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FROM *MALAKAH* TO DEEP LEARNING: CONTEXTUALIZING IBN KHALDUN FOR MODERN EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

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Abstract

This study aims to examine Ibn Khaldun's concept of *malakah* in relation to the philosophy of deep learning based on the principles of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning. The study is motivated by the need for an educational approach that emphasizes depth of understanding, critical reflection, and character building. Using comparative literature review method, this study draws primarily on the *Muqaddimah* as it main source and analyze it through systematic comparison with contemporary deep learning framework. Data were analyzed using content analysis techniques involving stages of data reduction, theme categorization, and comparative interpretation. The results of the study indicate a strong conceptual convergence between *malakah* and deep learning,

especially in the process of internalizing knowledge through sustained practice, guided repetition, and reflective dialogue. This study contributes by proposing *malakah*-Deep Learning Integration, a synthetic framework that maps the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, and connects the spiritual-moral dimensions of *malakah* with the development of 21st-century competencies associated with deep learning. This framework provides a philosophical-pedagogical foundation of more holistic and contextually grounded model of Islamic education. This study recommends further empirical studies to examine the practical effectiveness of this conceptual framework in educational settings.

Keywords: *Comparison, Islamic Education, Malakah, Syntesis.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengevaluasi konsep malakah Ibnu Khaldun dalam kaitannya dengan filosofi deep learning yang berlandaskan prinsip mindful, meaningful, dan joyful learning. Penelitian ini berangkat dari kebutuhan terhadap pendekatan pendidikan yang menekankan kedalaman pemahaman, refleksi kritis, serta pembentukan karakter. Menggunakan metode comparative literature review, penelitian ini menjadikan Muqaddimah sebagai sumber utama dan dan membandingkannya secara sistematis dengan kerangka deep learning kontemporer. Data dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis konten yang mencakup tahapan reduksi data, kategorisasi tema, dan interpretasi komparatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya relevansi konseptual yang kuat antara malakah dan deep learning, terutama dalam proses internalisasi pengetahuan melalui latihan berkesinambungan, pengulangan terarah, dan dialog reflektif. Kontribusi penelitian ini adalah pengembangan kerangka konseptual Integrasi Malakah–Deep Learning, sebuah model sintesis yang memetakan keterpaduan kognitif, afektif, dan psikomotorik, serta menghubungkan dimensi spiritual-moral malakah dengan pengembangan kompetensi abad ke-21 dalam deep learning. Kerangka ini memberikan landasan filosofis-pedagogis bagi perancangan pembelajaran PAI yang lebih holistik dan kontekstual. Penelitian ini juga merekomendasikan studi

empiris lanjutan untuk menguji efektivitas kerangka konseptual tersebut dalam praktik pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: *Malakah, Pendidikan Islam, Perbandingan, Sintesis.*

INTRODUCTION

Education serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge, but also as a process of developing whole human beings with depth of thought, moral resilience, and spiritual awareness. In the context of modern education, the deep learning approach has emerged as a new paradigm that emphasizes in-depth understanding, critical reflection, and the application of meaning in real-life situations (Suyanto, 2025). Learning is no longer framed as a passive act of information retention, but rather as an active process of developing substantive understanding through active, collaborative, and reflective participation. This paradigm is responds to the growing crisis in contemporary education, which tends to be trapped in a purely cognitive orientation, without developing value awareness and character formation.

Within the intellectual treasury of Islamic thought, the notion of in-depth learning can be found in Ibn Khaldun's concept of Malakah. In his Muqaddimah, Ibn Khaldun explains that malakah is an ability that is deeply rooted in an individual, which is formed as a result of consistent practice and repetition, so that this knowledge becomes an integral part of the essence of his soul. Malakah is not just a theoretical understanding, but a complete and permanent mastery that forms scientific competence and personality (Khaldun, 2003). In the context of Islamic education, this concept contains spiritual and moral values that make science not only knowledge that is mastered, but also put into practice in life.

Ibn Khaldun's concept of *malakah* exhibits notable convergence with the principles of deep learning, as both

emphasize a profound, reflective, and character-building internalization of knowledge. This connection demonstrates that classical Islamic educational values have strong relevance to 21st-century learning practices, which are now widely studied and implemented through deep learning approaches. This relevance is demonstrated in various contemporary research findings that confirm the effectiveness of deep learning in improving the quality of student learning processes and outcomes.

