development in the understanding and application of the values of respect for human dignity as creatures of God Almighty. Each phase in this curriculum gradually teaches the importance of mutual respect and appreciation among others, which is the essence of national character.

In Phase A, learning is focused on the material of Chapter 7, Grade 1 "Love for Others". Students are invited to understand and appreciate the value of compassion through the introduction of Asmaul Husna, namely Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim. Ar-Rahman reflects God's universal love, covering all creatures without exception, while Ar-Rahim describes God's special love for His believing servants. This understanding is an important basis in character education, encouraging students to emulate the nature of God's compassion in their daily interactions (Nurbaeti et al., 2020). Character education based on the values of compassion aims to create an inclusive and harmonious environment. By teaching the value of compassion from an early age, students are not only formed into individuals who are sensitive to others, but also encouraged to reject discrimination in various forms (Octaviani et al., 2019). The integration of compassion values in character education contributes to the formation of a national character that upholds justice and humanity (Syarnubi, 2022). By understanding and applying the attributes of Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim, students learn to view each individual as a creature of God who has the same dignity. This enables them to develop attitudes of mutual respect, tolerance and solidarity. Teaching about Asmaul Husna in the context of character education is a strategic step in shaping a generation that is not only intellectually smart, but also morally noble (Esmael & Nafiah, 2018)

In Phase B, learning focuses on respect for others, which is a fundamental value in character education. In Chapter 3 of Grade 3, students are taught about being filial to parents, teachers, and respecting others. This respect is not only directed to parents and teachers who play an important role in life, but also to all individuals regardless of background. This reflects a universal respect for fellow human beings, which is very important in building a respectful society (Nata, 2020). Furthermore, in Chapter 3 Grade 4 "Respect and Appreciate People of Different Religions", this discussion is expanded with the recognition of the diversity of beliefs and the importance of maintaining tolerance. Education that emphasizes the values of mutual respect and appreciation of religious differences is very relevant in the context of pluralism in Indonesia. Research shows that multicultural education can serve as an alternative to resolve conflicts and encourage students to strengthen the values of tolerance in society (Prasetiawati, 2017). Thus, teaching about mutual respect and appreciation of religious differences is an integral part of character education that supports the peaceful life of the nation (Syarnubi, 2024). The importance of respect-based character education is also seen in how religious education can help individuals understand and accept religious and cultural diversity. Through inclusive religious education, students are taught to appreciate differences and build mutual understanding, which is key in creating a cohesive and harmonious society. Thus, teaching the values of respect for others in grades III and IV not only shapes individual character but also contributes to the formation of a better and more tolerant society (Mulyadi et al., 2023; Nur'aeni et al., 2022).

In Phase C, in Chapter 3 of Grade 5, "The Beauty of Mutual Respect" becomes an important focus in students' character education. In this case, students are taught that every individual has value and dignity that must be respected, regardless of differences in ethnicity, race or belief. Everyone has the right to have a quiet and peaceful life despite their differences. As Allah provides certainty about the beauty of mutual respect in the Qur'an letter Al-Qasas verse 77, which emphasizes the importance of doing good to others as a manifestation of moral values in Islam (Shofwan & Farantika, 2022). Then in Chapter 8 of Grade 5 "It's Nice to Make Friends", students are taught about the value of brotherhood in Islam and the importance of making friends regardless of religion. This material not only teaches students to appreciate differences, but also to see differences as wealth that can enrich relationships between individuals. By instilling an attitude

of tolerance and mutual respect, students are expected to build inclusive and harmonious relationships, which is the main goal of character education in Indonesia (Mahardika, 2020). Overall, the integration of the values of tolerance and respect for differences in basic education is very important to form a generation that is able to coexist in diversity. Through an educational approach based on religious and multicultural values, students can learn to respect each other and create a peaceful environment (Ilmi et al., 2021).

