Attanwir : Jurnal Keislaman dan Pendidikan
Volume 14 (2) September 2023
e-ISSN: 2599-3062 p-ISSN: 2252-5238
Available at: http://e-jurnal.staiattanwir.ac.id/index.php/attanwir/index

Transformation of The Independent Curriculum: Strengthening the Islamic Dimension in Islamic Education

Sahri
sahriunugiri@gmail.com
Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, Bojonegoro, Indonesia

Abstract: *The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the implementation of the independent curriculum in the context of Islamic religious education with a focus on strengthening the Islamic dimension. type / research approach in the form of Library Research. Literature research is a research method carried out by collecting and analyzing various relevant literature sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, and other documents, in order to answer research questions or gain a deeper understanding of a particular topic or issue. The results of the Independent Curriculum Transfomrasi research to strengthen the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education, namely a). the concept and essence of the independent curriculum; b) The need to strengthen the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education; c) Independent curriculum approach and strategy in Islamic religious education; d) implications and challenges in strengthening the Islamic dimension through the Merdeka Curriculum.*

keyword: *Transformation, Independent Curriculum, Islamic dimension*

Introduction

Islamic Religious Education is a learning system that aims to provide understanding, appreciation, and practice of Islamic teachings to students [1]. This approach to Islamic religious education involves teaching about Islamic religious teachings, ethics, morals, values, and worship practices adopted by Muslims. Islamic religious education has a central role in shaping the character, values, and identity of strong Muslims. Islamic religious education aims to equip students with deep knowledge and understanding of religious teachings, as well as encourage them to live and practice Islamic values in everyday life.

In the era of increasingly dynamic curriculum development, the concept of the Independent Curriculum emerged which emphasizes flexibility, freedom, and relevance in curriculum design. Curriculum development is influenced by a variety of factors, including the development of knowledge and technology, social change, the needs of learners, the demands of the world of work, and education policy. The purpose of curriculum development is to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and responsiveness to learners' needs and environmental demands. The Merdeka Curriculum enables educational institutions to adapt and integrate local needs and strengthen the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education[2].

Curriculum transformation can involve changes in curriculum structure, addition or subtraction of learning materials, development of innovative learning methods and approaches, integration of technology in learning, increased focus on 21st century skills, and empowerment of learners as active subjects in the learning process. The curriculum transformation process typically involves the participation of various stakeholders, including educators, curriculum experts, learners, parents, and the community. Collaboration and active involvement from all parties are key in achieving successful and effective curriculum transformation[3].

Curriculum transformation refers to fundamental changes made to the existing curriculum [4]. This transformation aims to produce a curriculum that is more relevant, adaptive, and responsive to the needs of learners and environmental demands. Curriculum transformation involves a thorough evaluation process of the existing curriculum, identification of deficiencies or weaknesses, and development of strategies and corrective measures. The transformation of the Merdeka Curriculum aims to strengthen the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education, so that students can develop a deeper understanding of religious teachings and internalize Islamic values in

[1] Arsyad Arsyad, Wahyu Bagja Sulfemi, and Tia Fajartriani, "Penguatan Motivasi Shalat Dan Karakter Peserta Didik Melalui Pendekatan Pembelajaran Kontekstual Pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *POTENSIA: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2020): 185–204.

[2] Neny Muthi'atul Awwaliyah, "Pondok Pesantren Sebagai Wadah Moderasi Islam Di Era Generasi Millenial," *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset Dan Kajian Keislaman* 8, no. 1 (2019): 36–62.

[3] John Mendy, Maria Madiope, and others, "Curriculum Transformation: A Case in South Africa," *Perspectives in Education* 38, no. 2 (2020): 1–19.

[4] Satria Kharimul Qolbi and Tasman Hamami, "Impelementasi Asas-Asas Pengembangan Kurikulum Terhadap Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 3, no. 4 (2021): 1120–32.

everyday life. In this context, it is important to explore effective approaches and strategies in integrating the Islamic dimension in the Merdeka Curriculum[5].

In this approach, the role of Islamic religious education is very important in shaping the character, values, and identity of strong Muslims [6]. Islamic religious education is expected to be able to guide students to understand and internalize religious teachings holistically, and apply them in every aspect of their lives.

However, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum with a focus on the Islamic dimension is not without challenges[7]. Some challenges such as limited resources, resistance to change, or differences in religious interpretations can affect the implementation process. Therefore, the right strategy is needed to overcome these challenges and ensure success in strengthening the Islamic dimension through the Merdeka Curriculum. Through the transformation of the Independent Curriculum that strengthens the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education, it is hoped that a generation of Muslims who have noble morals, are knowledgeable about Islamic religious teachings, and are able to apply Islamic values in everyday life [8]. The positive implications of strengthening this dimension of Islam can have far-reaching impacts, both for individual Muslims and society as a whole.

With this background, it is important to explore more about the concepts, approaches, strategies, and research results related to the Transformation of the Independent Curriculum: Strengthening the Islamic Dimension in Islamic Religious Education. This will provide a deeper understanding of how the Merdeka Curriculum can be an effective means in strengthening the Islamic dimension and achieving the goals of Islamic religious education.

Methods

research approach in the form of Library Research. Literature research is a research method carried out by collecting and analyzing various relevant literature sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, and other documents, in order to answer research questions or gain a deeper understanding of a particular topic or issue [9]. Literature research is carried out by reading, reviewing, and analyzing existing literature on the topic that is the focus of research.

