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The Implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education Learning During the Merdeka Curriculum Era: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

The implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy has become increasingly important in Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam / PAI) following the adoption of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes competency-based learning, character development, and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). However, previous studies have generally examined Bloom's Taxonomy from limited perspectives, such as HOTS, assessment, learning models, or educational technology, while comprehensive reviews remain limited. This study aims to examine the application of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education instruction and identify significant trends related to the Merdeka Curriculum. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, this library research reviewed twelve journal articles published between 2025 and 2026, which were obtained through Google Scholar. The data were analyzed using thematic, comparative, and critical analysis approaches. The findings revealed four major trends. First, the cognitive domain was primarily implemented through HOTS-oriented learning, active learning, and problem-solving strategies. Second, the affective domain was developed through religious character education, value internalization, and affective assessment. Third, the psychomotor domain was strengthened through practice-based and experiential learning activities. Fourth, technology integration supported interactive learning, digital assessment, and the development of higher-order thinking skills. The study concludes that the effective implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education requires the integration of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and technological dimensions. This study contributes a conceptual framework that can support curriculum implementation, instructional design, and assessment practices in Islamic Religious Education within the Merdeka Curriculum context.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a crucial role in shaping students who are not only intellectually capable but also demonstrate strong religious values, moral integrity, and practical religious competencies. From the perspective of Islamic education, the goal of the educational process is to develop individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, ethically responsible, and capable of applying Islamic principles in their daily lives. Consequently, IRE instruction should not focus solely on the cognitive acquisition of religious knowledge but should also encourage the internalization of spiritual values, character development, and the

improvement of religious practices. This situation highlights that IRE requires a comprehensive learning approach that integrates knowledge, attitudes, and skills within a cohesive educational framework (Delahunty et al., 2021; Musyaffa & Mabrury, 2025; Nasir et al., 2024; Nasucha et al., 2023; Saputra & Khoeron, 2026).

The relevance of such an approach has become increasingly significant with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia. The curriculum emphasizes competency-based learning, character development, and the cultivation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Through student-centered learning, reflective activities, contextual instruction, and collaborative engagement, students are expected to actively construct knowledge and apply it in real-life situations. In the context of IRE, students are no longer expected only to understand Islamic concepts theoretically but also to think critically, address socio-religious issues, and practice Islamic values in everyday life. As a result, the IRE learning process under the Merdeka Curriculum has shifted from a content-oriented approach toward a competency-based model that harmonizes cognitive development, religious character formation, and practical religious abilities.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a framework that aligns well with educational objectives and instructional planning. Bloom's Taxonomy categorizes learning objectives into three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. This framework provides guidance for educators in designing learning objectives, selecting instructional strategies, and developing assessment methods to evaluate student achievement. Recent studies have demonstrated that Bloom's Taxonomy is valuable in IRE because it assists teachers in organizing learning activities systematically and ensuring that students develop comprehensive competencies. Furthermore, instructional design based on Bloom's Taxonomy has been shown to improve learning effectiveness through the integration of active learning strategies and systematic assessment practices.

The application of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education has been associated with the development of Higher Order Thinking Skills. HOTS are essential for enabling students to achieve deeper understanding of religious teachings. This approach encourages students to apply Islamic principles in real-life contexts rather than merely memorizing concepts. Bloom's Taxonomy and HOTS are important frameworks for supporting meaningful learning outcomes in IRE. Previous studies have shown that HOTS-based IRE instruction enhances students' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities when addressing social and religious issues.

Assessment practices designed to promote deeper thinking also encourage students to analyze, evaluate, and make decisions based on Islamic values. Through these processes, students learn to apply values as a foundation for analysis, evaluation, and decision-making. Similarly, the application of active learning approaches has been found to contribute positively to the enhancement of HOTS among vocational school students in Islamic Religious Education. Digital learning media, including Kahoot, have further supported the development of HOTS-oriented learning and assessment by increasing student engagement and participation.

Beyond the cognitive domain, Bloom's Taxonomy is highly relevant to the affective dimension of IRE. Educational success is not determined solely by academic achievement but also by students' character development and behavioral formation. Islamic education aims to develop students' moral awareness, attitudes, and spiritual values. Several studies have

emphasized the importance of assessing students' affective development to evaluate the effectiveness of Islamic education in supporting their spiritual and social growth. In addition, social cognitive approaches in moral education have proven effective in fostering ethical behavior through modeling, habituation, and meaningful social interaction within learning environments. These findings suggest that affective development should remain an integral component of Islamic Religious Education.

