



Meretas Tantangan Penilaian Autentik dalam Pembelajaran Pai-Bp di Smk Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping

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ABSTRACT The implementation of authentic assessment in the learning process of Islamic Education and Character Building (PAI-BP) in vocational high schools remains a significant challenge, particularly in aligning assessment methods with the unique characteristics of vocational students. This study aims to explore the existing barriers and propose strategic solutions to overcome obstacles in authentic assessment practices at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping. The research focuses on how authentic assessment can more effectively measure students' competence in spiritual attitudes, social behavior, knowledge, and skills, as mandated by the Merdeka Curriculum. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study collects data through in-depth interviews with PAI-BP teachers, classroom observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that time constraints, teacher readiness, limited understanding of assessment instruments, and insufficient integration of spiritual-moral competencies into practice-based tasks constitute major hindrances. Despite these challenges, several good practices emerge, including the use of reflective journals, project-based tasks, and peer assessments that help bridge the gap between theory and practice. The study concludes that consistent professional development, collaborative teacher forums, and simplified but comprehensive assessment rubrics are critical to fostering a culture of meaningful and sustainable authentic assessment. These findings contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of PAI-BP instruction in vocational education contexts. Keywords: <i>Authentic Assesment, PAI-BP, Vocational Education, Learning Evaluation</i>			

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INTRODUCTION

Assessment plays a crucial role as a measurement tool to determine the achievement of learning objectives and the holistic development of students. In the implementation of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, the approach to assessment has shifted from being quantitative and results-oriented to authentic assessment, which emphasizes learning processes, critical thinking skills, and students' self-reflection (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Authentic assessment is highly relevant in the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education (PAI-BP), as it evaluates not only cognitive aspects but also students' affective and psychomotor domains.

Efforts to improve the quality of education are continuously being made, and the role of assessment is pivotal in determining the direction and effectiveness of students' learning processes. A study conducted by (Putri & Zakir, 2023) provides an in-depth examination of the importance of implementing formative and summative assessments within the framework of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. Through a qualitative approach and content analysis of various documents, books, and scholarly literature, the study highlights that assessment functions not merely as an evaluation tool but also as a reflective medium for continuous improvement in the learning process. The research outlines that formative assessment is the process of collecting data during learning activities, which educators interpret to design more effective instruction. In contrast, summative assessment is used to measure the achievement of learning outcomes (CP) as a basis for determining grade promotion or graduation. A variety of techniques are employed in both types of assessment, including goal checks, observations, discussions, written tests, portfolios, and learning projects. These findings affirm that properly designed and interpreted assessments can make a tangible contribution to enhancing the quality of learning and student achievement.

Islamic Religious Education and Character Education (PAI-BP) is a fundamental subject in shaping students' character and moral values, particularly at the vocational high school level. With the rapid advancement of the workforce and technology, challenges in religious education are not limited to content but also concern the comprehensive and authentic assessment of students' learning outcomes. Authentic assessment, as recommended by the *Merdeka Curriculum*, aims to evaluate students' competencies in real-world contexts, integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Suleman & Luneto, 2023). Unfortunately, in practice, the implementation of authentic assessment is often suboptimal, especially in vocational high school environments where technical skills are more heavily emphasized.

SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping, as a vocational education institution, faces the reality that its students are primarily focused on mastering job-related competencies. This often results in the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education (PAI-BP), including its assessment process, receiving insufficient attention. Teachers frequently still rely on conventional, quantitative assessments that inadequately address students' attitudes and spirituality. In fact, according to the direction of national education policy, PAI-BP is expected to serve as the foundation for character building—including integrity, collaboration, and social responsibility—all of which can be developed and measured through authentic assessment. The habituation of noble character values often encounters obstacles, as students tend to concentrate more on acquiring technical skills.

Efforts to improve the quality of learning are ongoing, with assessment playing a crucial role in determining the direction and effectiveness of the student learning process. The study conducted by (Putri & Zakir, 2023). Provides a comprehensive analysis of the importance of implementing formative and summative assessments within the framework of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. Utilizing a qualitative approach and content analysis of various documents, books, and academic literature, this study highlights how assessment

functions not only as an evaluation tool but also as a reflective means for continuous improvement in teaching and learning. It emphasizes that formative assessment involves the collection of data during learning activities, which teachers interpret to design more effective instruction. In contrast, summative assessment is used to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes (Capaian Pembelajaran/CP), serving as the basis for decisions on grade promotion or graduation. Various techniques are employed in both types of assessment, such as goal checks, observations, discussions, written tests, portfolios, and project-based learning. These findings underscore that well-designed and appropriately interpreted assessments can make a significant contribution to improving both learning quality and student outcomes.