Phase D emphasizes tolerance among religious communities, with learning that invites students to respect differences in beliefs. In Chapter 2 of Grade 8: "Believing in the Books of God: Becoming a Tolerant Generation of Qur'an Lovers", students are taught to believe in the books of God revealed to the previous prophets and understand the importance of building an attitude of tolerance in everyday life. In the Qur'an, people who believe in the previous scriptures are referred to as people of the book, including followers of the Jewish and Christian religions who received revelations from prophets before Prophet Muhammad. This lesson also highlights the harmonious relationship that existed between Muslims and people of the book during the time of Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Although the Prophet Muhammad was a messenger of God, he never forced Jews and Christians to convert to Islam, demonstrating the respect for religious freedom that is part of the teachings of Islam. Through the Medina Charter, Prophet Muhammad created rules that guarantee religious freedom and encourage interfaith cooperation to maintain the security and welfare of society (Dedi Ardiansyah & Basuki, 2023). In the context of learning, students are invited to emulate the attitude of the Prophet Muhammad by upholding tolerance and mutual respect. Students are invited to understand that diversity must be accepted with an open attitude. In this way, students are expected to be able to become individuals who respect differences and are able to coexist peacefully in a plural society. The values of tolerance taught are important provisions for creating a generation capable of maintaining unity and peace (Fatihatusshofwa et al., 2023).

In phase E Chapter 6 "Avoiding Promiscuity and Adultery" emphasizes the importance of maintaining human dignity by avoiding destructive behavior that has a negative impact on individuals and society. Promiscuity and adultery not only damage a person's moral and physical integrity, but can also weaken social structures, such as loss of trust, family breakdown, and moral degradation of society. Through this chapter, students are taught to understand the importance of self-control and to take religious values as guidelines in social interactions. Effective character education can help students develop positive attitudes and behaviors that respect the rights and dignity of others (Febrian & Harmanto, 2021). By instilling strong moral values, students are expected to create an environment that is safe, healthy, and free from negative stigma (Syarnubi et al., 2021). Research shows that character education integrated in the curriculum can increase students' awareness of the importance of maintaining human dignity (Hamdani et al., 2022). It also instills awareness that protecting human dignity means recognizing the right of every individual to live with integrity and honor. In this context, character education plays an important role in shaping individuals who are responsible and respectful of moral values. With this understanding, students are expected to be able to contribute to building a dignified society, where every individual is valued and their rights are protected (Yusuf et al., 2022).

In Phase F Chapter 2 class 11 "Evidence of Faith: Fulfilling Promises, Maintaining Speech, and Covering the Disgrace of Others" focuses on strengthening character through concrete actions in daily life. Fulfilling promises is a form of responsibility and trust that is very important in building good relationships between individuals. Research shows that fulfilling promises can increase trust and strengthen social relationships, which in turn creates a more harmonious environment (Rosad, 2019). Maintaining one's tongue, or keeping one's speech good and correct, is another important aspect discussed in this chapter. Maintaining speech can prevent conflict and build harmonious communication between individuals. Research shows that good and polite communication can reduce the potential for misunderstandings and interpersonal conflicts (IKHSAN, 2024). In addition, guarding one's speech also reflects ethical and moral values that are important in social interactions, contributing to positive character building. Meanwhile, covering the disgrace of

others reflects respect for human dignity. This not only creates a sense of security in society, but also builds mutual respect among individuals. Research shows that mutual respect and covering others' disgrace can strengthen social bonds and create a more peaceful environment. Thus, these values help shape a social environment that is harmonious, peaceful and mutually supportive, which is very important in the context of character education (Anshori, 2017).

Overall, the analysis of national character in the context of respect for human dignity as creatures of God Almighty shows the integration of Islamic values in every phase of the curriculum. Character education that emphasizes compassion, respect and tolerance is expected to form a generation that is not only sensitive to differences, but also able to create a just, civilized and inclusive society. Thus, this character education plays an important role in building a strong and harmonious national foundation. Moreover, character education, which is integrated into the independent curriculum, shows significant potential in shaping students' morals (Syarnubi, S., Syarifuddin, A., & Sukirman, 2023). By being taught about the values of respect for human dignity from an early age, it is hoped that students can develop into individuals who are noble, responsible, and have a high sense of empathy. This will have a positive impact on their lives both in the family, school and community environment.

B. Analysis of National Character of Joint Determination for a Free, Independent, and United National Life

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has an important role in shaping national character among students. In this context, an analysis of the teaching materials of PAI and Budi Pekerti shows that each phase of learning is designed to instill fundamental national values. With a focus on developing attitudes of discipline, tolerance, and cooperation, these teaching materials not only equip students with religious knowledge, but also build their awareness of the importance of living in a diverse society. Through a systematic approach, students are expected to internalize these values and apply them in their daily lives.