The stages carried out in conducting this literature research go through the PRISMA stages, namely identifying eligibility criteria, defining information sources, literature selection, data collection and selection of data items. The data analysis technique used in this research is a descriptive method, which is research that seeks to

[5] Rahmat Ryadhush Shalihin, "Enhancing the Islamic Education in Kurikulum Merdeka through International Benchmarking: A Transdisciplinary Study," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan* 9, no. 01 (2023): 1–16.

[6] M Arif Khoiruddin and Dina Dahniary Sholekah, "Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa," *PEDAGOGIK: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2019): 123–44.

[7] Imroatus Solikhah, "Revisiting the EFL Curriculum in the Outcome-Based Education Framework and Freedom to Learn Program," *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 13, no. 2 (2022): 243–64.

[8] Eva Syarifatul Jamilah and others, "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Merdeka Belajar Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *HEUTAGOGIA: Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 1 (2022): 83–96.

[9] Evanirosa Andan et al., *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan (Library Research)*, Cet. I (Bandung: Media Sains Indonesia, 2022).

describe and interpret what exists, growing opinions, ongoing processes, consequences or effects that occur or trends that develop[10].

Result and Discussion

A. Concept and Essence of the Independent Curriculum

In the context of Islamic religious education, the independent curriculum refers to an educational approach that gives freedom to students to develop understanding, appreciation, and practice of Islam independently. This means that the independent curriculum provides space for students to take an active role in the learning process, choose content and learning methods that suit their interests and needs, and develop an understanding of Islam that is in accordance with their beliefs and personal choices [11]. In the independent curriculum, learners not only become passive recipients of information, but also become active subjects in the learning process. They are given the freedom to develop their own understanding and appreciation of Islam through exploration, research, reflection, and dialogue. Students can delve deeper into the teachings of Islam, relate them to real-life contexts, and apply Islamic values in their daily experiences[12].

The independent curriculum in Islamic religious education also encourages students to understand and appreciate the diversity of Islamic interpretations and develop an inclusive attitude and tolerance towards differences [13]. Students are given the freedom to explore various Islamic points of view and build their own understanding by gaining access to a variety of different sources of knowledge, literature, and views of scholars.

In essence, the independent curriculum in Islamic religious education provides students with freedom, independence, and active participation in developing their understanding, appreciation, and practice of Islam in accordance with personal beliefs and choices [14]. It aims to provide educational experiences that are meaningful, relevant, and strengthen the Islamic dimension in the lives of students.

According to BSNP or the National Education Standards Agency, the definition of the independent learning curriculum is a learning curriculum related to the approach of talents and interests. Here, students (both male and female) can choose the subjects they want to study according to their talents and interests. The Objectives of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education (a) Strengthening Islamic understanding: The independent curriculum aims to strengthen students' understanding of Islamic religious teachings. Through an approach that gives freedom to students, they can explore a deeper understanding of Islamic concepts, Islamic religious

---

[10] Sumanto, *Teori Dan Metode Penelitian* (Yogyakarta: CAPS (center of Academic Publishing Service, 2014).

[11] Muhammad Minan Zuhri and others, "Arah Baru Pengembangan Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah (Telaah Kurikulum Dan Model Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam)," *QUALITY* 1, no. 1 (2017): 162–82.

[12] Toni Ardi Rafsanjani and Muhammad Abdur Razaq, "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Terhadap Perkembangan Anak Di Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah Kriyan Jepara," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 2019, 16–29.

[13] Mualimul Huda, "Eksistensi Pesantren Dan Deradikalisasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 3, no. 1 (2018): 85–109.

[14] Hamzah Junaid, "Sumber, Azas Dan Landasan Pendidikan (Kajian Fungsionalisasi Secara Makro Dan Mikro Terhadap Rumusan Kebijakan Pendidikan Nasional)," *Sulesana: Jurnal Wawasan Keislaman* 7, no. 2 (2012): 84–102.

teachings, and moral principles contained therein; (b) Increase Islamic appreciation: The independent curriculum also aims to encourage students' Islamic appreciation. By providing freedom and active participation to students in the development of Islamic understanding and practice, they can deepen and internalize Islamic religious values so that they have a real influence in daily life; (c) Strengthening Islamic identity: The independent curriculum in Islamic religious education aims to help students strengthen their Islamic identity. In a context that provides freedom and active participation, learners have the opportunity to understand, explore, and develop their own Islamic identity by integrating Islamic religious values in all aspects of their lives; (d) Preparing a generation of Muslims with noble morals: One of the main objectives of the independent curriculum in Islamic religious education is to prepare a generation of Muslims who have noble morals[15]. By integrating Islamic values and principles in the curriculum, learners can gain a solid understanding of ethics, morality, and actions that are in accordance with the teachings of the Islamic religion.