This study aims to describe the implementation and challenges of authentic assessment in PAI-BP instruction based on the *Merdeka Curriculum* at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping. The main focus is to explore the extent to which teachers implement diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments comprehensively and in alignment with the principles of the *Merdeka Curriculum*. The urgency of this research is grounded in field realities, where the application of assessment under the *Merdeka Curriculum* still faces various obstacles, both on the part of teachers and students. Many teachers have limited access to up-to-date information regarding assessment mechanisms, while students often struggle to understand questions and demonstrate critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the unequal distribution of technology in schools hinders the optimal implementation of digital-based assessments.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on authentic assessment within the PAI-BP subject at the vocational high school level. Most previous studies have examined authentic assessment in elementary schools, and few have positioned this issue as a central theme in contemporary Islamic education research. Additionally, this study incorporates data from the *Final Summative Assessment of Educational Level (Penilaian Sumatif Akhir Jenjang, PSAJ)* to support the analysis of the effectiveness of real-world assessment implementation. A qualitative descriptive approach was used, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The variables investigated include types of assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative), teacher readiness, technological proficiency, and students' literacy skills. The term PAI-BP refers to *Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Budi Pekerti* (Islamic Religious Education and Character Education), while AKM refers to *Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum* (Minimum Competency Assessment), which serves as a key indicator within the assessment system of the *Merdeka Curriculum*.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach based on field research, aiming to explore in depth the various challenges faced by teachers in implementing authentic assessment in the subject of Islamic Religious Education and Character Education (PAI-BP) at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping. This approach was chosen in accordance with (Danim, 2013) who asserts that field research involves an in-depth study of a specific social unit and yields an external depiction of the subject under investigation.

The qualitative approach allows researchers to understand the context and meaning embedded in assessment practices—elements that cannot be revealed through numerical data alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The researcher conducted direct observation of the research subject, examining both the implementation process and the challenges encountered (Maolani, 2016) specifically focusing on three types of assessment within PAI-BP. This process involved both teachers and student activities, making the population representative of all PAI-BP teachers at the school. Sampling was conducted using purposive sampling, selecting informants based on specific criteria such as having more than three years of teaching experience, active involvement in lesson plan development (RPP), and participation in curriculum training. Three PAI-BP teachers were selected as primary informants, supported by one school principal and two students as secondary informants to strengthen data through source triangulation.

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques:

- 1) **Semi-structured interviews**, which enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth data regarding teachers' perceptions and practices related to authentic assessment;
- 2) **Classroom observation**, to capture the actual implementation of assessment strategies employed by teachers; and
- 3) **Document analysis**, including examination of learning tools such as Learning Outcomes (*Capaian Pembelajaran*), Learning Objectives (*Tujuan Pembelajaran*), Learning Trajectory (*Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran*), teaching modules, assessment rubrics, and student learning outcomes. These techniques were chosen to provide a comprehensive picture of how authentic assessment is practiced in real instructional settings.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by (Miles & Huberman, 2014), which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data validity was ensured through methodological triangulation, source triangulation, and **member checking**, in which the researcher's interpretations were confirmed with informants to ensure consistency with their intended meanings. The study was conducted over a two-month period, from February to March 2025, following systematic steps including research permit processing, data collection, and data analysis. Given the qualitative nature of the study, statistical tests were not employed. However, the researcher documented the frequency of emerging themes and patterns as part of the descriptive analysis.