Various contemporary studies show that deep learning plays a crucial role in improving the quality of 21st-century education. According to Marton and Saljo in a study by Dewi et al. Dewi et al. (2025) deep learning emphasizes deepening understanding through a more comprehensive learning experience. Students not only use their cognitive abilities by simply memorizing information but also involve emotional aspects so that learning is more meaningful. Research by Nasyir et al. (2025) at MI Nurul Quran showed that learning Indonesian using a mindful, meaningful, and joyful approach increased student participation and understanding of the material through connections with everyday experiences and the use of media and educational games. Another study conducted by Kusmawati et al. (2025) at SD N 01 Guwo reported that the use of a mindful, meaningful, and joyful approach contributed significantly to improving learning activities and learning outcomes in Indonesian.

Several previous studies have addressed the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thought to modern education. Saeful Bahri explains that malakah encompasses the actualization of learning in three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Bahri, 2020). Other research highlights the alignment of Ibn Khaldun's thought with constructivism, which argues that skills cannot be acquired without active experience and repetition. Meanwhile, Syafi'i & Darnaningsih (2025) demonstrate that mindful, meaningful, and joyful deep learning enhances student engagement and facilitates the internalization of values in religious learning. However, a research gap remains: studies explicitly linking the philosophical

concept of malakah to the practice of joyful, meaningful, and mindful deep learning in Indonesia have yet to be found.

This research is important because it can formulate a pedagogical model that integrates the classical Islamic philosophical heritage with contemporary deep learning approaches. By exploring the foundations of Ibn Khaldun's malakah and linking it to joyful, meaningful, and mindful practices in deep learning, this study aims to analyze the concept of malakah as a philosophical foundation for deep learning, describe the concept of deep learning in the context of Indonesian education, and compare it with the concept of malakah. This study is expected to contribute to strengthening the philosophical foundations of modern Islamic education and enrich learning practices that are oriented towards depth of thought, continuity of learning, and spiritual awareness.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative methodology using a comparative literature review to examine and juxtapose Ibn Khaldun's concept of *malakah* with the philosophy of deep learning based on the principles of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning. This model was selected because it allows for an integrated analysis of classical thought and contemporary educational perspectives with the aims of identifying their relevance and potential conceptual integration. The research data sources consist of primary literature such as the Muqaddimah and studies related to the concept of *malakah*, as well as contemporary literature in the form of scientific journals and the latest research on deep learning in education. Regarding the literature on malakah, the range of publication years is not limited because it is sourced from classical thought that has been interpreted in various periods. Meanwhile, literature on deep learning was selected based on its level of recency to obtain theoretical and empirical overviews relevant to the development of modern education. Literature selection was

carried out based on thematic relevance, credibility, recency, and full-text availability. Data were collected through documentation studies with keyword searches in various digital databases. Data analysis used content analysis through the stages of data reduction, thematic categorization, concept comparison, and drawing conclusions to identify similarities, differences, and common ground between malakah and the philosophy of deep learning. Through this method, the research produces a conceptual mapping that shows how the two approaches can complement each other and contribute to the development of Islamic education that is relevant to the needs of 21st-century learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Ibn Khaldun's Makalah

In the Muqaddimah, Ibn Khaldun defines *malakah* as such:

و الملكة صفة راسخة تحصل عن استعمال ذلك الفعل وتكرره مرة بعد أخرى حتى ترسخ صورته

> "*Malakah refers to a deeply rooted and enduring disposition that emerges through the repeated performance of certain activities or practices, until these patterns become firmly established and permanently embedded in the mind*." (Ibn Khaldun, 2005, p. 135).

He also added:

و الملكة إنما هي للعالم أو الشادي في الفنون دون من سواهما فدل على أن هذه الملكة غير الفهم والوعي

> *"And indeed, this malakah (rooted expertise/competence) is only possessed by those who truly master knowledge (al-'ālim) or those who are on the path to mastery of knowledge (al-shādī) in various disciplines, not by anyone else. This shows that this malakah is different from mere understanding (al-fahm) or awareness (al-wa'yu)."* (Ibn Khaldun, 2005, p. 184).

Understanding a discipline can be achieved with equal quality by anyone, from novice students to intellectuals. Therefore, *malakah* must possess deeper dimension, and it must be dharuri (immediate or intuitive) and include inner impulses, making it the exclusive domain of experts. This aligns with Bloom's taxonomy,

which places memorization and understanding at the lowest cognitive level, while analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are at a higher level. Gestalt theory also supports that meaningful learning must involve insight, namely the ability to grasp the whole picture, perceive relationships between parts as a whole (Rohmah et al., 2023). Thus, *malakah* in the cognitive domain (*idrakiyah)* includes mastery of in-depth knowledge, intellectual reasoning, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking skills.

