

Summative Assessment of Islamic Education Subject in Merdeka Curriculum

Nabila Nayyrotul Fitria¹, Luk Luk Nur Mufidah², Puput Setiawati³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, nabilanayyrotul@gmail.com¹.

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to examine the implementation of summative assessment within the “Merdeka” Curriculum, specifically in Islamic Religious Education courses. The adoption of this curriculum is still relatively new in the education process, and many teachers have not yet achieved optimal success in applying it. Although this assessment closely resembles that of the previous curriculum, it requires alignment with learning indicators and individual student characteristics to accurately reflect learning objectives. This study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, gathering data from library research. The primary reference for this research is the “Merdeka Belajar” curriculum strategy from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Summative assessment refers to evaluations conducted at the end of an academic year or semester. For the successful implementation of summative assessment in Islamic Religious Education within the Merdeka Curriculum, this research identifies nine essential phases: (1) defining competencies; (2) selecting an assessment structure; (3) providing necessary assessment tools; (4) establishing an assessment scale; (5) scheduling assessments; (6) completing summative assessments on time; (7) processing assessment results; (8) providing feedback and reports; and (9) conducting an evaluation.

Keywords: merdeka curriculum, summative assessment, islamic religious education, implementation phases.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum places significant emphasis on summative assessment as a means of gauging student competencies, especially in areas like Islamic Religious Education (PAI).¹ Conducted at the conclusion of a learning phase, this assessment serves as a holistic measure of student achievement and informs crucial educational decisions, including program evaluations and study progressions.^{2,3} To increase its effectiveness, summative assessment can be further refined through the integration of modern technology within the Education 5.0 framework, such as utilizing big data. This integration can deepen the evaluation process and provide a more individualized learning experience for students.⁴ By leveraging automation and adaptive testing, such technology enhances assessment accuracy and equity, allowing students to receive immediate feedback and facilitating more organized learning paths.⁵

However, implementing summative assessments within the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum encounters several challenges, primarily concerning teachers' comprehension and adaptation. The shift to this new curriculum has been far from seamless, with persistent issues surrounding the validity and reliability of assessments.⁶ These difficulties are further intensified by infrastructure limitations and inadequate teacher training, both of which directly affect the curriculum's overall effectiveness.⁷ Difficulties in differentiating between formative and summative assessments frequently results in their improper application within classroom settings.⁸ Insufficient teacher training hampers the optimal implementation of the curriculum, highlighting the need for adequate infrastructure support to improve its effectiveness.⁹ Moreover, inconsistencies in communication

¹ Khusnul Hanifah et al., "Implementasi Empat Pilar Pendidikan UNESCO Dalam Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Di MIS Muhammadiyah 4 Jetis Ponorogo," *Tarbawi Ngabar: Jurnal of Education* 5, no. 2 (July 27, 2024): 174–95, <https://doi.org/10.55380/tarbawi.v5i2.838>.

² M. Rizal Fuadiy, "Evaluasi Pembelajaran Sebagai Sebuah Studi Literatur," *DIMAR: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (December 1, 2021): 173–97, <https://doi.org/10.58577/dimar.v3i1.83>.

³ M Febi Wennisgo and M. Asep Fathur Rozi, "Kreativitas Guru Dalam Proses Belajar Mengajar Mata Pelajaran Akidah Akhlak Pada Kurikulum Merdeka," *Journal on Education* 6, no. 3 (April 19, 2024): 17194–200, <https://doi.org/10.31004/JOE.V6I3.5600>.

⁴ Ahmad Sunoko, "Model Pengembangan Kurikulum KKNi Pada PTKIS Berbasis Pesantren (Studi Kasus Implementasi Kurikulum KKNi Di STAI Al-Anwar Sarang Rembang)," August 26, 2022, <http://repository.iainkudus.ac.id/9232/>.

⁵ Maida Maqsood et al., "Assessment and Evaluation in Education 5.0," 2024, 235–48, <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3041-8.ch013>.

⁶ Ramdanil Mubarak, Makherus Sholeh, and Ika Irayana, "Classroom Management Strategy in Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum (Independent Curriculum) in Primary Education Institutions," *Al-Adzka: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 13, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 189–202, <https://doi.org/10.18592/aladzkapgmi.v13i2.11356>.