The scope of this study is limited to a single educational institution, SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping, and focuses exclusively on the subject of PAI-BP. Therefore, the findings are not intended for generalization to other schools but rather serve as a contextual portrait of the dynamics of authentic assessment within religious vocational education. Nonetheless, the results provide valuable insights into the need for more practical and reflective approaches to authentic assessment practices in vocational school settings, which require a balance between spiritual values and job-related skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Teachers' Understanding of Authentic Assessment

Teachers' understanding of the concept of authentic assessment at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping demonstrates considerable variation. Most PAI-BP (Islamic Religious Education and Character Education) teachers recognize authentic assessment as an evaluative process that not only emphasizes final outcomes (such as written tests) but also focuses on the learning process itself. This includes students' cognitive abilities, attitudes, and practical skills in real-life contexts. This understanding aligns with (Wiggins, 1990), definition, which describes authentic assessment as requiring students to complete tasks that mirror real-world situations, involving problem-solving, self-reflection, and the application of knowledge in relevant scenarios.

Teachers at vocational schools exhibit a range of comprehension levels regarding authentic assessment. Some teachers correctly interpret it as focusing on both the process and the product of learning that is relevant to real-world applications, such as projects, performance tasks, and portfolios. However, others adopt a narrower interpretation—viewing authentic assessment merely as a replacement for traditional written tests, without a full understanding of the competencies it is designed to measure. According to (Suhendra, 2021) such discrepancies in understanding are influenced significantly by the teachers' training backgrounds and their teaching experiences within vocational education contexts.

Despite a general theoretical awareness of authentic assessment, practical implementation remains limited. Some teachers reported difficulties adapting authentic assessment to classroom realities, particularly due to time constraints and the limited number of instructional hours allocated to PAI-BP. While teachers acknowledge that authentic assessment should integrate real-world experiences into learning activities—evaluating students through projects, performance tasks, and portfolios—this conceptual understanding is not consistently reflected in practice. Some teachers still perceive authentic assessment as a mere substitute for traditional tests, without appreciating its holistic focus on both the process and the product of learning (Nirwana et al., 2024). As noted by (Henderson, Karr-Kidwell, & Henderson, 1998), authentic assessment requires significantly more time to design and implement appropriate instruments. Consequently, many teachers default to traditional forms of assessment such as written exams and quizzes, which are easier to administer but fail to adequately capture students' affective traits and moral values.

Interviews revealed that PAI-BP teachers recognize the importance of assessing affective and psychomotor domains in religious education, including observations of students' prayer practices and attitudes during learning activities. However, the application of such assessments is hindered by the lack of valid and reliable assessment tools. Teachers often struggle to design rubrics that objectively measure attitudes and skills, particularly when assessing students' spiritual behaviors and moral conduct.

Moreover, authentic assessment is expected to integrate moral values and student character—central elements of the PAI-BP curriculum. However, implementing character-based assessment in a vocational school setting presents unique challenges. A gap persists between the goals of religious education and the school's primary focus on technical skill development. The heavy emphasis on vocational competence often results in the neglect of character assessment, despite its vital role in shaping students into well-rounded individuals (Ermiyanto & Fadriati, 2023).

Overall, while teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping exhibit a reasonably strong conceptual grasp of authentic assessment, limitations persist in terms of technical implementation and contextual adaptation of assessment instruments. Further professional development is necessary to enhance teachers' competencies in designing assessment rubrics that are both pedagogically sound and contextually appropriate for vocational students. Such training should focus on making religious education more application-oriented and aligned with the unique needs of the SMK environment.

Design and Implementation of Authentic Assessment

In designing authentic assessments, most vocational school teachers refer to the established teaching modules and curriculum, although often in a primarily administrative manner. Assessment instruments such as rubrics and observation sheets are developed, yet they do not fully capture students' critical thinking, collaboration, and independence. In classroom implementation, many teachers struggle to naturally integrate assessments into the learning process—especially when conducting individual evaluations in complex and time-consuming practical tasks (Suhendra, 2021).

Field findings indicate that the implementation of authentic assessment in PAI-BP learning at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping remains limited, with a reliance on more conventional tools such as written tests and memorization. While teachers acknowledge the importance of authentic assessment, in practice, they face challenges in designing instruments that integrate all three core dimensions of authentic assessment—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor—simultaneously. Teachers tend to emphasize cognitive assessment, using exams and written tests to measure students' understanding of religious content, while affective (attitude) and psychomotor (skills) domains are often inadequately addressed.