The psychomotor domain is essential for enabling students to apply knowledge in their daily lives and religious practices. Collaborative and experiential learning activities can improve students' understanding by actively involving them in meaningful learning experiences. The psychomotor domain enables students to demonstrate Islamic knowledge through actions and practices rather than only through theoretical understanding. Likewise, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has been shown to strengthen students' understanding of Islamic creed through direct experience and contextual problem-solving activities. These findings indicate that psychomotor development requires instructional approaches that are practical, participatory, and experience-based.

The education system is rapidly evolving alongside technological advancement, which has facilitated the integration of Bloom's Taxonomy into interactive learning environments. Technology enables students to engage in interactive learning experiences according to their learning needs and interests. Studies have shown that the use of digital tools can support critical thinking development and increase student engagement. The integration of Bloom's Taxonomy and digital learning platforms provides support for HOTS-oriented learning and enhances student motivation and participation in the classroom. The concept of Technology-Based Bloom's Taxonomy is particularly useful for designing tools that monitor student progress through formative and summative assessment. This framework provides guidance for improving assessment practices through technology integration.

Despite these developments, several challenges remain in implementing Bloom's Taxonomy within IRE under the Merdeka Curriculum. Instructional practices in many schools continue to emphasize lower-order cognitive skills, particularly memorization and basic comprehension. Teachers often encounter difficulties in designing HOTS-based assessments and authentic evaluation instruments for affective and psychomotor learning outcomes. Furthermore, disparities in digital competence and technological infrastructure limit effective technology integration. Recent evidence indicates that significant gaps remain between curriculum expectations and classroom implementation regarding HOTS development in Islamic Religious Education. These gaps highlight the need for comprehensive reviews that synthesize existing research and identify practical strategies for bridging the divide between educational policy and classroom practice.

METHOD

This study employed a library research method using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. The SLR approach was selected because the study aimed to identify, analyze, and synthesize previous research findings concerning the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning. Through this approach, the study examined research developments, implementation trends, instructional strategies, assessment models, and challenges related to the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of

Bloom's Taxonomy within IRE. In addition, the SLR approach facilitated the identification of research gaps and the development of a theoretical synthesis based on existing empirical evidence.

This study analyzed and synthesized previous research findings related to the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in IRE. The analysis did not only examine the contributions of previous studies but also critically evaluated their strengths and limitations. This approach was selected because the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in IRE continues to develop, particularly in relation to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), authentic assessment, and technology integration in learning environments.

The data sources consisted of previously published academic literature, including journal articles, conference proceedings, and research reports related to Bloom's Taxonomy and Islamic Religious Education. The literature search was conducted through Google Scholar using the keywords "Bloom's Taxonomy" and "Islamic Religious Education." Google Scholar was selected as the primary database because it provides access to a wide range of scholarly publications related to education and Islamic learning. The search process was conducted in May 2026 and was limited to publications from 2025 to 2026 to ensure the relevance of the reviewed studies to current developments in the Merdeka Curriculum, Bloom's Taxonomy, and Islamic Religious Education.

The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) studies discussing the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education; (2) publications issued between 2025 and 2026; (3) articles published in scholarly journals with valid DOI numbers; (4) publications written in Indonesian or English; and (5) studies directly related to the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domains of Bloom's Taxonomy in IRE learning. The exclusion criteria included: (1) studies unrelated to Islamic Religious Education; (2) non-academic or popular publications; (3) sources without clear publication information; and (4) studies that did not provide sufficient data or discussion regarding the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy.

The article selection process followed the PRISMA framework for systematic reviews. The process consisted of four stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. In the identification stage, 242 articles were retrieved from Google Scholar using predetermined search terms. Subsequently, 117 duplicate records were removed, resulting in 125 articles for title, abstract, and keyword screening. A total of 62 articles were excluded because they were not directly relevant to the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education.

During the eligibility assessment stage, 63 remaining articles were reviewed in detail. A total of 51 articles were excluded because they did not specifically discuss the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy, did not address the cognitive, affective, or psychomotor domains, or lacked sufficient research information. As a result, 12 articles met all inclusion criteria and were selected for the final analysis.

Following the selection process, a quality assessment was conducted to evaluate the credibility and relevance of the included studies. Four quality indicators were applied: (1) relevance to the research topic; (2) clarity of research methodology; (3) clarity of findings and discussion; and (4) contribution to understanding the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education. Studies that fulfilled these indicators were considered suitable for further analysis.