⁷ Ni Putu Ani Astuti et al., "Permasalahan Asesmen Pada Kurikulum Merdeka," *Cetta: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 7, no. 1 (January 2024): 22–32, <https://doi.org/10.37329/cetta.v7i1.2954>; Yuyun Alfasius Tobondo, "Challenges and Solutions in the Implementation of Educational Policies in Indonesia: A Literature Analysis of Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka and Teacher Reform," *EDUKASIA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran* 5, no. 1 (June 2024): 1157–64, <https://doi.org/10.62775/edukasia.v5i1.997>; Dukha Yunitasari, I Wayan Suastra, and I Wayan Lasmawan, "Implementation Challenges of Merdeka Curriculum in Primary Schools," *Prisma Sains: Jurnal Pengkajian Ilmu Dan Pembelajaran Matematika Dan IPA IKIP Mataram* 11, no. 4 (August 2023): 952, <https://doi.org/10.33394/j-ps.v11i4.8079>.

⁸ Ani Astuti et al., "Permasalahan Asesmen Pada Kurikulum Merdeka."

⁹ Fatimatuzzahrah Fatimatuzzahrah, Lulu Sakinah, and Siti Alikha Alyasari, "Problematika Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Di Sekolah: Tantangan Membangun Kualitas Pendidikan," *Jurnal Bintang Pendidikan Indonesia* 2, no. 1 (November 2023):

between educational policy directives and practical implementation often lead to misunderstandings about the collective responsibilities involved in conducting summative assessments.¹⁰

From a research standpoint, there is a noticeable gap in studies addressing the application of summative assessments within the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, particularly in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Although formative assessments have been widely examined, research on the effectiveness and impact of summative assessments in this curriculum remains limited. Existing literature on summative assessment development and implementation indicates that employing systematic approaches—such as psychometric analysis and engagement with subject-matter experts—can enhance the validity and reliability of these assessments.¹¹ Involving faculty in the development of assessments ensures that they are aligned with the intended educational objectives. Summative assessments have shown to be effective in gauging students' comprehension within practical learning environments, where both students and mentors regard them as a meaningful affirmation of their efforts and dedication.¹² This suggests that the proper application of summative assessments can improve learning outcomes in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and facilitate more informed educational decision-making.

In practice, carefully crafted summative assessments also promote a student-centered learning approach and uphold fairness in evaluation.¹³ Incorporating higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) into these assessments enables alignment with curriculum objectives that emphasize the development of critical and creative thinking skills.¹⁴ A thorough integration of summative assessment complements ongoing formative feedback, offering a more comprehensive perspective on student learning and achievement.

This study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of summative assessments within the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, focusing specifically on Islamic Religious Education (PAI), and to assess its influence on educational decision-making. Additionally, the study aims to identify the challenges associated with implementing summative assessments and propose viable solutions to address these obstacles.

43–53, <https://doi.org/10.55606/jubpi.v2i1.2339>; Tobondo, “Challenges and Solutions in the Implementation of Educational Policies in Indonesia: A Literature Analysis of Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka and Teacher Reform.”

¹⁰ Riska Mutia Nur Putri et al., “Peran Wawasan Pendidikan Karakter Guru PAI Dalam Pembentukan Akhlak Mulia Siswa,” *JUPE: Jurnal Pendidikan Mandala* 8, no. 2 (2023): 573–80; Yunitasari, Suastra, and Lasmawan, “Implementation Challenges of Merdeka Curriculum in Primary Schools.”

¹¹ Ashley N Castleberry et al., “Development of a Summative Examination with Subject Matter Expert Validation,” *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 80, no. 2 (March 2016), <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe80229>.

¹² Abdool Qaiyum Mohabuth and Syed Munir Ahmad, “The Effectiveness of Summative Assessment in Practice Learning,” in *Proceedings of International Academic Conferences* (International Institute of Social and Economic Sciences, 2015).

¹³ M. Aliyul Wafa, Muhamad Khoirur Roziqin, and Nurul Isma Yadha, “Analisis Pembelajaran PAI Melalui Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Di SMPN 1 Kabuh,” *ISLAMIKA* 6, no. 3 (July 2024): 951–69, <https://doi.org/10.36088/islamika.v6i3.4881>; Badrun Kholid, Arif Rahman, and Lalu Ari Irawan, “Implementing Diagnostic Assessment in Designing Differentiated Learning for English Language Learning at the Junior High Schools,” *Journal of Language and Literature Studies* 4, no. 2 (June 2024): 445–58, <https://doi.org/10.36312/jolls.v4i2.1934>.

¹⁴ Nur Isnaini and Nur Jannah, “Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning Assessment Based On Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) At SMK Muhammadiyah 5 Jember,” *AL-WIJDĀN Journal of Islamic Education Studies* 9, no. 3 (July 2024): 334–53, <https://doi.org/10.58788/alwijdn.v9i3.4647>.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection conducted through library research. Library research involves gathering data from various literature sources relevant to this study, which are then reviewed and analyzed.¹⁵ Using this research methodology as a foundation for knowledge, the researcher engages directly with the data or texts presented. This study exclusively relies on library resources, such as books, articles, and secondary sources, to gather insights. Written data from prior studies are compiled to address challenges educators encounter in understanding summative assessments.