Authentic assessment can be effectively conducted through project-based assignments, which allow students to apply their knowledge in more realistic contexts rather than merely through written tests (Albina et al., 2022). However, PAI-BP teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping experience difficulty in designing project tasks that align with the religious education context and the characteristics of vocational students, who are more technically oriented. The main challenges include limited time for designing project-based assessments and a lack of resources to support their implementation. Although authentic assessment inherently demands more time—especially when evaluating the affective and psychomotor aspects, which are often difficult to measure objectively (A. Nkhoma, Nkhoma, Thomas, & Quoc Le, 2020), teachers have attempted to

use simplified rubrics and practice-based assignments, such as creating educational videos or giving presentations, to assess students' attitudes and skills. Nevertheless, these efforts remain inconsistent and do not yet encompass all dimensions of authentic assessment comprehensively.

Additionally, (Henderson et al., 1998) caution that while authentic assessment provides a more holistic view of student competence, it requires the development of more complex and structured instruments, as well as a deeper understanding on the part of teachers regarding how to assess attitudes and moral values. Therefore, teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping require further training in the creation of authentic assessment rubrics that are contextually appropriate for religious education and suited to the unique learning characteristics of vocational students.

Practical Challenges in Classroom Implementation

In implementing authentic assessment within PAI-BP instruction at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping, several practical challenges have emerged that hinder optimal execution. Findings from classroom observations and teacher interviews reveal that the most significant obstacles are the limited time available for comprehensive authentic assessments and the difficulty of measuring non-cognitive aspects such as attitudes, morals, and religious values that are intended to be instilled through PAI-BP learning.

1. Limited Time and Instructional Hours

Most PAI-BP teachers reported that restricted instructional time is a major barrier to conducting authentic assessments. Given the limited hours allocated for the subject, lessons often focus more on theoretical content and memorization, which are easier to assess through written tests. Authentic assessments—which require extended periods for project-based tasks or attitude observations—are deprioritized due to the compressed curriculum schedule. This finding aligns with (Albina et al., 2022) who argue that authentic assessment demands more time and effort than traditional evaluation methods.

2. Resource and Training Constraints

Another key challenge is the lack of resources, both in terms of instructional materials and teacher training. Although some teachers have attempted to use technology-based projects, such as creating videos or digital presentations to assess psychomotor and affective aspects, they face limitations due to inadequate technological infrastructure and insufficient training on integrating technology into assessments. Moreover, many teachers reported not having received adequate professional development on how to assess affective and psychomotor domains—both of which are essential components of authentic assessment.

3. Difficulties in Assessing Affective and Psychomotor Domains

Authentic assessments aimed at measuring affective (attitudes and behaviors) and psychomotor (practical skills) aspects present unique challenges. Although some teachers attempt to observe and evaluate students' attitudes during religious practices or classroom interactions, the absence of systematic and objective

instruments often results in subjective evaluations. This highlights the need for clear and standardized rubrics to enable objective measurement of students' moral and character development.

PAI-BP teachers often rely on direct observation to assess students' attitudes, but a lack of consistency and objectivity in using these instruments compromises the accuracy of such evaluations. This can reduce the validity of assessments targeting students' character and values—core objectives of PAI-BP instruction. Additionally, teachers face multiple obstacles including limited time, large class sizes, and insufficient facilities and infrastructure. The high administrative workload also detracts from their ability to consistently implement authentic assessment practices. Furthermore, the diverse characteristics of vocational students—including low academic motivation among some—hinder the effectiveness of these assessments (Suhendra, 2021).

4. Student Resistance to Authentic Assessment-Based Learning

In addition to teacher-related challenges, authentic assessments at vocational schools face resistance from students who are more accustomed to exam-based learning. Some students perceive project-based assessments or attitude evaluations as burdensome due to the greater time and active involvement required, compared to the relative simplicity of traditional exams. This indicates a need for more communicative and structured approaches to help students understand the value of authentic assessment in their learning process. As (Wiggins, 1990) asserts, authentic assessment should engage students in critical thinking and deeper participation in the learning experience.

Contextual Dynamics in the Vocational School Environment

The vocational school (SMK) environment presents its own unique dynamics that influence the implementation of authentic assessment. The demands of industry and the labor market necessitate competency-based assessments, yet school culture and administrative expectations still place greater emphasis on numeric scores and graduation rates. Differences among normative, adaptive, and productive subjects also lead to varied assessment approaches, with productive (skill-based) subjects being more conducive to authentic assessment than theoretical ones (Suhendra, 2021).