Data collection was conducted through several stages. First, relevant literature was identified using predetermined search keywords. Second, the retrieved articles were screened based on the relevance of their titles, abstracts, and full-text content to the research objectives. Third, selected articles were evaluated based on thematic relevance, journal quality, DOI availability, and publication recency. Priority was given to studies published in reputable journals with direct relevance to Bloom's Taxonomy-based Islamic Religious Education.

The primary research instrument was a literature synthesis matrix used to identify and categorize important information from each selected article. The extracted data included research focus, methodology, Bloom's Taxonomy domains, instructional strategies, assessment models, educational technology integration, research findings, and contributions to Islamic Religious Education learning.

Data analysis involved thematic analysis and critical analysis. Thematic analysis was used to categorize findings into four main areas: implementation of the cognitive domain, development of the affective domain, application of the psychomotor domain, and integration of technology in Islamic Religious Education. Comparative analysis was then conducted to identify similarities and differences in instructional approaches, learning strategies, and research findings across the selected studies. Finally, critical analysis was applied to examine the contributions, strengths, limitations, and emerging trends within the reviewed literature. This process provided a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education during the Merdeka Curriculum era.

To ensure research credibility and ethical compliance, all sources were cited consistently according to academic citation standards to prevent plagiarism. Complete reference information, including DOI numbers and access links, was provided for each source. However, this study had several limitations. First, the literature search was limited to the Google Scholar database, which may have excluded relevant studies indexed in other academic databases. Second, the number of studies specifically examining the integrated implementation of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education remained limited. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings and drawing conclusions from this review.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of looking for and choosing literature, which followed the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, found 12 articles that fit the criteria for being included and were important for applying Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education (IRE). The chosen studies were looked at using methods that focused on themes and critical reviews to find patterns in research, how Bloom's Taxonomy is used, teaching methods, ways to assess learning, and how technology is used in IRE teaching under the Merdeka Curriculum.

The synthesis of the selected literature indicates that the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in IRE is predominantly concentrated on the development of the cognitive domain through Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Several studies emphasize the importance of promoting critical thinking, analytical reasoning, evaluation, and problem-solving skills through HOTS-oriented learning, assessment, and instructional materials. In addition, the reviewed literature highlights the growing attention given to the affective domain through

religious character education and value internalization, as well as the psychomotor domain through practice-based and experiential learning approaches.

Additionally, the results show a growing movement towards including digital technology in IRE teaching and evaluations. Learning platforms that use technology and digital assessment tools are often used to help students stay engaged, motivated, and to improve their critical thinking skills. These results indicate that using Bloom's Taxonomy in IRE has changed from just traditional classroom teaching and is now including more digital learning spaces that match the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum.

In terms of methods, the studies that were looked at used various approaches. These included theoretical studies, qualitative research, experiments, classroom action research, research and development, case studies, and thorough reviews of literature. This variety in methods shows that Bloom's Taxonomy has been explored in IRE from both theory and real-life examples.

Table 1. Literature Synthesis on the Implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education

No	Author(s)	Research Focus	Method	Main Findings	Bloom's Domain
1	Umah (2025)	HOTS in IRE Learning	Conceptual Study	HOTS improves students' critical thinking skills	Cognitive
2	Rahmah, Wardhani, & Alwiyah (2026)	HOTS-Based Assessment in IRE	Qualitative Descriptive	HOTS assessment enhances analytical and evaluative abilities	Cognitive
3	Rahmanto, Bunyamin, & Wahjusaputri (2025)	Active Learning in IRE	Experimental Study	Active learning improves students' HOTS achievement	Cognitive
4	Apriansyah & Harto (2025)	HOTS-Based Teaching Materials	R&D	Teaching materials improve problem-solving skills	Cognitive
5	Putriana & Daswita (2025)	Bloom-Based Learning Design	Model Development	Bloom's Taxonomy facilitates instructional objective formulation	Cognitive
6	Azaliya (2025)	Affective Assessment in IRE	Case Study	Affective assessment supports religious character formation	Affective
7	Hikayat et al. (2025)	Moral Education through Social Cognitive Theory	Qualitative Study	Social cognitive approaches foster moral behavior	Affective
8	Nurfuad et al. (2025)	Think Talk Write in IRE	Experimental Study	Active learning improves student learning outcomes	Psychomotor
9	Mu'in (2025)	Problem Based Learning in Aqidah Learning	Classroom Action Research	PBL improves students' understanding of Islamic creed	Psychomotor

10	Saputri (2025)	Kahoot and HOTS Assessment	R&D	Kahoot increases engagement and supports HOTS development	Cognitive & Technology
11	Pangga et al. (2025)	Technology Bloom's Taxonomy	SLR	Technology supports digital formative and summative assessment	Technology
12	Rizza, Mutiah, & Sugali (2025)	Kahoot in IRE Learning	Qualitative Descriptive	Kahoot enhances participation and learning motivation	Technology & Affective

Source: Synthesized by the author (2026).