Analysis of the teaching materials per phase shows significant contributions in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors. In Phase A, in grade 2, Chapter 8, "I'm Happy to Have a Praiseworthy Character," focuses on the material of a regular lifestyle. An orderly lifestyle instills important values in forming neat and orderly living habits. This habit is not only related to time management and daily activities, but also builds discipline that is the foundation of social life. The habituation of regular behavior at an early age can form a strong disciplinary character in children, which is very important for their future development (Utami & Usiono, 2023). The discipline built through a regular lifestyle contributes to better time management, which in turn can increase productivity and efficiency in various aspects of life. In the context of education, this habituation helps students to focus more on learning and interacting with their social environment (Fauzi et al., 2023). In addition, an organized lifestyle also plays a role in shaping an attitude of responsibility, where students learn to respect their time and the commitments they make. Furthermore, the organized lifestyle taught in this teaching material also reflects broader character values, such as perseverance and consistency. Research shows that strong character, formed through good habits, can help students deal with the challenges and pressures of everyday life. Thus, education that emphasizes a regular lifestyle serves not only to improve individual discipline, but also to prepare students to become responsible and productive members of society (Fatonah et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Phase B in Grade 4, which begins with Chapter 1, teaches the main message of Q.S. Al-Hujurat/49:13, emphasizing the importance of brotherhood regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or social status. This verse highlights the principle of unity as a key element in building an independent and united nation. In this context, an understanding of religious moderation is essential. Moderation in religion can strengthen moderate understanding and social attitudes among the people, which are indispensable for maintaining unity in diversity (Islamy & Susilo, 2022). Furthermore, Chapter 10 "Promoting Harmony" teaches the importance of collaboration between groups to create peace in society. In the context of Islamic education, education that emphasizes multiculturalism can build awareness and tolerance among students from different cultural backgrounds (Barella et al., 2023). This is in line with the views of Nurfi and Batubara who

emphasize that tolerance in the context of brotherhood is very important to create an environment of mutual respect. In addition, social integration in a multicultural society can reduce the risk of conflict and increase harmony. Thus, education that teaches collaboration and respect for differences can contribute to peace and harmony in society (Barella et al., 2023). This is in line with the views of Nurfi and Batubara who emphasize that tolerance in the context of brotherhood is very important to create an environment of mutual respect. In addition, social integration in a multicultural society can reduce the risk of conflict and increase harmony. Thus, education that teaches collaboration and respect for differences can contribute to peace and harmony in society (Nurfi & Batubara, 2021).

Phase C, in Grade 5, invites students to emulate the Prophet's struggle in the story of Fathu Makkah, which shows the importance of cooperation and diplomacy in achieving common goals. In this chapter, students learn about the Hudaibiyah treaty, which shows how the Prophet used wisdom to overcome conflict and create unity among Muslims. Through this story, students are taught that success in national life requires determination and commitment to work together (Husni et al., 2023). Furthermore, Chapter 6, entitled Living Peacefully in Togetherness, invites students to understand and live the values of tolerance in the midst of diversity by referring to Qur'anic verses, such as Surah Ali Imran (3:64), which calls on mankind to find common ground among them, and Surah Al-Baqarah (2:256), which emphasizes the principle of religious freedom as the basis of peace. This material is designed to instill mutual respect and appreciation of differences, which is an important foundation in building an inclusive pluralist society, as well as in line with the idea of modern multicultural education that encourages students to recognize and maintain social harmony. This discussion is relevant to the reality of Indonesia as a country rich in ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity, where tolerance is understood not as the elimination of differences, but rather as the creation of space for mutual acceptance and learning (Supriadi. AM, 2017).

Just like in Phase C, Phase D also emphasizes learning on the values of religious tolerance and moderation. In Chapter 8 "Building Tolerance and Harmony Among Religious People", this chapter emphasizes the importance of creating harmonious relationships among various groups in a pluralistic society. Mutual respect, understanding and cooperation are seen as the main keys to achieving freedom, unity and a peaceful life. In this lesson, students are invited to realize that differences do not have to be a source of conflict, but can be a strength to enrich life together. By respecting differences and upholding the values of togetherness, students are expected to become individuals who contribute to creating a peaceful and united society, regardless of diversity (Rusydi & Zolehah, 2018).