The concept and essence of the independent curriculum is the theoretical foundation that forms the basis of an educational approach that emphasizes freedom, independence, and active participation of students [16]. The following is a further explanation of the concept and essence of the independent curriculum:

1. Freedom
   Freedom is one of the main principles in the concept of an independent curriculum. In the context of Islamic religious education, freedom means giving freedom to students to develop their potential to the maximum, including understanding, appreciation, and practice of Islam [17]. The independent curriculum respects the freedom of individuals to choose and explore Islamic values and practices in accordance with their beliefs and personal choices.
2. Independence
   Independence refers to the ability of learners to be active subjects in the learning process. The independent curriculum provides space for learners to take an active role in designing, implementing, and evaluating their own learning process[18]. In Islamic religious education, independence provides opportunities for students to explore their own Islamic knowledge and understanding through research, reflection, and exploration.
3. Active Participation
   Active participation emphasizes the importance of learner involvement in the learning process [19]. In the independent curriculum, students are encouraged to actively participate in learning activities, such as discussion, collaboration, and

[15] Imam Tabroni and Akbar Miftahur Romdhon, "The Influence of Islamic Religious Education on the Student's Conduct," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Madani* 2, no. 2 (2022): 787–94.

[16] Mohamad Rifqi Hamzah et al., "Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Sebagai Wujud Pendidikan Yang Memerdekakan Peserta Didik," *Arus Jurnal Pendidikan* 2, no. 3 (2022): 221–26.

[17] Mahmud Arif, "Pendidikan Agama Islam Inklusifmultikultural," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–18.

[18] Siti Wahyuni, "Kurikulum Merdeka Untuk Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 6 (2022): 13404–8.

[19] Emmeria Tarihoran, "Guru Dalam Pengajaran Abad 21," *SAPA-Jurnal Kateketik Dan Pastoral* 4, no. 1 (2019): 21.

sharing experiences. In the context of Islamic religious education, active participation can include various activities, such as the practice of worship, the application of Islamic values in daily life, and contributions in social and community activities.

4. Integration of islamic Values

   One of the essences of the independent curriculum in Islamic religious education is the integration of Islamic values into the learning process. The independent curriculum can integrate Islamic religious teachings, ethics, and principles in every aspect of learning[20]. It aims to form learners who have a deep understanding of the religion of Islam and are able to apply Islamic values in their lives.

In the concept and essence of the independent curriculum, Islamic religious education can be more dynamic, interactive, and relevant to the needs of students[21]. Students are given the freedom to develop their Islamic identity, the independence to take an active role in learning, and the opportunity to participate in concrete Islamic practices. Thus, the concept and essence of an independent curriculum can strengthen the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education.

B. The Need to Strengthen the Islamic Dimension in Islamic Education

Strengthening the Islamic Dimension refers to efforts to strengthen Islamic aspects in Islamic religious education [22]. This involves a greater emphasis on understanding, internalizing, and applying the teachings of Islam in the learning process. Strengthening the Islamic dimension aims to form students who have a deep understanding of Islam, practice religious values and principles in everyday life, and have a strong Islamic identity[23]. In the era of an independent curriculum, there are several needs that need to be considered to strengthen the Islamic dimension in the Islamic religious education curriculum. Here are some of those needs:

1. Strengthening Deep Islamic Understanding: The Islamic religious education curriculum needs to provide a deep understanding of Islamic religious teachings, including an understanding of Islamic concepts and principles, Islamic history, Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, fiqh (Islamic law), and akidah (belief). This deep understanding will provide a solid foundation for students to develop their understanding and appreciation of Islam.
2. Development of Critical Thinking Skills: The Islamic religious education curriculum needs to involve learners in the development of critical thinking skills related to Islamic understanding and practice[24]. Students need to be invited to question, analyze, and reflect on the teachings of Islam using a logical, rational,

[20] Deden Heri and Uus Ruswandi, "Konsep Integrasi Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Pada Lembaga Pendidikan," *Jurnal Dirosah Islamiyah* 4, no. 2 (2022): 255–67.

[21] Imam Fuadi, Ahmad Tanzeh, and others, "Implementation Of Prophetic Education In Building Religious And Social Culture At Al Fattah Islamic High School," *Re-JIEM (Research Journal of Islamic Education Management)* 6, no. 1 (2023): 18–28.

[22] Ahmad Zain Sarnoto and Taufiq Nugroho, "Dimensi Mutu Dalam Pendidikan Sekolah," *Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman "Ulumuddin"* 5, no. 1 (2015): 48–57.

[23] Garbi Schmidt, "Islamic Identity Formation among Young Muslims: The Case of Denmark, Sweden and the United States," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 24, no. 1 (2004): 31–45.

[24] Tariq Elyas and Michelle Picard, "Saudi Arabian Educational History: Impacts on English Language Teaching," *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues* 3, no. 2 (2010): 135–45.

and based approach based on religious propositions. This will help learners understand the teachings of religion more deeply and apply them wisely in daily life.

3. Integration of Islamic Values in the Contemporary Context: The Islamic religious education curriculum needs to integrate Islamic values in the context of contemporary life. Students need to learn how to apply Islamic values in challenges and problems faced in everyday life, including in terms of morality, ethics, social relations, environment, technology, and social justice. It will help learners understand the relevance of Islamic values in the present context and prepare them to be responsible individuals and contribute positively to society.
4. Interactive and Participatory Learning: Islamic religious education curriculum needs to encourage interactive and participatory learning, where learners are actively involved in the learning process[25]. Students need to be invited to discuss, collaborate, share experiences, and participate in practical activities that encourage deeper understanding and appreciation of Islam. This can be done through learning methods that involve group activities, simulations, role plays, independent research, or real experiences in the community.
5. Development of Tolerance and Inclusivity: The Islamic religious education curriculum needs to encourage the development of an attitude of tolerance and inclusivity towards differences. Students need to be invited to understand the diversity of Islamic interpretations and respect differences in worship practices and religious views. This will help learners become individuals who value diversity and are able to live harmoniously in a multicultural society[26].