Based on Table 1, the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education can be classified into four major themes. First, the cognitive domain is strengthened through HOTS-oriented learning aimed at developing students' critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving abilities. Second, the affective domain is implemented through religious character education and the internalization of Islamic values. Third, the psychomotor domain is developed through practice-based and experiential learning activities that encourage students to apply Islamic teachings in real-life contexts. Fourth, technology integration supports both instructional and assessment processes by providing interactive, adaptive, and engaging learning environments.

The distribution of studies also reveals an imbalance among Bloom's domains. The cognitive domain receives the greatest scholarly attention, particularly in relation to HOTS development and assessment practices. In contrast, fewer studies focus specifically on the affective and psychomotor domains. This finding indicates that research on Bloom's Taxonomy in IRE continues to prioritize cognitive achievement, while investigations concerning character formation and practical religious skills remain comparatively limited.

Overall, the studies looked at show that using Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education within the Merdeka Curriculum is changing to a more complete method. This method brings together brain development, building religious values, learning real-life skills, and using digital technology. These results create a basis for a deeper conversation about each part of Bloom's Taxonomy and what it means for IRE learning in today's schools.

Implementation of the Cognitive Domain in Islamic Religious Education

The findings indicate that the implementation of the cognitive domain in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has developed significantly through the strengthening of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Most studies emphasize that learning should not merely focus on remembering and understanding religious concepts but should also promote students' abilities to analyze, evaluate, and create. This orientation is consistent with the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes competency-based and problem-solving learning approaches.

Umah (2025) explains that HOTS-based learning improves students' critical thinking skills in understanding religious issues contextually. This finding is supported by Rahmah, Wardhani, and Alwiyah (2026), who found that HOTS-oriented assessment encourages students to become more actively involved in analyzing and evaluating socio-religious issues. Similarly, Rahmanto, Bunyamin, and Wahjusaputri (2025) reported that active learning

strategies significantly improve student engagement and higher-order thinking skills compared with conventional lecture-based instruction. Apriansyah and Harto (2025) further demonstrated that HOTS-based teaching materials contribute positively to students' problem-solving abilities in Islamic Religious Education.

These studies collectively indicate that the successful implementation of HOTS depends on the integration of instructional strategies, assessment practices, and learning materials. Nevertheless, the literature also reveals a gap between the theoretical expectations of HOTS and classroom implementation. Several studies suggest that IRE instruction remains dominated by lower cognitive levels, particularly memorization and basic comprehension. Teachers also continue to experience difficulties in designing assessment instruments that address analysis, evaluation, and creation levels.

Practically, these findings suggest that IRE teachers should adopt more active and contextual learning models, including Problem-Based Learning, case-based discussion, and Project-Based Learning. Teachers should also strengthen their competence in developing HOTS-based assessments to ensure that learning extends beyond memorization of religious content.

Implementation of the Affective Domain in Islamic Religious Education

The affective domain relates to the development of religious personality, spiritual disposition and an incorporation of Islamic values into daily lives. The articles under review show that the affective domain is still an important aspect of Islamic education because educational achievement is not only measured by knowledge acquisition, meaning if something new was learned, but also by a change in attitudes and behavior.

Azaliya (2025) emphasizes that affective assessment plays a crucial role in measuring students' spiritual and social development systematically. The study highlights the need for assessment instruments capable of evaluating students' religious attitudes continuously. Likewise, Hikayat et al. (2025) found that a social cognitive approach effectively promotes moral behavior through role modeling, habituation, and social interaction in moral education learning.

While both studies identify character formation as a main purpose of Islamic education, the implementation approaches differ in each one. While Hikayat et al., examines the atmosphere of learning in which teachers implemented character assessment, Azaliya concentrates on affective evaluation as an instrument to observe student spiritual and social development. By: modeling by teachers, interaction with others, and trained practice These variances suggest that efficient and sustainable assessment mechanisms need to be paired with instructional strategies.

It can be seen from a critical analysis that the realization of affective domain continues to have limitations associated with assessment objectivity. Teachers continue to employ subjective and administrative assessment of the attitudes of students. There is no way of assessing whether there has been any change in their characters. Existing research also does not offer adequate measurement of the impact of such education programs.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results can be linked to Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura, who contends that behavior is learned by observing, imitating, and being habituated. In terms of Islamic education, the affective area represents tahdzib al-akhlaq, which emphasizes the importance of morals as the primary focus of education.