In Phase E Chapter 5 "Exemplifying the Role of the Ulama in Spreading Islam in Indonesia", we can emulate the ulama in spreading Islam. Islam explicitly states that there is no compulsion in religion. Everyone is welcome to choose their own religion and beliefs. Religious people respect each other and respect differences in religion, ethnicity, race, and class. Do not demean and belittle other people's religions and beliefs. The existence of a feeling of superiority is a source of chaos in religious life. The scholars who spread Islam in Indonesia were very tolerant of local culture. Indigenous people who embrace Islam are still allowed to carry out local traditions that have been harmonized with Islamic teachings. Thus, there is no clash between Islamic teachings and local culture. On the contrary, the teachings of Islam and local culture can go hand in hand. A tolerant attitude will foster a sense of national unity. As individual beings as well as social beings, humans must be able to establish harmonious relationships between fellow citizens. Respect for differences can be fostered by getting to know each other among religious communities, races, tribes, and groups (Mubarak, 2018).

Finally, in Phase F, the material on teaching students to avoid fights, alcohol, and drugs is delivered in grade 11 in Chapter 3. Avoiding fights between students is an important step in educating students to resolve conflicts peacefully, while supporting the creation of unity and stability in society. In addition, staying away from alcohol and drugs not only instills a sense of individual responsibility in maintaining personal health, but also strengthens the social safety that

is the foundation of an independent national life. These efforts play a strategic role in shaping a young generation that is healthy, productive and contributes positively to the nation's progress. All these phases collectively shape the character of students who are responsible, tolerant, and committed to living in a society that is free of discrimination (Ardi et al., 2019).

An analysis of PAI teaching materials shows that each phase has a significant contribution in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors. From the introduction of disciplinary values to the cultivation of religious tolerance and moderation, these teaching materials gradually build students' awareness of the importance of living together in the midst of differences. In addition, teaching materials that focus on the avoidance of negative behaviors also contribute to the formation of responsible student characters who care about the health and safety of the community.

The analysis of PAI teaching materials on the common determination to live a free, independent, and united national life shows that religious education has a strategic role in shaping students' characters who are tolerant and committed to unity. By instilling these values through various phases of learning, students are expected to contribute to creating a harmonious and prosperous society, where every individual is valued and their rights are recognized. PAI education does not only function as religious teaching, but also as a means to build strong national awareness among the younger generation.

C. Analysis of National Character Love for Homeland and Nation

Character education for love of the homeland is a fundamental aspect in the formation of the next generation of a dignified nation. Through the Merdeka Curriculum, national values are integrated into the teaching materials of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti to instill a sense of patriotism from an early age. Each learning phase is designed to build a deep understanding of nationality through applicable religious values, so that students not only understand the concepts, but also practice them in everyday life.

In Phase A, learning is focused on the values of cleanliness and order as a form of love for the country. In Chapter 8 of Grade 2, the theme "I'm Happy to Have a Praiseworthy Character" emphasizes the importance of having a clean and tidy lifestyle. Similarly, Chapter 9 Grade 1, which teaches the importance of clean living, also internalizes the value of patriotism through the habit of keeping the environment clean. This is part of character education that teaches students that maintaining cleanliness is a form of positive contribution to the homeland, which can preserve the environment and culture of the nation. Teaching cleanliness at this early stage is also a strategic step to form characters who care about the welfare of society and the nation (Daud & Triadi, 2021).

In phase B, the material taught in class 4 in Chapter 5 "Hikmah Hijrah Prophet Muhammad PBUH" introduces students to the concept of sacrifice for greater ideals. Love for the country is depicted through selfless struggle, by instilling an understanding that the success of a nation requires contributions without expecting rewards. This value encourages students to develop a sense of responsibility in fighting for good values for the progress of the nation.