The contextual dynamics of the vocational school environment affect the implementation of authentic assessment in PAI-BP instruction. As educational institutions with a strong emphasis on technical skills and vocational competence, vocational schools tend to face challenges in holistically integrating religious and character education into the curriculum. The focus on technical competency and practical output often results in affective and psychomotor aspects of religious education being overlooked.

1. Vocational Competency as the Primary Focus

One of the main challenges faced by PAI-BP teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping is the prioritization of vocational skills over character development. The current curriculum emphasizes students' practical abilities in specific fields, such as automotive engineering, computer technology, or hospitality. Consequently,

PAI-BP—which centers on religious values, morality, and character education—is often regarded as a secondary subject that does not receive equal attention.

Nevertheless, PAI-BP teachers have attempted to bridge this gap by adapting learning materials to better align with the world of work—for example, by incorporating religious values into work ethics and social relations in professional settings. This effort reflects a commitment to aligning PAI-BP learning objectives with students' vocational contexts, as recommended by (Sağ, 2014) , who emphasized the importance of integrating religious knowledge with life skills in vocational education.

2. Stereotypes about PAI-BP as a Subject

Another challenge in implementing authentic assessment is the prevailing stereotype among students that religious education is easier than subjects related to practical skills. Some vocational students perceive PAI-BP as having little relevance to their technical expertise, leading to reduced motivation to actively participate in authentic assessments that involve social and character-based competencies.

According to (Henderson et al., 1998) authentic assessment in vocational settings should connect moral and spiritual dimensions with workplace demands so that students are not only assessed based on their technical abilities but also on behaviors and attitudes that reflect character values relevant to their professional lives. This highlights the need for carefully designed authentic assessments that go beyond measuring religious knowledge to evaluating social and moral competencies required in the workforce.

3. The Role of Teachers in Aligning Curriculum and Assessment

PAI-BP teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping play a crucial role in aligning the existing curriculum with authentic assessments that are appropriate for their students' context. Integrating religious values with vocational education requires creativity and the development of contextual learning methods. For instance, when teaching about work ethics and character, teachers can employ workplace simulations or case studies to assess how students apply religious values in professional contexts. Such strategies help bridge the gap between technical skills and character education.

The implementation of authentic assessment in the classroom continues to face major challenges, such as large class sizes, limited practical facilities, and high administrative demands on teachers. Additionally, some students are unaccustomed to open-ended assessments that require high levels of responsibility and creativity. Another obstacle is the limited instructional time available to conduct the complex and continuous processes involved in authentic assessment (Pebriyanti, Nauli Siagian, & Tabroni, 2024).

Adaptive Strategies Implemented by Teachers

Based on the findings of this study, several solutions and recommendations can help improve the implementation of authentic assessment in PAI-BP instruction at SMK

Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping. Although the challenges encountered are complex, a number of measures can be taken to address these obstacles and optimize the effectiveness of authentic assessment in shaping students' character and morals.

1. Enhancing Teacher Capacity through Training

A key strategy to improve the implementation of authentic assessment is the enhancement of PAI-BP teachers' capacity through more structured and continuous training. This training should not only focus on strategies for designing authentic assessment instruments but also on how teachers can objectively and systematically measure affective and psychomotor domains. Teachers also need to be equipped with skills to use educational technologies that support authentic assessment, such as online learning platforms with built-in rubrics and real-time feedback systems.

Research compiled by (Zubaedi, 2015) emphasizes the importance of teacher training in developing clear and understandable authentic assessment rubrics. Well-trained teachers are more confident in implementing authentic assessments that address students' moral attitudes and are more capable of providing constructive, criteria-based feedback.

2. Curriculum Adjustment to Accommodate Vocational and Character Needs

Another key recommendation is a deeper curriculum adjustment to accommodate the character education needs of vocational school students. The curriculum should be designed so that religious values are not only taught theoretically but are also integrated with technical competencies and the professional ethics required in the workforce.

For example, project-based assignments that link religious ethics with practical work in industrial settings can serve as an effective means of assessing students' ability to apply religious values in daily life and work environments. This aligns with (Sağ, 2014) yang menyatakan bahwa penilaian autentik harus dapat menghubungkan keterampilan hidup dengan kebutuhan dunia kerja, termasuk pengembangan karakter dan nilai moral.