The concept of malakah is also related to the classification of sources of knowledge. Knowledge is divided into two ways of acquisition. First, knowledge that arises spontaneously (*tahjumu*), such as inspiration or *laduni* (obtained without a learning process). Second, knowledge obtained through learning (*tuktasabu),* namely *i'tibar* or *ta'limi* (Hatta, 2024). Implicitly, *malakah* is in the category of *ilm muktasab* (acquired knowledge), because it is born from repetition, deepening, intensive practice so that knowledge is embedded in the soul. Thus, the educational process is not merely a transfer of material, but a process of personality and ability transformation that requires persistence, continuity, and active involvement. Ibn Khaldun said that the way to acquire *malakah* can be done through the method of scientific discussion and debate (*al-muhawarah wa al-munadzarah*) and continuous learning (*ittisal*) which strengthens the internalization of knowledge until it becomes true expertise.

First, engagements in scientific discussions and debates is regarded as an effective way to obtain malakah, as explained by Ibnu Khaldun in the Muqaddimah.

وأيسر طرق هذه الملكة فتق اللسان بالمحاورة والمناظرة في المسائل العلمية فهو الذي يقرب شأنها ويحصل مرامها

> *"And the easiest way to obtain this malakah is by cultivating verbal fluency in speaking through dialogue and debate on scientific issues; because this is the way that brings us closest to realizing this malakah and realizing the intended purpose."*(Ibn Khaldun, 2005, p. 186).

Second, Ibn Khaldun argued that continuity *(ittisal*) in every learning activity is crucial to support the concept of malakah. This continuity is a key element in learning that plays a role in strengthening malakah (Walidin, 2005). With continuity in learning material, understanding (comprehension) will develop progressively and facilitate the completion of the learning process in a more efficient duration, supported by the most effective methods and resulting in maximum achievement. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun advised students not to take long breaks in their studies. If they do, this can result in the knowledge or skills learned being imperfect, incomplete, and ultimately forgotten.

Concerning the principle of continuity (*ittiṣāl*), Ibn Khaldun articulates his perspective in the *Muqaddimah* in the following passage:

ينبغي لك أن لاتطول على المتعلم في الفن الواحد بتفريق المجالس وتقطيع ما بينها لأنه ذريعة إلى النسيان وانقطاع مسائل الفن بعضها من بعض فيعسر حصول الملكة بتفريقها من بعض فيعسر حصول الملكة وإذا كانت أوائل العلم وأواخره حاضرة عند الفكرة مجانبة للنسيان كانت الملكة أيسر حصولا وأحكم ارتباطا وأقرب صنعة لأن الملكات إنما تحصل بتتابع الفعل وتكراره وإذا تنوسي الفعل تنوسيت الملكة الناشئة عنه. والله علمكم مالم تكونوا تعلمون

> *"You should not prolong the learning of a student in a branch of knowledge by fragmenting the sessions and disrupting its continuity, because that causes forgetfulness and disconnection of the issues in that knowledge from one another. As a result, it becomes difficult to acquire the malakah because of the separation of its parts. If the beginning of knowledge and its end are present together in the mind, far from being forgotten, then the malakah will be easier to acquire, the attachment will be stronger, and it will be closer to becoming an established skill. This is because malakah can only be acquired through continuity of action and its repetition. If the action is forgotten, then the malakah that arises from it is also forgotten. And Allah has taught you what you did not know before."* (Ibn Khaldun, 2005, p. 215).

It is important not to remain excessively focused on a single discipline, as this can disrupt the proper allocation of study time. Such disproportionate extension increases the risk of forgetfulness among learners and may ultimately interrupt the continuity and coherence of the discipline being studied. As a result, achieving *malakah*—understood as mastery or skill—becomes more difficult. By contrast, when the body of knowledge can be comprehended as an integrated whole, from beginning to end, without being forgotten, *malakah* is more readily attained and more firmly established. Since *malakah* is developed through repetition and sustained study, neglecting or discontinuing these processes will lead to the weakening or loss of the *malakah* that should have been formed (Bahri, 2020).

Ibn Khaldun also emphasized in the Muqaddimah that skills in applying knowledge are much more important than simply spending time learning without understanding and putting it into practice.