This journal article adopts a library research approach, drawing on a variety of literature, including books, notes, and previous research reports, to explore the impact of the Merdeka Belajar policy on the development of summative assessments in Islamic Religious Education within the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. The policy established by Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture serves as the primary information source for this research.

DISCUSSION

A summative assessment is a form of evaluation designed to collect data on students' comprehension or academic achievement concerning the material covered by the end of a quarter or semester. The results from summative assessments contribute to students' report cards and serve as a criterion for graduation eligibility. This assessment method measures students' cumulative learning success, encompassing material from all topics and learning objectives associated with the semester or annual program. Each question reflects specific topics aligned with established indicators.¹⁶

Summative assessment is conducted at the end of a program unit, such as at the end of a semester or academic year, to determine how students have achieved the competencies set in the curriculum.¹⁷ If the assessment indicates that students have met the established standards, they may advance to the subsequent material. Conversely, if students have not mastered the tested content, it will be revisited. Summative assessments enable educators to evaluate the extent to which students have achieved one or more learning objectives over a defined period. These assessments provide a quantifiable measure of students' learning abilities in relation to established achievement criteria, helping determine students' readiness to progress to the next grade level or class.¹⁸

Summative assessment takes place after a subject is completed or at the end of a semester to assess how thoroughly students have mastered the material over a given

¹⁵ Miza Nina Adlini et al., "Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (March 2022): 974–80, <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v6i1.3394>.

¹⁶ Noly Shofiyah and Septi Budi Sartika, *Buku Ajar Mata Kuliah Asesmen Pembelajaran*, Umsida Press (Sidoarjo: Umsida Press, 2018).

¹⁷ Anizar and Sardin Sardin, *Evaluasi Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Dan Pemanfaatan Hasil Penilaiannya* (Aceh Besar: Edupedia Publisher, 2023).

¹⁸ Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Panduan Pembelajaran Dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, Dan Menengah* (Jakarta, 2022).

timeframe. The results form a basis for planning subsequent educational steps or materials, ensuring that instruction aligns with students' learning needs. Key characteristics of summative assessment include its role as a tool for measuring student outcomes over a set period—such as a single topic, semester, or academic year; a method for comparing student achievement against established standards; and a resource for educators or institutions to refine and enhance their instructional programs.¹⁹

Summative assessment is divided into three categories based on its timing and purpose: end-of-material summative assessment (for and of learning), mid-semester summative assessment (of learning), and end-of-semester summative assessment (of learning). The end-of-material summative assessment functions as (1) a tool to evaluate and measure student achievement upon completing a specific material segment, (2) a reflection on the effectiveness of the learning process for that material, and (3) feedback to enhance instructional strategies for future content²⁰ and, (4) a means to identify strengths and weaknesses in the learning process conducted for that material scope.²¹ Several techniques can be employed in summative assessments for Islamic Religious Education (PAI), including: (1) written exams, where students respond to questions that explore respect for religious diversity and the application of inclusive character principles in various contexts; (2) final projects, in which students create a project that demonstrates their understanding and role in promoting religious moderation and inclusive character development. This project may take the form of a presentation, report, or artwork, incorporating elements of reflection and analysis; (3) written assignments, where students compose essays or reports discussing the significance of respecting religious diversity to foster inclusivity and identifying practical steps to encourage inclusive behaviors;²² and (4) group discussions, where students collaborate to share insights and enhance social interaction skills.²³

Implementing summative assessment within the Merdeka curriculum begins with careful planning to maximize effectiveness. The steps in planning a summative assessment are as follows:

1. Identify Competencies: Determining the competencies to be assessed in the summative assessment should align with the goals and content of the Merdeka Curriculum.²⁴ Competencies may encompass aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

¹⁹ Anizar and Sardin, *Evaluasi Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Dan Pemanfaatan Hasil Penilaiannya*.

²⁰ Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Riset dan Teknologi, *Panduan Pembelajaran Dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, Dan Menengah*.

²¹ Arifin Nur Budiono and Mochammad Hatip, "Asesmen Pembelajaran Pada Kurikulum Merdeka," *Jurnal Axioma : Jurnal Matematika Dan Pembelajaran* 8, no. 1 (April 2023): 109–23, <https://doi.org/10.56013/axi.v8i1.2044>.

²² Darodjat et al., *Pengembangan Asesmen Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti* (Banyumas: Amerta Media, 2023).