In Phase C, learning emphasizes individual responsibility for the environment as a tangible form of love for the country. Chapter 8 of Grade 6 on "Caring for the Environment" teaches students to maintain cleanliness, reduce waste, and preserve natural resources. These actions link concern for the environment with a genuine sense of patriotism. Young people who care about the preservation of nature, as taught in this chapter, are expected to play a role in maintaining the quality of life and well-being of the nation. This environment-based learning further reinforces the importance of the connection between daily actions and responsibility towards the nation (Nur Salwa, 2019).

In Phase D, the values of patriotism are further integrated with an understanding of social responsibility and respect for the environment. In Chapter 1 of Grade 8 on "Inspiring the Qur'an: Preserving Nature, Preserving Life", students are taught that protecting nature is a form of gratitude and love for the country that can provide benefits for the sustainability of the nation. This chapter connects religious attitudes with social responsibility to protect nature as part of the contribution to the nation and state. The understanding that protecting nature is a form of

gratitude for God's favor enriches students' understanding of how daily actions play a role in the sustainability of the nation (Aji & Wangid, 2022).

In Phase E, Chapter 1 teaches about competition in goodness and high work ethic as part of the realization of love for the country. In this chapter, students are invited to compete in goodness and cultivate a high work ethic, which is the basis for contributing to nation building. As students strive to achieve success in a way that is good and beneficial to society, they actualize the value of patriotism through actions that benefit the state and nation. This competition-based character education in goodness is very important to form a generation that is responsible and contributes to the progress of the nation (Bagus Cahyanto et al., 2022).

In Phase F, learning deepens by integrating religious moderation and love for the country. In Chapter 6 of Grade 12 on "Love for the Country and Religious Moderation", students are taught that love for the country is part of faith. Hadiths on patriotism teach that maintaining national unity is part of religious teachings. By teaching these values, it is hoped that students will not only have a deep love for the homeland, but also be able to maintain interfaith harmony in order to build a more peaceful and harmonious nation (Priyoutomo et al., 2016).

Overall, character education on love for the country in the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes the values of cleanliness, sacrifice, care for the environment, and strengthening work ethic as the basis for forming a generation committed to the progress of the nation. Through this progressive education, it is hoped that students can grow into individuals who not only love the country, but also play an active role in nation building through concrete actions that benefit the community.

D. Analysis of the National Character of Democracy or Popular Sovereignty

Based on the analysis of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti textbooks in the Merdeka Curriculum, strengthening democratic values or popular sovereignty is seen through integrated teaching in each learning phase. Each phase shows progressivity in instilling democratic values, both through religious activities and leadership history.

In Phase A, Chapter 4, Grade 2 teaches the importance of praying in congregation as a form of togetherness. Although the focus is on the performance of worship, this activity also reflects respect for the leader (imam) who meets the terms and conditions that apply in the rules of fiqh science such as having the ability to read fashih, older people, and people who have a lot of knowledge. This instills the value of justice and obedience to rules (Hayati, 2017). Phase B expands the meaning of congregational prayer through teaching the principle of deliberation, such as in Chapter VI grade 3 on the message of the hadith and the practice of congregational prayer. Students learn that togetherness and collective decisions in worship can be a reflection of democracy. For example, the imam being open to corrections from the congregation demonstrates the application of the principle of democratic leadership. This parallels the democratic process in society, where leaders are accountable to their communities (Lusi Sulistiana et al., 2023).

In Phase C, Chapter 10 class 5 "Exemplary Khulafaurasyidin" provides insight into the principles of democracy through the history of the leadership of the caliphs. Students are taught about the importance of deliberation in decision-making, as exemplified by Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. This material introduces students to the concept of community participation in choosing leaders and managing the government. The example of the Khulafaurasyidin reflects democratic values such as justice, transparency and social responsibility. Through this learning, students are invited to understand that good leadership is not only about authority, but also about involving the community in a fair decision-making process (Hidayat & Suwanto, 2020).

In Phase D, Chapter 3, Grade 9 "The Beauty of Islamic Social and Communication Ethics" emphasizes the importance of ethics in communicating and respecting the opinions of others. In the context of democracy, the ability to communicate well and respect each other is the main foundation of active participation in society (Syarnubi, 2019a). This lesson teaches students the importance of expressing opinions politely and accepting different views with an open attitude. The communication ethics taught in this chapter reflect democratic values such as tolerance, inclusiveness, and respect for freedom of speech (Ihsani & Febriyanti, 2021).