By paying attention to these needs, the Islamic religious education curriculum in the era of the independent curriculum can be more effective in strengthening the Islamic dimension, enriching students' understanding and appreciation of Islamic religious teachings, and forming Muslim characters with integrity and commitment to Islamic religious values.

Religious education can transform ignorant people into good people. Islamic education is characterized by the formation of a complete and comprehensive understanding of Islam, the maintenance of what he has learned, the development of the knowledge he has gained and to stay on the rails of sharia. The results of Islamic education will form a calm soul, intelligent mind and strong physique and a lot of charity. Integrated Islamic education in spiritual education, fikriyah and amaliyah (activities)[27]. Islamic religious education plays a very important role in shaping the character, values, and identity of strong Muslims. Here are some of the main roles of Islamic religious education in this regard:

---

[25] Muh Syaiful Romadhon, Amalia Rahmah, and Yekti Wirani, "Blended Learning System Using Social Media for College Student: A Case of Tahsin Education," *Procedia Computer Science* 161 (2019): 160–67.

[26] Jānis (John) Tālivaldis Ozoliņš, "Creating Public Values: Schools as Moral Habitats," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 42, no. 4 (2010): 410–23.

[27] Sinta Rahmadania, Ajun Junaedi Sitika, and Astuti Darmayanti, "Peran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Keluarga Dan Masyarakat," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 5, no. 2 (2021): 221–26.

1. Understanding and Practicing Islamic Teachings
   Islamic religious education provides a deep understanding of the teachings of Islam, including about beliefs (akidah), laws (fiqh), morals, and moral values of Islam. Students learn to understand and practice these teachings in daily life, thus forming a good Muslim character[28].
2. Morality and Ethics
   Islamic religious education teaches Islamic moral and ethical values which include honesty, justice, patience, compassion, help, and so on [29]. Learners learn to use these values as a guide in acting and interacting with fellow human beings. Thus, Islamic religious education helps to form a character of integrity and responsibility.
3. Strong Islamic Identity
   Islamic religious education strengthens the Islamic identity of students by providing an understanding of Islamic teachings, history, culture, and traditions [30]. Students learn to appreciate and maintain their Islamic identity, and realize the importance of being part of Muslims who play an active role in society.
4. Spiritual Awareness
   Islamic religious education helps learners to develop a deeper spiritual awareness [31]. They are taught to have a strong relationship with Allah Almighty through worship, prayer, dhikr, and self-reflection. This spiritual awareness helps learners to seek inner calm, increase faith, and understand the higher purpose of life.
5. Tolerance and Justice
   Islamic religious education teaches the principles of tolerance, brotherhood, and justice in Islam [32]. Learners are taught to respect differences and treat everyone fairly regardless of ethnicity, religion, race, or other background. This helps shape the character of Muslims who have an inclusive attitude and are able to live in harmony with a diverse society.

With the role of strong Islamic religious education, it is hoped that students can become individuals with noble morals, have a strong Islamic identity, and contribute positively to building a just and harmonious society.

---

[28] Derliani Daulay, "Implementasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan Di Sekolah Menengah Atas Al-Azhar Medan," *ANSIRU PAI: Pengembangan Profesi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 2 (2019): 1–19.

[29] Ahmad Asroni, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Buku Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti Kelas VI Sekolah Dasar/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah," in *Renjana Pendidikan: Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Dasar*, vol. 2, 2021, 61–72.

[30] Hisyam Muhammad Fiqyh Aladdiin and Alaika M Bagus Kurnia Ps, "Peran Materi Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah Dalam Membentuk Karakter Kebangsaan," *Jurnal Penelitian Medan Agama* 10, no. 2 (2019).

[31] A Suradi, "Penanaman Religiusitas Keislaman Berorientasi Pada Pendidikan Multikultural Di Sekolah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 6, no. 1 (2018): 25–43.

[32] Husnul Khotimah, "Internalisasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Kurikulum Pesantren," *Rabbani: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 1 (2020): 62–68.

C. Approach and Strategy for Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Education

Approach refers to a method or method used in dealing with a problem or achieving a goal [33]. Strategy is a design of activities used to achieve a certain goal. While the implementation strategy of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka curriculum is a design of activities to implement the independent campus learning curriculum so that it can be effective and efficient[34]. The approach and strategy of implementing the Independent Curriculum refers to the methods and approaches used in implementing and implementing the curriculum. This involves concrete steps designed to ensure the goals and principles of the Independent Curriculum are effectively achieved[35].

The approach and strategy in the implementation concept of the Independent Curriculum aims to create an effective, relevant, and positively impactful learning environment for students. By choosing the right approach and strategy, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can increase students' understanding, appreciation, and practice of Islam in Islamic religious education[36]. To integrate the Islamic dimension in the Merdeka Curriculum, an effective approach and strategy are needed. The following are some approaches and strategies that can be used:

1. Learner-Centered Approach: This approach places learners as the main subject in the learning proces[37]s. The teacher acts as a facilitator who helps students build an active understanding and appreciation of Islam. This approach involves students in collaborative activities, self-reflection, and the application of Islamic concepts in the context of their lives.
2. Practicum and Real Experience Approach: This approach involves learners in direct practice, simulation, or field trips related to Islamic religious teachings[38]. Students are given the opportunity to apply Islamic concepts and values in real situations. This helps strengthen students' understanding and appreciation of Islam through direct experience.
3. Inclusive Approach: This approach pays attention to the diversity of students in the context of Islamic religious education[39]. Teachers develop learning strategies

---

[33] Nawiroh Vera, "Strategi Komunikasi Dosen Dan Mahasiswa Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran Daring Selama Pandemik Covid-19," *Avant Garde* 8, no. 2 (2020): 165–77.