3. Developing Holistic Assessment Rubrics

It is essential for teachers to develop more holistic assessment rubrics that comprehensively cover the three core components of authentic assessment: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Rifai, Utomo, Astina, & Suharto, 2023). These rubrics should evaluate students' understanding of religious content, their attitudes toward religious values, and their ability to apply these values in real-life and professional contexts. Additionally, rubrics should be adaptable to project-based assessments involving social interaction and teamwork, acknowledging the importance of psychomotor aspects in religious education.

In this regard, (Henderson et al., 1998) also emphasized that in authentic assessment, there must be alignment between learning objectives and the assessment instruments used, so that the assessment accurately reflects the attainment of the intended competencies in the PAI-BP learning context.

4. Building Student Awareness of the Importance of PAI-BP Learning

To overcome student resistance toward religious education subjects, a more communicative and participatory approach is needed to explain the objectives of PAI-BP. Students should be helped to understand that the values learned in this subject are not only relevant to their personal lives but are also critical for character development and professional ethics in the workplace. Awareness campaigns about the importance of religious values in work ethics and social collaboration can be implemented through various methods, such as group discussions, case studies, or problem-based learning.

In response to these challenges, vocational teachers have developed adaptive strategies such as inter-teacher collaboration in assessment design, the use of information technology for online assessments, and the simplification of rubrics to make them more practical. Teachers also involve students in self- and peer-assessment to enhance engagement and learning awareness. Furthermore, internal training and regular teacher discussions have become key methods for improving the quality of authentic assessment (Gadink & Sukenti, 2024).

5. Integration of Authentic Assessment into the School-Wide Evaluation System

Authentic assessment also needs to be integrated into a more comprehensive school-wide evaluation system. This includes more in-depth assessment of students' social competencies and character, rather than relying solely on written examinations. The implementation of authentic assessment that incorporates aspects of character and social skills will provide a more holistic picture of student competencies that can be applied in daily life and the professional world.

According to (Setyosari, 2022) , assessment conducted by teachers should not merely evaluate correct or incorrect answers. Instead, questions posed to students should aim to foster creativity and encourage them to develop confidence. Consequently, assessment should be viewed as a process that positively shapes student characteristics.

(Wijiatun, Lusia & Indrajid, 2022) emphasize that the ongoing influence of globalization continues to change societal characteristics. Therefore, educators must be able to design assessments that align with students' contemporary needs and the evolving context of their lives.

In a similar vein, (Arikunto, 2015) argued that teachers, through the results of student assessments, can identify which students have mastered the material and which have not. Based on this understanding, teachers are expected to focus more attention on students who are struggling to understand the subject matter, thereby personalizing instruction and support based on assessment outcomes.

Analysis of Findings from Theoretical and Policy Perspectives

Based on an analysis of various studies, the implementation of authentic assessment in vocational high schools (SMK) aligns with the constructivist approach and the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. However, field practices still require more

adaptive policy support, continuous teacher training, and an evaluation system that holistically assesses both the learning process and outcomes. Without these components, authentic assessment risks becoming a formality lacking meaningful impact on student competency development (Achmad, Ratnasari, Amin, Yuliani, & Liandara, 2022).

1. Theoretical Perspective on Authentic Assessment

Findings from this study indicate that while authentic assessment has considerable potential to measure student competencies holistically, its implementation in Islamic Education and Character Building (PAI-BP) classes at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping faces several challenges. According to (Wiggins, 1990), authentic assessment evaluates students' abilities in real-life contexts and requires them to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in authentic situations. The goal is to provide a deeper evaluation of students' practical skills and character, beyond rote memorization or written tests.

Nevertheless, the study reveals that although there is awareness of the importance of authentic assessment, the instruments used are often not fully integrated with the realities of the professional world or the students' character development. From the theoretical perspective, authentic assessment instruments should be designed to integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. (Wilson, 2016) also emphasizes the significance of connecting knowledge, attitudes, and skills to achieve comprehensive learning outcomes.

2. Theoretical Perspective on Learning and Character Education

In the context of character education, authentic assessment serves to foster students' moral and ethical values that can be applied both in daily life and the workplace. According to (Kleinschmidt, 2023) character education should integrate cognitive (knowledge), affective (feelings and attitudes), and psychomotor (behavioral) aspects into the curriculum. The study's findings suggest that while character education in vocational schools is expected to cultivate students with strong religious values, the assessment process has yet to fully capture this development comprehensively.