In Phase E, Chapter 10 "The Role of Ulemas in the Spread of Islam in Indonesia" highlights the role of ulemas as facilitators of democracy. Students are taught how ulama encourage community participation in decision-making, both in social and religious contexts. This material illustrates that democracy is not only about politics, but also includes the active role of society in maintaining shared values. By understanding the contribution of ulama in building society, students are taught the importance of the role of individuals in realizing people's sovereignty (Ja'far, 2021).

In Phase F, Chapter 10 grade 12 "The Role of Islamic Organizations in Indonesia" teaches students about the contribution of Islamic organizations in the struggle for independence as a concrete form of popular sovereignty. This material emphasizes the importance of active community participation in defending rights and freedoms, which is the essence of democracy. This lesson also links democratic values with the history of the nation's struggle, so that students can understand that democracy is the result of collective work involving various elements of society (Ekawati, 2016).

Overall, the analysis of democratic national character education in PAI and Budi Pekerti textbooks shows that the materials are designed to gradually build students' understanding of democratic values. Each phase of the curriculum contributes significantly to shaping students' characters that respect democratic principles, from togetherness in congregation to active participation in society. This gradual and integrative approach reflects an effective character education strategy in building a democratic and dignified generation.

E. Analysis of National Character of Social Solidarity

Based on the analysis of the teaching materials of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti books in the independent curriculum, there is a progressive development in the understanding and application of the values of social solidarity as the foundation of national character. Each phase in this curriculum gradually teaches the importance of mutual respect, empathy, and concern for others, which is the essence of national character based on social solidarity.

In Phase A, Chapter 3, Grade 2 "Let's Behave Properly" is a crucial starting point in character education. Here, students are introduced to the basic values of solidarity through the practice of empathy, compassion, and good behavior (Syarnubi, 2019b). The emphasis on social care, honesty, and gentle speech not only builds the foundation of social solidarity, but also creates an inclusive and harmonious environment. Character education in this phase serves to instill awareness that every individual has value and dignity that must be respected (Nurbaiti et al., 2022). By teaching students to be sensitive to the feelings of others, they are trained to reject discrimination in various forms. This is particularly important in the context of a diverse society, where mutual respect and empathy are key to creating harmonious relationships.

In phase B, it focuses on the importance of maintaining good relationships with others. In Chapter 6 of Grade 4, students are taught about the hadith about friendship, which emphasizes the importance of building and maintaining social relationships. This lesson not only teaches moral values but also provides students with the social skills necessary to interact well in society (Tharaba, 2020). Chapter 8 grade 5, which teaches the value of helping others, reinforces the concept that social life should be based on selflessly helping each other. Education that emphasizes these values is highly relevant in building a society of mutual respect and support, and creating a strong sense of community among individuals.

In Phase C, the emphasis on forgiving each other and caring for those less fortunate is a major focus. In Chapter 3 of Grade 6, students are taught that forgiving each other strengthens social bonds and creates a more harmonious atmosphere. This is an important step in overcoming conflict and building better relationships between individuals. Chapter 1 of Grade 5, which teaches the value of caring for orphans, emphasizes students' social responsibility towards those less fortunate. By fostering a sense of empathy and caring, students are expected to contribute to a more inclusive and supportive society. This creates awareness that every individual has a role in creating a better social environment (Oktaviani et al., 2019).

Furthermore, in phase D, emphasizing social care through worship. In Chapter 4 of grade 8, students are taught about the importance of discipline in worship and caring for others through the practice of funeral prayer. This shows that worship is not only ritual, but also has an important social dimension in building solidarity in society (Nasution & Pohan, 2024). Then, Chapter 8, Grade 7, which teaches the importance of avoiding gibah and practicing tabayun, creates strong social solidarity. By avoiding negative talk about others, students are taught to respect the dignity of others and maintain social harmony. This is especially important in today's social media context, where information is often spread without clarification (Novaliyana & Arifin, 2024).