[34] Henni Anggraini et al., "Strategi Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Berbasis Individual Differences," *Jurnal Ilmiah Potensia* 7, no. 1 (2022): 64–74.

[35] Ahmad Teguh Purnawanto, "Perencanakan Pembelajaran Bermakna Dan Asesmen Kurikulum Merdeka," *JURNAL PEDAGOGY* 15, no. 1 (2022): 75–94.

[36] Pat Kurniati et al., "Model Proses Inovasi Kurikulum Merdeka Implikasinya Bagi Siswa Dan Guru Abad 21," *Jurnal Citizenship Virtues* 2, no. 2 (2022): 21.

[37] Abdullah Abdullah, "Pendekatan Dan Model Pembelajaran Yang Mengaktifkan Siswa," *EDURELIGIA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 1 (2017): 45–62.

[38] Firman Mansir and Abdul Karim, "Islamic Education Learning Approaches in Shaping Students' Emotional Intelligence in the Digital Age," *Hayula: Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2020): 67–86.

[39] Amiruddin Amiruddin, Askar Askar, and Yusra Yusra, "Development of Islamic Religious Education Learning Model Based on Multicultural Values," *International Journal Of Contemporary Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (2019): 1–19.

that can accommodate the needs and backgrounds of students inclusively. This approach reinforces respect for differences, promotes respectful understanding, and creates an inclusive learning environment.

4. Integrative Approach: This approach integrates various aspects of students' lives with Islamic religious teachings[40]. Teachers connect learning materials with students' daily lives, including in social, cultural, and technological contexts. This helps learners see the relevance and practical application of Islamic religious teachings in their lives.

The strategy of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic religious education also involves concrete steps [41], such as the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in learning, the development of relevant and interesting teaching materials, community and stakeholder involvement in the learning process, and optimal use of available resources. The choice of approaches and strategies in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic religious education must consider the characteristics of students, the objectives of Islamic religious education to be achieved, as well as the context and needs of schools or educational institutions[42]. The main objective is to strengthen students' understanding, appreciation, and practice of Islam through relevant and meaningful learning experiences.

By applying this approach and strategy, it is hoped that the Islamic dimension in the Merdeka Curriculum can be effectively integrated, provide a deep understanding of Islam, and encourage students to live and practice the teachings of Islam in everyday life.

D. Implications and Challenges in Strengthening the Islamic Dimension through the Independent Curriculum

Strengthening the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education through the Merdeka Curriculum has several positive implications that can form a generation of Muslims with noble and knowledgeable morals, including:

1. Formation of Noble Morals

   Focusing on the Islamic dimension in the independent curriculum can help students develop noble morals in accordance with Islamic religious teachings [43]. They will be taught values such as honesty, patience, hard work, empathy, tolerance, and mutual respect. With a deep understanding and appreciation of Islamic teachings, students will be able to internalize these values in everyday life and form a noble character.

2. Deep Religious Understanding

[40] Mala Komalasari and Abu Bakar Yakubu, "Implementation of Student Character Formation Through Islamic Religious Education," *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education Journal* 2, no. 1 (2023): 52–64.

[41] Moh Yusuf Efendi and Fahru Rozi, "Strategi Pembelajaran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Menghadapi Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Di MAN 4 Bojonegoro Jawa Timur," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 6 (2022): 7731–37.

[42] Zulkifli Lubis and Dewi Anggraeni, "Paradigma Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Era Globalisasi Menuju Pendidik Profesional," *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 15, no. 1 (2019): 133–53.

[43] Yekti Ardianti and Nur Amalia, "Kurikulum Merdeka: Pemaknaan Merdeka Dalam Perencanaan Pembelajaran Di Sekolah Dasar," *Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Pendidikan* 6, no. 3 (2022).

Strengthening the Islamic dimension in the independent curriculum provides opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of Islam [44]. They will study the teachings of Islam with a broader and deeper context, including an understanding of tawhid, worship, ethics, history, and the life of the apostle. This deep understanding helps students strengthen their beliefs and build a solid scientific foundation of Islam.

3. Extensive Knowledge of Islam
   The independent curriculum that strengthens the Islamic dimension also encourages students to acquire extensive knowledge about Islam[45]. They will learn about various aspects of religion, including theology, Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, the history of the development of Islam, Islamic law, and the development of Islamic thought. This broad knowledge helps learners become more informed and able to dialogue comprehensively about the religion of Islam with a deep understanding.
4. Critical and Analytical Thinking Skills
   In strengthening the Islamic dimension, the independent curriculum also encourages students to develop critical and analytical thinking skills [46]. They are taught to analyze Qur'anic verses, interpret religious texts, understand the historical context, and consider the practical implications of Islamic religious teachings. These critical thinking skills help learners to explore the deeper meaning of religious teachings and apply them intelligently in their lives.
5. Strengthening a Strong Muslim Identity
   Strengthening the Islamic dimension in the independent curriculum also contributes to strengthening the Muslim identity of students. They will feel more connected to the teachings of Islam, recognize distinctive Islamic values and practices, and build a sense of pride in their identity as Muslims. A strong Muslim identity helps learners maintain their true selves in the face of challenges and strengthens bonds with the wider Muslim community[47].

