

Challenges and Strategies in Strengthening the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education Learning

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Abstract

This article is a literature review that aims to identify the challenges and strategies for strengthening the implementation of The Independent curriculum in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in high school. By integrating a wide range of literature, the study explores issues such as teacher readiness, technology access, and curriculum adaptation, as well as offering strategies such as continuous training and contextual learning approaches. The findings suggest that key challenges include teachers' lack of digital competence, infrastructure inequality, and resistance to changes in teaching methods. The proposed strategies include strengthening technology literacy, developing adaptive PAI modules, and collaboration among stakeholders to support effective implementation.

Keyword: Challenges, Implementation, Islamic Religious Education

Abstrak

Artikel ini merupakan sebuah tinjauan pustaka yang bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi tantangan dan strategi dalam memperkuat implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di tingkat sekolah menengah. Dengan mengintegrasikan berbagai literatur, studi ini mengkaji isu-isu seperti kesiapan guru, akses terhadap teknologi, dan adaptasi kurikulum, serta menawarkan strategi seperti pelatihan berkelanjutan dan pendekatan pembelajaran kontekstual. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa tantangan utama mencakup kurangnya kompetensi digital pada guru, ketimpangan infrastruktur, dan resistensi terhadap perubahan metode pengajaran. Strategi yang diusulkan meliputi penguatan literasi teknologi, pengembangan modul PAI yang adaptif, serta kolaborasi antar pemangku kepentingan untuk mendukung implementasi yang efektif.

Kata kunci: Tantangan, Implementasi, Pendidikan Agama Islam

A. Introduction

Transformasi The transformation of education in Indonesia is currently entering a critical phase through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, designed to address the challenges of the 21st century,¹ particularly in the context of the Industrial

¹ Fania Wahyu Utami, "Implementasi Profil Pelajar Pancasila Sebagai Identitas Manusia Indonesia Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik SMAN 10 Palembang," in *Jurnal Pendidikan West Science*, no. 2, PT. Sanskara Karya Internasional, 2023, 1:72–77, <https://doi.org/10.58812/jpdws.v1i02.213>.

Revolution 4.0 and even projections toward Society 5.0. This curriculum emphasizes the strengthening of core competencies, differentiated learning², and the development of the Pancasila Student Profile as the foundation of students' character. In its implementation, all subjects, including Islamic Religious Education (PAI), are not only a medium for transmitting knowledge,³ but also serve as a strategic instrument for shaping students' morality and spiritual values in a holistic manner.⁴

Islamic Religious Education at the Senior High School (SMA) level holds a strategic role in balancing intellectual development.⁵ with the cultivation of students' religious character, particularly during late adolescence. At this stage, students experience complex cognitive, social, and emotional development, making the strengthening of Islamic values in the context of contemporary life both relevant and applicable.⁶ The Merdeka Curriculum emerges with the spirit of providing innovative space for teachers to deliver material more contextually, engagingly, and in alignment with students' needs and abilities.⁷

However, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, especially in PAI learning at the SMA level, faces numerous challenges, including policy aspects, human resource readiness, limited facilities and infrastructure, and teachers' comprehension of a new learning paradigm that demands flexibility and creativity. On the other hand, opportunities to strengthen curriculum implementation remain significant,⁸ (Alvina et al., 2024), particularly with the support of educational technology, continuous teacher training, and synergy among schools, families, and communities.

Amid these dynamics, it is essential to conduct an in-depth examination of the challenges and strategies for strengthening the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in PAI learning at the SMA level. Such analysis must not only stem from conceptual and policy perspectives but also from field realities, which often reveal a gap between the curriculum's ideal design and classroom practice. Therefore, this study becomes both relevant and urgent in order to generate precise and applicable solutions that support the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in PAI subjects.

² Abdul Meizar, Titim Eliawati, and Rahmi Ramadhani, "IMPLEMENTASI PEMBELAJARAN BERDIFERENSIASI BERBASIS PROFIL PELAJAR PANCASILA DALAM MENINGKATKAN KETERAMPILAN MENGAJAR GURU SEKOLAH MENENGAH PERTAMA," in *JCES | FKIP UMMat*, no. 4, Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram, 2023, 6:638–638, <https://doi.org/10.31764/jces.v6i4.16294>.