فتجد طالب العلم منهم بعد ذهاب الكثير من أعمارهم في ملازمة المجالس العلمية سكوتا لاينطقون ولا يفاوضون وعنايتهم بالحفظ أكثر من الحاجة. فلا يحصلون على طائل من ملكة التصرف في العلم والتعليم ثم بعد تحصيل من يرى منهم أنه قد حصل تجد ملكته قاصرة في علمه إن فاوض أو ناظر أو علم وما أتاهم القصور إلا قبل التعليم وانقطاع سنده. وإلا فحفظهم أبلغ من حفظ سواهم لشدة عنايتهم به, وظنهم أنه المقصود من الملكة العلمية وليس كذلك

> *"It was observed that some students spent considerable portions of their lives attending scientific sessions. Yet, some of them remained silent, not speaking, and not discussing issues at hand. They paid excessive attention to memorization, beyond what was necessary. As a result, they did not acquire much skill in practicing knowledge or in teaching it. Some of them thought they had mastered a particular field, but when discussing, debating, or teaching, they discovered their scientific abilities were very limited. They only realized this limitation after experiencing difficulties in teaching and being cut off from the scientific tradition. The knowledge they memorized was indeed more than*

> *that of other scholars, because they paid so much attention to memorization. They assumed that scientific ability was synonymous with extensive memorization, when in fact this was not the case." (Ibn Khaldun, 2002, p. 543)*

Ibn Khaldun's critique of educational practices that rely exclusively on memorization remains relevant to today's pedagogical issues. Modern education systems that still assess success through information reproduction tests often produce students who are able to answer questions but lack proficiency in argumentation, problem-solving, and decision-making. From a *malakah* perspective, true ability is not measured by the amount of material memorized, but by the ability to process, relate, and apply knowledge flexibly in new contexts. Thus, Ibn Khaldun's critique provides an epistemological basis that the memorization paradigm is no longer adequate for developing in-depth expertise. Education must shift toward a model based on activity, discussion, collaboration, and reflection, which can begin by improving the learning model to focus on students rather than on educators, so that knowledge is truly transformed into an operational and functional malakah.

Based on Ibn Khaldun's comprehensive explanations regarding malakah, the axiology of malakah lies in the utility of knowledge that does not stop at understanding and memorization, but is oriented towards permanent, in-depth mastery. *Malakah* is the true goal of education, namely to form solid competencies in students so as to produce authoritative experts. To achieve this, Ibn Khaldun emphasized the importance of appropriate methods, such as discussion, scientific debate (*al-muhawarah wa al-munadzarah*), and continuity of learning (*ittisal*), because only in this way can knowledge be fully internalized and not easily lost.

Within this framework, the affective and psychomotor domains constitute integral components of the malakah formation process. The affective domain is evident in the formation of mental attitudes, learning awareness, and scientific habits that emerge through active involvement in scientific discussions (*al-muḥawarah*

wa al-munaḍzarah) and continuous learning (*ittisal).* These two activities shape students' ethical thinking, perseverance, and scientific attitudes. Meanwhile, the psychomotor domain is evident in students' ability to demonstrate concrete skills through repeated practice and in-depth mastery (*as-syadi*), as emphasized by Ibn Khaldun that malakah is only formed through a process of continuous practice, not merely understanding (*al-fahm*) or memorization (*al-wa`y)* (Bahri, 2020). This view aligns with modern educational domain theory, where the affective domain encompasses values, attitudes, and learning dispositions, while the psychomotor domain relates to the ability to perform actions or motor skills that are evident through concrete performance (Safitri et al., 2024). Thus, the affective and psychomotor in the concept of *malakah* are united as a form of change in attitude and trained skills that emerge from a continuous and in-depth learning process.

Moreover, *malakah* posseses axiological dimension that connects knowledge with practice. Knowledge that has become *malakah* does not stop at the theoretical level, but becomes a real skill that is beneficial for life. Thus, *malakah* emphasizes the function of knowledge as a productive force that shapes disciplined, diligent, and consistent individuals, and encourages real social contributions. This concept positions knowledge not merely as knowledge, but as a functional, inherent competence that benefits both individuals and society.

The Concept of Deep Learning in The Indonesian Context

Deep learning, first introduced by Marton and Saljo in 1976, is a learning method that emphasizes gaining a comprehensive understanding of the meaning and relationships between concepts. This approach focuses on developing a more substantial understanding of the material through comprehensive learning experiences, involving not only the cognitive but also the emotional aspects of students in the process. According to Suwandi, the goal of deep learning is to transform the traditional learning model that prioritizes memorization and repetition into a more constructive

and reflective process. This shift allows students not only to master the content but also to hone their critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. (Suwandi et al., 2024).