With the strengthening of the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education through an independent curriculum, positive implications such as the formation of noble morals, deep religious understanding, broad knowledge of Islam, critical thinking skills, and strengthening Muslim identity can form a generation of Muslims with noble and knowledgeable morals[48]. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum with a focus

[44] Qurroti A'yun et al., "Penerapan Nilai Iman, Takwa Dan Akhlak Mulia Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dalam Membentuk Karakter Islami Siswa," *Tawazun: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 1 (2023): 9–20.

[45] Muhamad Taufik, "Strategic Role of Islamic Religious Education in Strengthening Character Education in the Era of Industrial Revolution 4.0," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 20, no. 1 (2020): 86–104.

[46] Wiryanto Wiryanto and Garin Ocshela Anggraini, "Analisis Pendidikan Humanistik Ki Hajar Dewantara Dalam Konsep Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar," *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan* 15, no. 1 (2022): 33–45.

[47] Rika Riyanti, "Moderasi Sebagai Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Pancasila Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum," *Adiba: Journal Of Education* 2, no. 1 (2022): 109–21.

[48] Sahri Sahri, Asrof Syafi'i, and Sokip Sokip, "Direction and Strategy of Islamic Education Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia," *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 20, no. 1 (2023).

on the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education can face several challenges, including:

1. Limited Resources: One of the main challenges is limited resources, both in terms of technology infrastructure, software, and the expertise of educators[49]. Not all schools have adequate access to the technology and digital resources needed to implement innovative learning methods. In addition, training and professional development for teachers in using ICT in learning may also be limited.
2. Resistance to Change: The introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum with a focus on the Islamic dimension can face resistance to change from various parties, including teachers, parents, or educational institutions[50]. Some may doubt or not believe in the benefits or relevance of using ICTs in Islamic religious education. They may find existing traditional methods quite effective and be reluctant to adopt new changes.
3. Different Religious Interpretations: Islam has a variety of different schools and interpretations[51]. This can pose challenges in implementing the Islamic dimension in the Merdeka Curriculum, especially if there are differences in views in interpreting religious teachings. It is important for educational institutions to ensure that the interpretations taught in the curriculum remain in accordance with the generally accepted framework of Islamic teachings and avoid controversy or polarization.
4. Adaptation to the Local Environment: The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum with a focus on the Islamic dimension must also consider the social, cultural, and local environmental context[52]. Each region or community may have different characteristics, traditions, or Islamic practices. Therefore, it is necessary to make appropriate adjustments and adaptations so that the material and learning approach are in accordance with the needs and realities of the local community.

To overcome these challenges, collaboration between governments, educational institutions, and relevant stakeholders is needed. The provision of adequate resources, training for educators in using ICT, open dialogue with religious communities, and thoughtful adaptation to the local context can help overcome obstacles in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum with a focus on the Islamic dimension of Islamic religious education

[49] Asriani Alimuddin et al., "Teknologi Dalam Pendidikan: Membantu Siswa Beradaptasi Dengan Revolusi Industri 4.0," *Journal on Education* 5, no. 4 (2023): 11777–90.

[50] Senata Adi Prasetia, Siti Firqo Najiyah, and others, "The Revitalization of Education Character in The Pandemic Covid-19 Era," *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 1 (2021): 95–110.

[51] Abdulai Abukari, "Education of Women in Islam: A Critical Islamic Interpretation of the Quran," *Religious Education* 109, no. 1 (2014): 4–23.

[52] Zulhamri Abdullah, "Cultural Diversity Management in Malaysia: A Perspective of Communication Management," *Managing Cultural Diversity in Asia: A Research Companion*, 2010, 14–38.

Conclusion

Strengthening the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education is the main goal. This can be achieved by integrating Islamic religious teachings holistically in the curriculum, enriching the learning experience of learners through active, collaborative, and reflective learning, and utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) to facilitate innovative and engaging Islamic religious learning. However, the implementation of an independent curriculum with a focus on the Islamic dimension also faces several challenges. These challenges include limited resources, resistance to change, and differences in religious interpretations. To overcome this challenge, strong support from all stakeholders is needed, including government, educational institutions, teachers, parents, and communities.

Nevertheless, strengthening the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education through an independent curriculum has significant positive implications. This includes the formation of a generation of Muslims who are noble, knowledgeable, and able to face the challenges of the times with strong Islamic faith and values. The implementation of an independent curriculum can also contribute to strengthening Muslim identity and building a more harmonious and quality society. This research emphasizes the importance of transforming the independent curriculum in strengthening the Islamic dimension in Islamic religious education. With proper implementation and strong support, the independent curriculum can be an effective instrument to form a generation of Muslims who are noble, knowledgeable, and have a strong identity in the foundation of Islam.

References

Abdullah, Abdullah. "Pendekatan Dan Model Pembelajaran Yang Mengaktifkan Siswa." *EDURELIGIA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 1 (2017): 45–62.