This gap relates to the lack of adequate instruments to evaluate student attitudes and character development. Therefore, implementing authentic assessment in religious education must go beyond evaluating students' religious knowledge and should include assessments of how these values are practiced in real life—such as through value-based projects or role-play simulations that link character education to vocational competencies.

3. The Merdeka Curriculum Policy and Implementation Challenges

This study also explores findings related to the Merdeka Curriculum policy, which promotes more authentic, student-centered assessment approaches. According to the (Kepala Badan Standar, Kurikulum & Kementerian Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, 2022) the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes flexibility and responsiveness to student needs through project-based assessments, portfolios, and comprehensive self-assessment.

However, in practice, several challenges persist, particularly in vocational school environments that prioritize technical skills. This indicates an imbalance between vocational competencies and character development. While the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes a competency-based approach, it must also be aligned with authentic assessment methods that evaluate students' social, moral, and ethical capabilities—essential in religious and moral education. Effective education policy must balance both vocational and character education (Hasanah, Darwisa, & Zuhriyah, 2023).

4. Policy Implications for Authentic Assessment Implementation in Vocational Schools

Based on the findings of this study, several policy implications must be considered to enhance the quality of authentic assessment in vocational schools (SMK), particularly in the subject of Islamic Education and Character Building (PAI-BP). More integrated policies that combine vocational competencies with character education can help optimize the implementation of authentic assessment. Such policies should include the development of more comprehensive authentic assessment instruments that equally measure cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. In addition, continuous teacher training on designing authentic assessment rubrics, as well as the development of instructional modules that integrate character and practical skills, must become part of the broader educational policy agenda. Implementing these policies will support a more holistic educational transformation—producing graduates who are not only technically proficient but also possess strong character in facing the challenges of the workforce.

Based on these findings, the following implications are identified for improving the quality of PAI-BP instruction at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping, particularly in implementing authentic assessment:

- a. Teachers should receive more intensive training in developing authentic assessment instruments that objectively evaluate not only cognitive but also affective and psychomotor domains. This training must also include the development of standardized rubrics for assessing students' attitudes and morality more validly and reliably. This reflects the need for professional development among teachers.
- b. In terms of curriculum, there should be adjustments to ensure a balanced development between technical competencies and character education to accommodate the holistic learning objectives of PAI-BP. An integrated curriculum that merges vocational competencies with religious values will help students understand the importance of ethics and morality in the professional world.
- c. Schools need to provide greater support in terms of time and resources to enable the optimal implementation of authentic assessment in line with institutional policy goals. Additionally, schools should foster student

awareness regarding the significance of religious and character values in their personal and professional lives.

- d. Developing a holistic and comprehensive authentic assessment rubric is essential to bridge the gap between assessments that only focus on exam results and those that evaluate success in character development. These rubrics should be designed to cover the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions relevant to the vocational school learning context.
- e. Emphasizing the importance of authentic assessment in PAI-BP learning can help students integrate religious values with professional competencies, ensuring that they are not only technically prepared but also morally grounded. This aligns with the integrative approach in vocational education, which seeks to develop students who are both competent and virtuous. Thus, the implication is a strengthened role for PAI-BP in vocational education.

This research offers critical insights for the development of authentic assessment in vocational education. However, many areas still warrant further exploration, such as an in-depth analysis of the impact of authentic assessment on changes in student attitudes and morals within the context of professional life. Comparative studies on authentic assessment implementation in vocational schools versus other educational levels are also needed to determine whether similar challenges arise and to identify effective, adaptable solutions. Furthermore, longitudinal studies should be conducted to monitor the long-term effectiveness of authentic assessment in shaping the character and morality of students who transition into the industrial sector.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of authentic assessment in Islamic Education and Character Building (PAI-BP) at SMK Negeri 1 Lubuk Sikaping faces various challenges stemming from practical, contextual, and structural factors. Although authentic assessment is crucial in providing a comprehensive picture of student development—including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects—its optimization is hindered by several issues, such as limited time, student resistance, resource constraints, and the lack of adequate teacher training. PAI-BP teachers strive to align the curriculum and assessment with the vocational needs of students; however, these efforts are sometimes constrained by a stronger institutional emphasis on technical vocational competencies.

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