In phase E, it emphasizes the importance of avoiding madzmumah morals and accustoming mahmudah morals. In Chapter 8, students are taught that by avoiding bad traits such as envy and pride, individuals can create an atmosphere of mutual respect and help. Good morals, such as empathy and caring, encourage individuals to care for others, especially those in need (Syarnubi & Fahiroh, 2024). Character education in this phase serves to build awareness that positive behavior is not only beneficial for individuals, but also for society as a whole. By familiarizing themselves with good behavior, students are expected to reduce social disparities and create a more inclusive and supportive environment (Daryanto & Ernawati, 2024). This is particularly important in the context of an increasingly complex society, where social interactions are often influenced by various factors, including social media and popular culture.

In Phase F, teaching social solidarity emphasizes the values of tolerance and respect for human life. In Chapter 6 of grade 11, entitled Strengthening Harmony through Tolerance and Preserving Human Life, students are taught to value life based on Q.S. Al-Māidah/5: 32 and Q.S. Yūnus/10: 40-41. Q.S. Al-Māidah/5: 32 emphasizes that killing one life without a religiously justified reason is the same as killing the entire human race, while saving one life is the same as saving the entire human race. This verse instills a deep respect for the value of human life. Meanwhile, Q.S. Yūnus/10: 40-41 teaches tolerance by stating that differences in beliefs are part of life, and humans are asked to deal with these differences with a wise attitude without putting down the other party. These values aim to build an attitude of tolerance that can strengthen solidarity and care among citizens. This is an important foundation in maintaining unity and harmony in the midst of diversity (Tanurianti et al., 2023).

Overall, the analysis of national character education in the context of social solidarity shows the integration of Islamic values in every phase of the curriculum. Character education that emphasizes compassion, respect and tolerance is expected to form a generation that is not only sensitive to differences, but also able to create a just, civilized and inclusive society. Thus, this character education plays an important role in building a strong and harmonious national foundation. Character education, which is integrated into the independent curriculum, shows significant potential in shaping students' morals. By being taught about the values of social solidarity from an early age, students are expected to develop into individuals who are noble, responsible, and have a high sense of empathy. This will have a positive impact on their lives both in the family, school and community environment. Thus, character education based on social solidarity not only shapes good individuals, but also contributes to the creation of a harmonious and mutually supportive society.

F. Analysis of the National Character of a Just and Prosperous Society

Based on the analysis of the teaching materials of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti books in the independent curriculum, there is a progressive development in the understanding and application of values that support the creation of a just and prosperous society. Each phase of the curriculum gradually teaches the importance of mutual respect, sharing, and contributing to the common welfare, which is the essence of national character.

In Phase A, learning is focused on Chapter 8 of Grade 1 "I Like to Be Grateful and Disciplined". Students are taught that discipline and gratitude are the foundation for creating a just and prosperous society. By instilling this habit early on, students are taught to respect time, the rights of others, and the rules that apply, thus supporting the formation of an organized, fair, and prosperous society (Hardianti et al., 2021). This values-based character education aims to produce

individuals who are not only sensitive to the environment, but also have high social responsibility, so as to contribute to the common welfare (Saputra & Gunawan, 2022).

In Phase B, learning focuses on the importance of public facilities as centers for social and spiritual activities. In Chapter 10 of Grade 4, students are taught about "Building a Mosque", which not only creates a place of worship, but also a center of activity that unites the community. This reflects the ultimate goal of a just-prosperous society, which is to create an environment where all individuals have equal opportunities to thrive and experience shared prosperity (Rusanti et al., 2021). By understanding the importance of public facilities, students are expected to contribute to creating social infrastructure that supports justice and well-being (Jaffar et al., 2020).

In Phase C, Chapter 4 class 5 "Living Well by Sharing" emphasizes the importance of the concept of sharing through teaching about zakat, infaq, and sadaqah as a form of obligation and social charity in Islam. Zakat, as one of the pillars of Islam, is required for every Muslim who is able to help those in need, while infaq and sadaqah, although voluntary, are highly recommended as a form of solidarity with others (Sonia Silastia et al., 2023). An understanding of these concepts aims to enable students to internalize the values of caring and solidarity in their daily lives, so that sharing not only has a positive impact on the recipient, but also helps to create a strong social support network, reduce social disparities, and improve shared prosperity. In addition, sharing also contributes to the establishment of a more balanced society, where every individual has better access to resources and opportunities. By practicing these values, students are expected to become caring and responsible individuals towards society, contributing to the creation of a just, prosperous and harmonious society (U. Hasanah et al., 2021).