Hariyanti defines deep learning as a strategy that prioritizes in-depth mastery of concepts through an intensive and reflective learning process, going beyond simply memorizing or quickly identifying facts, so that students can analyze, synthesize, and critique information more effectively. The most important goal is for students to not only understand the core concepts at a basic level, but also be able to connect them to real and relevant contexts in everyday life, such as applying mathematical principles in personal financial management or utilizing scientific knowledge to solve everyday environmental issues, which in turn builds sustainable adaptation skills.(Hariyanti, 2024). Thus, deep learning produces individuals who are more independent, reflective, and able to make decisions based on in-depth analysis.

In practice, deep learning requires active student involvement. Learning takes place not only through lectures but also through group discussions, collaborative projects, real-world simulations, and authentic problem-solving. Adnyana added that this approach provides learning experiences that enable students to critically analyze information, rather than simply passively receiving material. For example, in the argumentative text material in Indonesian language subjects, students not only learn the text's structure but are also trained to develop logical, accountable arguments. This activity encourages critical, creative, and communicative thinking. Furthermore, deep learning strengthens collaboration, self-confidence, and reflection skills through small experiments or research activities conducted by students in groups. Through reflection, students evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their learning strategies, thereby achieving optimal learning outcomes (Adnyana, 2024).

In Indonesia, the implementation of deep learning approaches in vocational education is beginning to emerge, but remains limited and faces various obstacles. Research by Andriyani

et al., (2025) confirms that most vocational schools still rely on conventional methods and are unable to integrate intelligent technologies, including adaptive learning systems, predictive analytics, and AI-based industrial simulations, due to limited infrastructure, low digital literacy, and a lack of teacher competency. Nevertheless, opportunities for development remain open, particularly through project-based learning models, immersive learning, and cross-sector collaboration with industry, which can create contextual learning experiences relevant to job market needs, in line with vocational learning principles such as teaching factories and link and match. However, the study also emphasizes that this implementation is uneven and not supported by an adaptive curriculum framework and systematic teacher training. Therefore, the collaborative role of educators, parents, principals, and all stakeholders is crucial to building a productive and relevant learning ecosystem that meets the demands of the times.

The three fundamental principles of the immersive learning approach include awareness, meaning, and joy. With a comprehensive and systematic implementation of immersive learning, not only will the quality of education in Indonesia improve, but it can also serve as a catalyst for transformation, fostering collective awareness and accelerating the achievement of national education goals. Strategic implementation of this approach will prepare the younger generation to face global challenges, provide quality education tailored to future needs, and support the realization of educational equity throughout Indonesia.

The mindfulness principle introduced by Ellen Langer emphasizes that learning is not limited to merely understanding information, but also includes comprehensive mental and physical engagement, openness to new experiences, and flexible thinking skills. This principle aligns with the holistic concept of deep learning, which integrates intellectual, emotional, and value aspects (Rimanoczy, 2018). Deep learning provides opportunities for students to actively engage, reflect, and apply knowledge broadly

(Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, 2018). Thus, mindful learning encourages students to engage holistically, increasing awareness of their thinking, emotions, and surroundings. In line with Benzt, deep learning stimulates students' emotional, intellectual, mental, physical, social, and personal development.

Meanwhile, the concept of meaningful learning, introduced by David Ausubel in 1963, emphasizes that the learning process will be more effective if new knowledge can be connected to students' previous experiences or knowledge. This principle aligns with deep learning as an effort to understand meaning, thereby increasing learning effectiveness and long-term memory (V. B Kovac, Dag Oystein Nome, 2023). Meaningful learning occurs when students are able to integrate new information with their existing knowledge, resulting in a deeper understanding of a concept. Deep learning is realized by connecting the learning process with relevant activities in real life, linking students' knowledge to various contexts (local, national, regional, and global), and utilizing the surrounding environment as a learning resource. Deep learning is based on the principle of meaningful learning because it emphasizes understanding the material as a whole, not just memorization. In this process, students are actively involved in connecting, analyzing, and synthesizing information, which is the core of the principle of deep learning.

Furthermore, the joyful principle, as articulated by several educational thinkers such as John Dewey and Howard Gardner, emphasizes that learning must be relevant to students' real lives and emphasizes active involvement through direct experience, both emotionally and intellectually (Suyanto, 2025). Michael Fullan, in his work on deep learning, also emphasizes the importance of creating a deep, meaningful, and enjoyable learning environment so that students are truly engaged in the learning process (Michael Fullan & Joanne Quinn, 2018). Deep learning becomes more meaningful for individuals because it can increase motivation while providing an enjoyable learning experience. Joyful learning emphasizes positive emotions, such as curiosity, enthusiasm, and

the drive to learn. In addition, deep learning provides a sense of comfort by presenting challenges that encourage students to explore complex ideas. Through interactive, active, and student-centered learning, their motivation to understand the material in depth is increased, resulting in optimal retention and understanding.