Abdullah, Zulhamri. "Cultural Diversity Management in Malaysia: A Perspective of Communication Management." *Managing Cultural Diversity in Asia: A Research Companion*, 2010, 14–38.

Abukari, Abdulai. "Education of Women in Islam: A Critical Islamic Interpretation of the Quran." *Religious Education* 109, no. 1 (2014): 4–23.

Aladdiin, Hisyam Muhammad Fiqyh, and Alaika M Bagus Kurnia Ps. "Peran Materi Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah Dalam Membentuk Karakter Kebangsaan." *Jurnal Penelitian Medan Agama* 10, no. 2 (2019).

Alimuddin, Asriani, Justin Niaga Siman Juntak, R Ayu Erni Jusnita, Indri Murniawaty, and Hilda Yunita Wono. "Teknologi Dalam Pendidikan: Membantu Siswa Beradaptasi Dengan Revolusi Industri 4.0." *Journal on Education* 5, no. 4 (2023): 11777–90.

Amiruddin, Amiruddin, Askar Askar, and Yusra Yusra. "Development of Islamic Religious Education Learning Model Based on Multicultural Values." *International Journal Of Contemporary Islamic Education* 1, no. 1 (2019): 1–19.

Andan, Evanirosa, Christina Bagenda, hasnawati, and Fauzana Annova. *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan (Library Research)*. Cet. I. Bandung: Media Sains Indonesia, 2022.

Anggraini, Henni, Sarah Emmanuel Haryono, Siti Muntomimah, Rina Wijayanti, Mochammad Ramli Akbar, and others. "Strategi Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Berbasis Individual Differences." *Jurnal Ilmiah Potensia* 7, no. 1 (2022): 64–74.

Ardianti, Yekti, and Nur Amalia. "Kurikulum Merdeka: Pemaknaan Merdeka Dalam Perencanaan Pembelajaran Di Sekolah Dasar." *Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Pendidikan* 6, no. 3 (2022).

Arif, Mahmud. "Pendidikan Agama Islam Inklusifmultikultural." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–18.

Arsyad, Arsyad, Wahyu Bagja Sulfemi, and Tia Fajartriani. "Penguatan Motivasi Shalat Dan Karakter Peserta Didik Melalui Pendekatan Pembelajaran Kontekstual Pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam." *POTENSIA: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2020): 185–204.

Asroni, Ahmad. "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Buku Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti Kelas VI Sekolah Dasar/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah." In *Renjana Pendidikan: Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Dasar*, 2:61–72, 2021.

Awwaliyah, Neny Muthi'atul. "Pondok Pesantren Sebagai Wadah Moderasi Islam Di Era Generasi Millenial." *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset Dan Kajian Keislaman* 8, no. 1 (2019): 36–62.

A'yun, Qurroti, M Bayu Akbar Pamungkas, Intan Sintia Dewi Agustin, Imamah Zahroh, Rakhmad Galih Afandi, Zulkarnaen Zulkarnaen, and others. "Penerapan Nilai Iman, Takwa Dan Akhlak Mulia Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dalam Membentuk Karakter Islami Siswa." *Tawazun: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 1 (2023): 9–20.

Daulay, Derliani. "Implementasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan Di Sekolah Menengah Atas Al-Azhar Medan." *ANSIRU PAI: Pengembangan Profesi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 2 (2019): 1–19.

Efendi, Moh Yusuf, and Fahru Rozi. "Strategi Pembelajaran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Menghadapi Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Di MAN 4 Bojonegoro Jawa Timur." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 6 (2022): 7731–37.

Elyas, Tariq, and Michelle Picard. "Saudi Arabian Educational History: Impacts on English Language Teaching." *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues* 3, no. 2 (2010): 135–45.

Fuadi, Imam, Ahmad Tanzeh, and others. "Implementation Of Prophetic Education In Building Religious And Social Culture At Al Fattah Islamic High School." *Re-JIEM (Research Journal of Islamic Education Management)* 6, no. 1 (2023): 18–28.

Hamzah, Mohamad Rifqi, Yuniar Mujiwati, Fany Ambarwati Zuhriyah, and Dinis Suryanda. "Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Sebagai Wujud Pendidikan Yang Memerdekakan Peserta Didik." *Arus Jurnal Pendidikan* 2, no. 3 (2022): 221–26.

Heri, Deden, and Uus Ruswandi. "Konsep Integrasi Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Pada Lembaga Pendidikan." *Jurnal Dirosah Islamiyah* 4, no. 2 (2022): 255–67.

Huda, Mualimul. "Eksistensi Pesantren Dan Deradikalisasi Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia." *Jurnal Kajian Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 3, no. 1 (2018): 85–109.

Jamilah, Eva Syarifatul and others. "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Merdeka Belajar Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam." *HEUTAGOGIA: Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 1 (2022): 83–96.

Junaid, Hamzah. "Sumber, Azas Dan Landasan Pendidikan (Kajian Fungsionalisasi Secara Makro Dan Mikro Terhadap Rumusan Kebijakan Pendidikan Nasional)." *Sulesana: Jurnal Wawasan Keislaman* 7, no. 2 (2012): 84–102.

Khoiruddin, M Arif, and Dina Dahniary Sholekah. "Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa." *PEDAGOGIK: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2019): 123–44.