In phase D, Chapter 5 "The Eastern Center of Islamic Civilization (661-750 CE)" discusses the history of the Umayyads in Damascus, highlighting the progress of Islamic civilization in various fields, including government, law, social, economic, religious, and educational. This chapter illustrates how societies can be built based on the principles of justice and welfare, which is very relevant in facing the challenges of diversity and social justice in Indonesia today (Karimullah, 2023). The history of the Umayyads shows that good governance, attention to social needs, and the development of education are key to creating a just and prosperous society. By learning and applying values from the Umayyad history, the younger generation is expected to contribute to creating a better society in the future (Md. Abu Sayem et al., 2023).

In phase E, focusing on the avoidance of negative traits such as extravagance, *riya'*, *sum'ah*, *takabbur*, and *hasad* is an important effort in shaping students' morally superior characters. These despicable traits have the potential to damage social relations and create injustice in society. Conversely, strengthening the cultivation of sincerity in doing good helps to create a just, harmonious and prosperous social environment. Character education that emphasizes noble moral values has proven to be the foundation for producing individuals who not only have moral integrity, but are also responsible for the common welfare. The implementation of character education in an integral manner, involving families, schools and communities, is the key to success in building a generation that is able to understand the impact of their actions on others and contribute positively to social life (Novita, 2021).

In Phase F, learning focuses on strengthening character through real actions in daily life. In Chapter 10 of Grade 11, students are taught about the influence of the values of justice and prosperity taught in Islam on the development of a just and prosperous society. Through the discussion of "The Influence of Modern Islam for Indonesia", students gain an understanding of how the principles of justice and prosperity in Islam are the foundation for creating social harmony and national progress. In addition, through the subtopic "The Wisdom of Learning Modern Islamic Civilization", students are equipped with insights that emphasize the importance of applying these values in the life of the nation and state. By learning this, students not only understand the relevance of Islamic values in facing global challenges, but are also motivated to uphold the spirit of nationality in contributing to the development of a better society (Rahmawati, 2023).

Overall, the analysis of national character education in the context of a just and prosperous society shows the integration of Islamic values in every phase of the curriculum. Character

education that emphasizes discipline, sharing, respect and good morals is expected to form a generation that is not only sensitive to differences, but also able to create a just, civilized and inclusive society. By teaching these values from an early age, students are expected to develop into individuals who are noble, responsible and have a high sense of empathy. This will have a positive impact on their lives in the family, school and community. Character education, which is integrated in the independent curriculum, shows significant potential in shaping students' morals and morals, as well as contributing to the development of a better and more prosperous society. Thus, character education based on the values of justice and prosperity not only shapes good individuals, but also contributes to the creation of a harmonious and mutually supportive society. This is an important step in building a strong and sustainable national foundation, where every individual feels valued and has equal opportunities to thrive.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the teaching materials for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Budi Pekerti in the Merdeka Curriculum shows that national character education in Indonesia focuses on developing fundamental values that support the formation of individuals who are noble, responsible, and sensitive to differences. Each phase of the curriculum progressively teaches values such as respect for human dignity, love for the country, democracy, social solidarity, and a just and prosperous society.

Character education that emphasizes compassion, respect and tolerance is expected to form a generation that is inclusive and harmonious, and able to reject discrimination. Through teaching the values of cleanliness, sacrifice, and care for the environment, students are taught to contribute positively to society and the nation, and understand that love for the country is a real action that must be realized in daily life. In addition, teaching materials that integrate democratic principles, such as deliberation and active participation, equip students with an understanding of the importance of involvement in fair and transparent decision-making processes. Education that emphasizes empathy, caring and mutual respect is expected to create a supportive and harmonious society, and reduce social disparities. By instilling the values of discipline, sharing, and social responsibility, students are expected to contribute to the creation of a just and prosperous society, where every individual has equal rights and opportunities.

Overall, character education integrated in the Merdeka Curriculum shows significant potential in shaping students' morals. By teaching these values from an early age, it is hoped that students can develop into individuals who not only love the country, but also actively contribute to the development of a better and more prosperous society. This is an important step in building a strong and sustainable national foundation, where every individual feels valued and has the opportunity to develop.

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