In line with the principles of deep learning, the application of HOTS in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is a logical step because both emphasize in-depth understanding, learning awareness, and reflective critical thinking skills. Research by Shidqi et al. (2024) shows that the application of HOTS questions can improve students' analytical, evaluative, and creative abilities, while supervisors play an active role in providing intensive training to junior teachers in compiling HOTS questions. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning demands an approach that can lead students to the processing of meaning, not just the reproduction of knowledge. This need becomes a connecting point between HOTS and deep learning approaches, which both require analysis, reflection, and in-depth understanding.

Research by Ambarita et al. (2025) emphasizes that deep learning is indeed in the realm of higher-order thinking, not just understanding concepts, but connecting concepts to broader contexts (analyzing, evaluating, creating), as explained through Bloom's HOTS components. Deep learning emphasizes mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning, requiring students to build connections between Islamic concepts and the context of social, cultural, and digital life. This approach aligns with research by Nasution et al. (2024) which shows that deep learning in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) effectively improves conceptual understanding, spiritual awareness, and problem-solving skills through inquiry, project-based learning, and reflective dialogue based on Islamic values.

In Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning, the relationship between HOTS and deep learning is strengthened

when applied in the context of value internalization. Other research confirms that an in-depth approach can strengthen religious character through mechanisms of critical inquiry, experiential learning, and contextual learning, which require higher-order thinking skills (C4–C6) and the ability to connect Islamic teachings with authentic life realities. (Prihantoro, 2025). In addition, Jatmiko's study shows that deep learning-based teaching tools empirically improve students' HOTS, with the achievement of improving analytical, evaluation, and creative abilities through multimodal and contextual learning activities (Chosya & Takiddin, 2025). Thus, deep learning and HOTS have a mutually related relationship, because both operate in the realm of high-level thinking skills and have been empirically proven to strengthen the quality of Islamic Education learning holistically.

Comparison of the Concept of Malakah and Deep Learning

The concept of malakah in Ibn Khaldun's thought and the principle of deep learning in modern education demonstrate a strong philosophical connection in viewing learning as a process of in-depth internalization of knowledge, not merely the accumulation of information. In classical Islamic epistemology, malakah is understood as an ability embedded and deeply rooted in the soul, so that knowledge is not only known, but also integrated to form established, stable, and internalized skills in the learner's personality structure. Ibn Khaldun emphasized that malakah is the result of istikmal al-fi'l (perfection of action) through practice and repetition, as stated in his statement:

و الملكة صفة راسخة تحصل عن استعمال ذلك الفعل وتكرره

> "*Malakah refers to a deeply rooted and enduring disposition that emerges through the repeated performance of certain activities or practices, until these patterns become firmly established and permanently embedded in the mind.*" *(Ibn Khaldun, 2005, p. 135).*

Thus, malakah involves not only cognitive aspects, but also affective, psychomotor, and spiritual dimensions that combine

knowledge with good deeds. A student is not considered to have achieved malakah until the knowledge he or she has learned is consistently applied through action, practice, munadzarah (scientific debate), and muhawarah (intellectual dialogue). This practice creates continuity of learning (ittisal) that prevents stagnation of thought and paves the way to true mastery of knowledge.(Khaldun, 2003). On the other hand, deep learning is born from the Western constructivist tradition, which emphasizes that deep understanding is achieved when students construct meaning through reflection, relationships between concepts, and relevant learning experiences. Deep learning rejects surface learning, which is solely oriented towards memorization, and instead emphasizes the full involvement of students in the process of analysis, evaluation, and creation. Ausubel's principle of meaningful learning aligns with the concept of malakah, which states that knowledge must be integrated with cognitive structures and life experiences to become permanent (Suyanto, 2025). Meanwhile, mindful learning demands a presence of full awareness in the learning process, in line with Ibn Khaldun's guidance regarding inner sincerity and learning etiquette. The principle of joyful learning also reinforces the idea of continuity in malakah, as a positive atmosphere encourages motivation and consistent learning, which are prerequisites for developing deep competence.