²³ Nurul Azizah and Zuhrotul Mufidah, "Pengembangan Asesmen Pembelajaran PAI Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar," in *Proceeding Seminar Nasional Ilmu Pendidikan (SEPEKAN) FKIP Universitas Islam Syekh-Yusuf*, vol. 1, 2023, 49–61.

²⁴ Amalia Nurlitasari and Tasman Hamami, "Assessment As, For, Dan Of Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Tingkat Menengah Atas," *Risalah, Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam* 9, no. 4 SE-Articles (December 2023): 1556–67, https://doi.org/10.31943/jurnal_risalah.v9i4.597.

2. **Select Assessment Format:** Choose a suitable assessment format to gauge competency achievement. Options include written tests, projects, presentations, assignments, or a combination of these methods to provide an accurate reflection of student performance.
3. **Specify Assessment Instruments:** Develop clear and reliable assessment tools. This involves defining the number and type of questions, instructions, scoring rubrics, and criteria. Instruments should align with competencies outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum.
4. **Determine Grading Scale:** Establish a grading scale that effectively measures student performance, whether numeric, letter-based, or narrative. The scale should have transparent and consistent criteria to distinguish various achievement levels.
5. **Schedule the Assessment:** Plan the summative assessment schedule according to the Merdeka Curriculum timeline, allowing adequate preparation time. The assessment's purpose is to reveal students' strengths and areas for growth, guiding further development.
6. **Conduct the Assessment:** Administer the summative assessment as scheduled, providing clear, detailed instructions to ensure fairness and accuracy. The assessment should be conducted objectively, with a focus on the specific competencies set out in the Merdeka Curriculum.
7. **Data Processing and Analysis:** Process and analyze assessment data post-completion to gain insights into students' competency achievements. This analysis helps identify strengths and weaknesses and aids in planning for improvement.
8. **Feedback and Reporting:** Offer students constructive, targeted feedback on their summative assessment performance to foster improvement. Additionally, consider sharing feedback with parents, guardians, or other relevant stakeholders to communicate assessment results.²⁵
9. **Evaluation and Improvement:** Periodically evaluate the planning and implementation of summative assessments to identify strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring continuous enhancement of the assessment process.²⁶

Summative Assessment in Islamic Religious Education (PAI)

The primary objective of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is to deepen students' faith and comprehension of Islamic principles, shaping them into devout Muslims with a strong belief in God and a noble character within both societal and national frameworks. Islamic education seeks to foster and fortify students' faith by imparting knowledge, understanding, and practical application of Islamic teachings, guiding them to become individuals who believe in Allah (SWT) and consistently demonstrate virtuous character in their everyday

²⁵ Elis Ratna Wulan and Rusdiana, *Evaluasi Pembelajaran* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2015).

²⁶ Illusiyah Maisyaroh, Muhammad Abdullah, and Muhammad Nur Hadi, "Model Asesmen Sumatif Dengan Menggunakan Metode Library Research Untuk Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) Pada Kurikulum Merdeka," *Asatiza: Jurnal Pendidikan* 4, no. 3 (September 2023): 274–87, <https://doi.org/10.46963/asatiza.v4i3.1063>.

lives.²⁷ The assessment of learning outcomes in PAI aims to determine the level of students' understanding and internalization of Islamic teachings. The purpose of evaluating PAI learning outcomes is to serve as a benchmark for assessing the quality and achievement of Islamic educational objectives as outlined in the established curriculum.

Planning

In planning summative evaluations, aligning success indicators with learning objectives is essential. This alignment, consistent with the school's educational goals, ensures a thorough assessment of students' comprehension acquired during the learning process. Within the Merdeka curriculum, this alignment is particularly significant for accurately assessing PAI learning outcomes. Achieving evaluation goals requires meeting specific criteria, which includes accounting for student characteristics and adhering to the independent curriculum guidelines. The independent curriculum aims to develop self-directed learners by facilitating access to relevant, contextual learning experiences, fostering innovation and creativity in the classroom, strengthening critical thinking abilities, and encouraging natural collaboration among students.²⁸ Planning a summative assessment for PAI involves formulating assessment objectives, creating a blueprint based on the syllabus and lesson plans, developing questions based on the blueprint and textbooks, and preparing an answer key.