Implementation of the Psychomotor Domain in Islamic Religious Education

The psychomotor domain is associated with practical religious skills and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. The literature indicates that practice-based learning is more effective in helping students understand and apply Islamic teachings than learning approaches that rely solely on theory and memorization.

Nurfuad et al. (2025) found that the Think Talk Write model improves learning outcomes through active and collaborative learning activities. Similarly, Mu'in (2025) reported that Problem-Based Learning enhances students' understanding of Islamic creed through direct learning experiences and contextual problem-solving.

Both studies suggest that active learning experiences play a central role in psychomotor development. However, they differ in instructional emphasis. Nurfuad et al. focus on communication and collaboration activities, whereas Mu'in emphasizes problem-solving based on authentic experiences. These differences suggest that various instructional models can effectively support psychomotor development as long as students actively participate in the learning process.

Despite these positive findings, research on the psychomotor domain remains relatively limited compared with research on cognitive development. Practical learning in IRE is still largely confined to formal worship practices and has not sufficiently addressed social, leadership, and collaborative competencies required in the twenty-first century.

Theoretically, these results can be related to Experiential Learning Theory proposed by David Kolb, who underlines that learning occurs through direct experience. In the field of Islamic education, psychomotor learning is very similar to the idea of amal, which means applying knowledge to practice.

Technology Integration and Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education

Technological developments have significantly influenced the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education. The reviewed studies indicate that digital media support HOTS development, increase learning motivation, and broaden access to learning opportunities.

Saputri (2025) found that the use of Kahoot in IRE enhances student engagement while supporting the development of HOTS-based assessment items. This finding is reinforced by Rizza, Mutiah, and Sugali (2025), who reported that Kahoot increases participation, motivation, and classroom interaction during the learning process. Furthermore, Pangga et al. (2025) demonstrated that Technology Bloom's Taxonomy assists teachers in designing more systematic digital assessments that align with students' cognitive levels.

The implication drawn from the study is that technology does not only entail the use of instructional media but involves the development of an effective online assessment system for fostering higher-order thinking skills. It should be noted that many obstacles are faced in implementing the concept of technology integration effectively.

In theory, all these results are well-aligned with Digital Learning Theory since according to this theory technology facilitates flexibility, interactivity, and learner-centeredness in learning. In the context of Islamic education, technology can be used as an efficient medium of learning provided it does not contradict ethical principles.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam / PAI) learning during the Merdeka Curriculum era through a Systematic Literature Review of twelve selected studies published between 2025 and 2026. The findings provided direct answers to the research questions. First, the implementation of the cognitive domain was predominantly reflected through the integration of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), active learning strategies, HOTS-oriented assessments, and the development of learning materials that promoted critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving abilities. Second, the implementation of the affective domain was achieved through character education, moral development, affective assessment, and the internalization of Islamic values through modeling, habituation, and social interaction. Third, the psychomotor domain was developed through practice-based learning, collaborative activities, experiential learning, and problem-solving activities, which encouraged learners to apply Islamic teachings in real-world contexts. Fourth, technology integration played an important role in supporting the implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy by facilitating interactive learning and assessment through digital tools such as Kahoot.

The study contributed theoretically by strengthening the relevance of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy proposed by Anderson and Krathwohl within the context of Islamic Religious Education under the Merdeka Curriculum. The findings demonstrated that the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains should not be treated as separate learning outcomes but as interconnected dimensions that collectively support holistic student development. Furthermore, this review extended the discussion of Bloom's Taxonomy by incorporating technology integration as a complementary element that enhanced learning effectiveness and assessment practices. Practically, the findings provided guidance for teachers, curriculum developers, and educational institutions in designing PAI learning that integrates HOTS-oriented instruction, character formation, experiential learning, and digital technology in a balanced and systematic manner.

The implications of this study suggest that effective implementation of Bloom's Taxonomy in PAI requires an integrative framework that simultaneously develops critical thinking skills, religious character, practical competencies, and digital literacy. Such integration aligns with the broader goals of Islamic education, which emphasize the harmony between knowledge, values, and practice. However, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of the reviewed literature. This study was limited to publications from 2025 to 2026 retrieved through Google Scholar, which may not represent all relevant research on the topic. In addition, the reviewed studies showed a stronger emphasis on the cognitive domain compared with the affective and psychomotor dimensions. Therefore, future research should further investigate the long-term implementation of integrated Bloom's Taxonomy in Islamic Religious Education, particularly regarding character formation, authentic assessment, and the utilization of educational technology.

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