From a pedagogical perspective, both malakah and deep learning have a very clear point of contact: both position learning activities not merely as receiving information, but as an active process involving interaction, dialogue, reflection, and practice. Ibn Khaldun strongly criticized the method of rote memorization alone, which makes students weak in argumentation and application of knowledge. This criticism has proven relevant in the study of modern Islamic education, as demonstrated by Zainol et al. (2018), that rote learning models without in-depth understanding often fail to produce higher-order thinking skills. This parallels the deep learning approach, which emphasizes discussion, problem-solving, and authentic projects as strategies for constructing meaning.

However, the difference between the two is evident in their philosophical orientation and ultimate learning goals. In malakah, the goal of learning is not merely to develop intellectual skills, but to shape civilized individuals through the integration of knowledge, practice, and morals. Knowledge is considered imperfect without practice, so cognitive mastery must be accompanied by ethical behavior and spiritual commitment. In contrast, deep learning focuses more on developing 21st-century competencies, such as critical thinking, creativity, and self-reflection. Nevertheless, the two orientations can complement each other. Malakah provides a foundation of values and character, while deep learning provides modern, systematic and contextual pedagogical methods.

This comparison demonstrates that *malakah* encompasses all learning domains recognized in modern education. In the cognitive domain, *malakah* requires deep mastery such that knowledge becomes an intrinsic disposition of the soul. In the affective domain, this concept cultivates scientific attitudes, ethical thinking, and inner commitment through *muḥāwarah* (dialogue) and *munāẓarah* (scholarly debate). In the psychomotor domain, *malakah* is formed through repeated practice (*as-syadī*) until it develops into a stable and established skill. These three domains are, in fact, consistent with the taxonomies of Bloom, Krathwohl, and Simpson, which emphasize that learning cannot be separated from attitudinal and behavioral aspects. To clarify the relationship between *malakah* and deep learning, the following table presents a comparison between the two.

Tabel 1. Malakah and Deep Learning Comparison.

Aspects	*Malakah*	Deep Learning
Philosophical Foundation	Islamic Epistemology; knowledge as	Constructivism; knowledge is constructed through

	soul's attribute through action and repetition.	reflective and contextual experience.
Learning Objective	Formation of in-depth expertise, manners, and moral integrity.	Formation of deep understanding, HOTS, critical & creative thinking.
Learning Process	Repetition, *ittiṣāl* (continuity), *muḥāwarah* (dialogue), and *munāẓarah* (scholarly debate).	Reflection, collaboration, authentic projects.
Cognitive Domain	Permanent and internalized competence.	Conceptual understanding, deep analysis.
Affective Domain	Earnestness, ethical conduct (*adab*), and inner readiness.	Mindfulness, motivation, curiousity.
Psikomotor Domain	Knowledge is practiced until it becomes a habit.	Practical activity, projects and real-world experience learning.
Spiritual Domain	Integration of knowledge-practive-ethics (akhlak).	Not explicitly stated, however it support the formation of positive character.

Through the table, it becomes evident that the integration of the concept of *malakah* and deep learning presents a comprehensive and holistic model of Islamic education. *Malakah* provides a philosophical and moral foundation that emphasizes that knowledge must be practiced until it shapes character and results in permanent competence. Meanwhile, deep learning offers a methodological approach that highlights the internalization of

meaning through learning experiences that are mindful, meaningful, and joyful. Mindful learning requires full presence and awareness in the learning process; meaningful learning emphasizes relevance and conceptual connectedness; and joyful learning creates a positive emotional environment that enables sustained repetition—the core principle in the formation of *malakah*.

Accordingly, *malakah* and deep learning should not be viewed as opposing concepts, but rather as complementary frameworks that can be synergistically integrated. *Malakah* strengthens the value-laden, ethical, and spiritual objectives of education, while deep learning reinforces pedagogical procedures that align with the demands of modern education. Their integration thus constitutes a crucial foundation for the development of contemporary Islamic education that not only cultivates knowledgeable and morally grounded learners, but also fosters critical, reflective, creative, and adaptive thinkers capable of responding to the dynamics of the modern world.

Revisiting the Concept of Malakah and Deep Learning in Contemporary Islamic Education

The integration of Ibn Khaldun's concept of malakah and the paradigm of deep learning (mindful, meaningful, joyful) carries profound philosophical implications for the direction of educational development in Indonesia. Ontologically, education is no longer understood merely as a process of knowledge transfer, but rather as an effort to transform oneself into a knowledgeable, charitable, and moral individual. From a malakah perspective, learning success is measured not by the amount of information mastered, but by the depth of that knowledge that has become a permanent characteristic within the student through consistent practice and repetition. This opinion is supported by research in Islamic boarding schools. The results of the study indicate that bahth al-masail activities train students to think critically, communicate effectively, and be tolerant, as well as to be able to

solve social and religious problems in a moderate manner through the practice of public speaking (debating, discussing), and repetition in learning (Afianti et al., 2025).