Implementation

Implementing summative assessment in PAI includes preparing the test room by ensuring cleanliness and appropriately arranging seating and desks. The teacher distributes test papers and answer sheets according to student numbers and collects answer sheets in the same order to facilitate grading. Teachers must ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to answer the questions effectively.²⁹

Follow-Up

Follow-up in PAI summative assessment involves assigning scores to each question based on the established criteria and reporting learning outcomes based on the cumulative scores achieved over the semester.³⁰ The evaluation of Teaching and Learning Activities, or learning activity evaluation, involves assessing learning outcomes based on metrics derived from student performance. To effectively manage classroom learning, teachers need to utilize assessment tools and comprehend success indicators, which serve as benchmarks for their performance. At its core, evaluation is a process of assessing behaviors that are dynamic and variable. Teachers are now tasked not only with conducting assessments but also with fostering successful learning processes. Learning objectives function as indicators

²⁷ Ina Magdalena and Nanda Citra Kumarani, "Pengembangan Model Evaluasi Sumatif Mata Pelajaran PAI Di Sekolah Dasar," *ANWARUL* 3, no. 2 (April 2023): 300–311, <https://doi.org/10.58578/anwarul.v3i2.981>.

²⁸ Achmad Musyafa' et al., "Implementasi Evaluasi Hasil Belajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Kurikulum Merdeka," *Pendas Mahakam : Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar* 8, no. 2 SE-Articles (December 2023): 209–15.

²⁹ Habibah Indah Ratnasari, Delia Vialo Lozada, and Arief Lutsfi Hakim, "Peningkatan Kualitas Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Melalui Evaluasi Sumatif Di SMP Muhammadiyah PK Al Kautsar," *MERDEKA : Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 1, no. 3 SE-Articles (January 2024): 168–72, <https://doi.org/10.62017/merdeka.v1i3.842>.

³⁰ Mabid Barokah, "Manajemen Penilaian Sumatif Pada Ranah Kognitif Pembelajaran PAI Kelas X Semester Ganjil Di SMA Negeri 2 Pontianak Tahun Pelajaran 2017/2018," *Al-Idarah: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2020): 159–79.

in planning and strategic development, forming a vital part of the assessment process. The instruments employed to gauge achievement are essential to ensuring that these objectives are met effectively.

By incorporating life values from the Qur'an into the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum assessment, educators can guide students toward a comprehensive understanding of the Qur'an, fostering good character and responsible citizenship.³¹ Additionally, PAI education should emphasize religious moderation to counteract radical thinking among students. The Merdeka learning principle encourages students to think critically and actively engage with their religious studies, leading to meaningful learning that can be applied in real life.³²

Summative assessment presents several challenges, including ensuring that the material taught by the teacher aligns accurately with the assessment content, avoiding overly explicit guidance in the assessment blueprint (such as by providing general rather than specific instructions), and ensuring a broad enough scope of material to encourage critical thinking. A narrow focus may limit students' ability to think expansively when responding to questions. Additionally, relying solely on exam scores as a benchmark for understanding may not fully capture student comprehension.

Student honesty in summative assessments can often be inferred from their results. A high score achieved honestly indicates active engagement and learning; a low score despite studying reflects the student's current capability level; consistent study habits paired with stable scores show sustained effort; and high scores obtained through dishonest means indicate potential issues within the assessment process.³³

CONCLUSION

This study examines the application of summative assessments within the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for Islamic Religious Education (PAI), with the goal of providing a comprehensive understanding of students' learning outcomes at the conclusion of the instructional period. It identifies nine essential stages in the summative assessment process, including competency identification, selection of assessment formats, and feedback delivery. The findings suggest that effective implementation of summative assessments enhances the learning experience, promoting deeper comprehension and helping students internalize Islamic values. Such assessments encourage the development of higher-order thinking and critical understanding, especially concerning PAI content.

However, implementing summative assessments within the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum presents challenges, such as limited teacher familiarity, infrastructural limitations, and inconsistencies between policy directives and field practices. Furthermore, the assessment approach aims to instill values of religious moderation and resist radical

³¹ Hasmawati Hasmawati and Ahmad Mukhtar, "Asesmen Dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Perspektif Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Indonesian Journal of Innovation Multidisipliner Research* 1, no. 3 (September 2023): 197–211, <https://doi.org/10.31004/ijim.v1i3.20>.

³² Darodjat et al., *Pengembangan Asesmen Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti*.

³³ Abil Fida Muhammad Qois Al Hadi et al., "Penerapan Evaluasi Sumatif Dalam Pembelajaran PAI Di SMPN 1 Surakarta," *TSAQFAH* 4, no. 1 (January 2024): 769–78, <https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v4i1.2570>.

ideologies, fostering an inclusive and critical student character. Additionally, leveraging Education 5.0 technology—such as big data for personalized learning insights and adaptive testing for tailored assessments—has the potential to enhance assessment precision, deliver immediate feedback, and promote a fairer, needs-based learning process.

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