Khotimah, Husnul. "Internalisasi Moderasi Beragama Dalam Kurikulum Pesantren." *Rabbani: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 1, no. 1 (2020): 62–68.

Komalasari, Mala, and Abu Bakar Yakubu. "Implementation of Student Character Formation Through Islamic Religious Education." *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education Journal* 2, no. 1 (2023): 52–64.

Kurniati, Pat, Andjela Lenora Kelmaskouw, Ahmad Deing, Bonin Bonin, and Bambang Agus Haryanto. "Model Proses Inovasi Kurikulum Merdeka Implikasinya Bagi Siswa Dan Guru Abad 21." *Jurnal Citizenship Virtues* 2, no. 2 (2022): 408–23.

Lubis, Zulkifli, and Dewi Anggraeni. "Paradigma Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Era Globalisasi Menuju Pendidik Profesional." *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 15, no. 1 (2019): 133–53.

Mansir, Firman, and Abdul Karim. "Islamic Education Learning Approaches in Shaping Students' Emotional Intelligence in the Digital Age." *Hayula: Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2020): 67–86.

Mendy, John, Maria Madiope, and others. "Curriculum Transformation: A Case in South Africa." *Perspectives in Education* 38, no. 2 (2020): 1–19.

Ozoliņš, Jānis (John) Tālivaldis. "Creating Public Values: Schools as Moral Habitats." *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 42, no. 4 (2010): 410–23.

Prasetia, Senata Adi, Siti Firqo Najiyah, and others. "The Revitalization of Education Character in The Pandemic Covid-19 Era." *TADRIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 16, no. 1 (2021): 95–110.

Purnawanto, Ahmad Teguh. "Perencanakan Pembelajaran Bermakna Dan Asesmen Kurikulum Merdeka." *JURNAL PEDAGOGY* 15, no. 1 (2022): 75–94.

Qolbi, Satria Kharimul, and Tasman Hamami. "Impelementasi Asas-Asas Pengembangan Kurikulum Terhadap Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam." *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 3, no. 4 (2021): 1120–32.

Rafsanjani, Toni Ardi, and Muhammad Abdur Razaq. "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Terhadap Perkembangan Anak Di Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah Kriyan Jepara." *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 2019, 16–29.

Rahmadania, Sinta, Ajun Junaedi Sitika, and Astuti Darmayanti. "Peran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Keluarga Dan Masyarakat." *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 5, no. 2 (2021): 221–26.

Riyanti, Rika. "Moderasi Sebagai Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Pancasila Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum." *Adiba: Journal Of Education* 2, no. 1 (2022): 109–21.

Romadhon, Muh Syaiful, Amalia Rahmah, and Yekti Wirani. "Blended Learning System Using Social Media for College Student: A Case of Tahsin Education." *Procedia Computer Science* 161 (2019): 160–67.

Sahri, Sahri, Asrof Syafi'i, and Sokip Sokip. "Direction and Strategy of Islamic Education Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia." *Tarbawi: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 20, no. 1 (2023).

Sarnoto, Ahmad Zain, and Taufiq Nugroho. "Dimensi Mutu Dalam Pendidikan Sekolah." *Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman "Ulumuddin"* 5, no. 1 (2015): 48–57.

Schmidt, Garbi. "Islamic Identity Formation among Young Muslims: The Case of Denmark, Sweden and the United States." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 24, no. 1 (2004): 31–45.

Shalihin, Rahmat Ryadhush. "Enhancing the Islamic Education in Kurikulum Merdeka through International Benchmarking: A Transdisciplinary Study." *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan* 9, no. 01 (2023): 1–16.

Solikhah, Imroatus. "Revisiting the EFL Curriculum in the Outcome-Based Education Framework and Freedom to Learn Program." *Journal of Social Studies Education Research* 13, no. 2 (2022): 243–64.

Sumanto. *Teori Dan Metode Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: CAPS (center of Academic Publishing Service, 2014.

Suradi, A. "Penanaman Religiusitas Keislaman Berorientasi Pada Pendidikan Multikultural Di Sekolah." *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education Studies)* 6, no. 1 (2018): 25–43.

Tabroni, Imam, and Akbar Miftahur Romdhon. "The Influence of Islamic Religious Education on the Student's Conduct." *Jurnal Multidisiplin Madani* 2, no. 2 (2022): 787–94.

Tarihoran, Emmeria. "Guru Dalam Pengajaran Abad 21." *SAPA-Jurnal Kateketik Dan Pastoral* 4, no. 1 (2019): 46–58.

Taufik, Muhamad. "Strategic Role of Islamic Religious Education in Strengthening Character Education in the Era of Industrial Revolution 4.0." *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 20, no. 1 (2020): 86–104.

Vera, Nawiroh. "Strategi Komunikasi Dosen Dan Mahasiswa Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran Daring Selama Pandemik Covid-19." *Avant Garde* 8, no. 2 (2020): 165–77.

Wahyuni, Siti. "Kurikulum Merdeka Untuk Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 6 (2022): 13404–8.

Wiryanto, Wiryanto, and Garin Ocshela Anggraini. "Analisis Pendidikan Humanistik Ki Hajar Dewantara Dalam Konsep Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar." *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan* 15, no. 1 (2022): 33–45.

Zuhri, Muhammad Minan and others. "Arah Baru Pengembangan Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Sekolah (Telaah Kurikulum Dan Model Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam)." *QUALITY* 1, no. 1 (2017): 162–82.