This paradigm guides national education to move from a cognitive orientation to transformative learning that fosters students' moral, spiritual, and social integrity as stated by H.A.R Tilaar, Jimmy Ph. Paat, (2011) that true education must be based on the value of humanization, namely education as a process that affirms that a person's development into a complete human being requires interaction and togetherness with others, because humanity is not formed automatically or realized by itself without a social process. Thus, the integration of the values of malakah makes the goal of Indonesian education not only to produce technically skilled individuals, but also individuals who are pious, civilized, and have character.

From an epistemological perspective, the integration of malakah and deep learning leads to a reformulation of perspectives on the nature of knowledge and the learning process. Ibn Khaldun emphasized that true knowledge is acquired through repetition, practice, and continuity (ittisal) until it becomes embedded in the soul and is applied in life. Meanwhile, deep learning emphasizes in-depth mastery of concepts through an intensive and reflective process, linking them to real-life contexts. Both are united by the idea of the importance of balancing the rational and spiritual dimensions in the educational process. This aligns with Zarkasyi's view that Islamic education should integrate religious and general knowledge to shape a generation competent in various fields. He emphasized that intellectual intelligence must be balanced with noble morals and independence (Suhaimi et al., 2025). In this framework, teachers no longer merely act as cognitive facilitators, but also as *murabbi* who guides the process of internalizing knowledge to form the spiritual integrity of students.

Axiologically, the implications of integrating malakah and deep learning are manifested in strengthening the value dimension in learning practices. The mindful, meaningful, and joyful

principles in deep learning emphasize the importance of conscious, meaningful, and enjoyable learning. These three principles align with the axiological value of malakah, which connects knowledge with good deeds, so that the learning process not only broadens insight but also fosters habits of deep thinking, noble character, and a productive spirit. Its implementation in the context of Indonesian education can be done through project-based learning. In his research (Biantoro & Rahmatullah, 2025) Contextual projects such as eco-enzymes, ecoprinting, edible cutlery, and macramé have proven effective in strengthening students' independence, critical reasoning, creativity, as well as faith and piety. This demonstrates that project-based learning is an effective strategy for internalizing the values of the *Pancasila Student Profile* in integrated Islamic schools. Accordingly, national education is directed toward cultivating lifelong learners who are adaptive to global change, while simultaneously nurturing lifelong worshippers who understand knowledge as a pathway of devotion to God.

From a policy perspective, the integration of *malakah* and deep learning guides the development of a curriculum that balances the dimensions of head, heart, and hand. Such a curriculum does not focus solely on conceptual mastery, but also on the cultivation of holistic awareness and personality formation. This model aligns with the direction of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which emphasizes reflective, contextual, and learner-centered learning; however, it needs to be enriched with the values of *ittiṣāl* (continuity of learning) and *muḥāwarah wa munāẓarah* (scholarly dialogue), as articulated by Ibn Khaldun. Teachers are therefore expected not only to understand deep learning theory, but also to be capable of implementing strategies of mindful reflection and spiritual learning within instructional practices. Accordingly, the integration of *malakah* and deep learning is not merely methodological, but also philosophical, positioning Indonesian education as a means of forming individuals who think deeply, possess intellectual independence, and embody noble moral character (*akhlāq karīmah*).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun's concept of *malakah* has strong relevance to the philosophy of deep learning, which emphasizes mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning. Both are grounded in the deep internalization of knowledge through sustained practice, purposeful repetition, and reflective dialogue that strengthens understanding. This convergence is evident in the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions, which form the basis of robust competence in *malakah* and simultaneously underpin higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) and 21st-century competencies in deep learning.

The primary difference in orientation lies in their value focus: *malakah* situates knowledge within a spiritual–moral framework, whereas deep learning emphasizes the development of reflective thinking capacities and academic competencies. The main contribution of this research is the provision of a theoretical framework that integrates classical Islamic pedagogy with modern learning approaches, thereby offering a philosophical–pedagogical foundation for the development of more holistic and contextually relevant models of Islamic education (PAI). Since this study is based on a literature review, further empirical research—through experimental studies, classroom action research, or longitudinal studies—is required to examine the effectiveness of the proposed integrative model.

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