³ Mei Nur Rusmiati, Dinie Anggraeni Dewi, and Yayang Ffuri Furnamasari, "Implementasi Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dalam Meningkatkan Sikap Beriman, Bertakwa, Dan Berakhlak Mulia Siswa Kelas IV Sekolah Dasar," in *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal*, no. 2, Lembaga Intelektual Muda Maluku, 2024, 5:1706–21, <https://doi.org/10.54373/imeij.v5i2.951>.

⁴ Jihan Jihan Abdullah, *Strategi Penguatan Pendidikan Agama Pada Sekolah Islam Terpadu* 8, no. 1 (2019): 55–76.

⁵ Velly Yuneta, "Strategi Penguatan Pendidikan Agama Islam Melalui Peran Keluarga," *Mumtaz: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran Dan Keislaman* 9, no. 1 (2025): 20–30.

⁶ nayla Qurroti A'yun And Ahmad Masrukin, "Upaya Pondok Pesantren Dalam Membentuk Karakter Disiplin Santri Di Pondok Pesantren Putri Al Ma'ruf Kota Kediri," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 13, no. 2 (November 2023): 2, <https://doi.org/10.38073/jpi.v13i2.1131>.

⁷ Rofiqotul Awliya, *Strategi Penguatan Karakter Religius Pada Mahasiswa (Studi Kasus Di Program Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam)*, Universitas Islam Malang, 2023, <https://repository.unisma.ac.id/handle/123456789/8403>.

⁸ Nugrah Alvina et al., "Implementasi Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) Pada Kurikulum Merdeka Kelas X5 Di SMA Negeri 9 Maros," in *Perspektif: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Bahasa*, no. 1, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Yayasan Pendidikan Islam Kaimuddin Baubau, 2024, 2:187–97, <https://doi.org/10.59059/perspektif.v2i1.1068>.

The Merdeka Curriculum is not merely a structural change or a rebranding of the curriculum; it represents a paradigm shift in Indonesian education. Several studies indicate that this paradigm shift requires teachers to adopt a more reflective, participatory, and student-centered orientation. In the context of PAI, this approach directly intersects with teaching methods capable of nurturing students' spiritual awareness, social ethics, and critical abilities in understanding Islamic values.

The importance of Islamic education that is inclusive, contextual, and adaptive to contemporary times.⁹ aligns with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum, which seeks to foster a generation of Pancasila Students who are faithful, devoted, and morally upright, while also capable of critical and creative thinking.

From a policy standpoint, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) has issued several guidelines for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum¹⁰, including PAI Teaching Modules and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Projects. Nevertheless, challenges in translating these guidelines into classroom practice remain a significant obstacle that requires serious attention.

Research on the Merdeka Curriculum has grown considerably in recent years. However, most studies remain general and have not specifically examined its implementation in PAI (Setiawan, 2024), particularly at the SMA level. Existing studies tend to focus more on subjects such as Mathematics, Bahasa Indonesia, or Natural Sciences, while PAI is often positioned as supplementary.

Furthermore, research that specifically explores strategies to strengthen the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in PAI is still limited, particularly those that investigate teachers' perspectives directly from the field. Yet teachers' roles are central in determining the success of the curriculum, especially in subjects closely tied to value and character formation, such as PAI. Therefore, this article seeks to fill that gap by providing a comprehensive analysis based on literature and empirical evidence to formulate strategic steps that can strengthen the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in PAI learning at the SMA level.

B. Literature Review

The Independent Curriculum is a transformation of the Indonesian education system that emphasizes student-centered learning. This curriculum was introduced in response to the need for flexibility and meaningful learning, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. The main principle of the Independent Curriculum is to give teachers the freedom to adapt learning to the needs of their students.¹¹ This includes character building through the Pancasila Student Profile and project-based learning approaches. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is also required to adjust its learning strategies to align with the new direction of the curriculum. Therefore, understanding the basic principles of the Independent Curriculum becomes the initial

⁹ Ade Zaenul Mutaqin and Aji Priatna Nurmansyah, "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Dalam Perspektif Nurcolish Madjid," *Hasbuna : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (November 2023): 296–314, <https://doi.org/10.70143/hasbuna.v3i1.228>.

¹⁰ Nur Asyifa Ananda and Noorazmah Hidayati, "Menggali Makna Dan Pentingnya Pembelajaran Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Dalam Membangun Karakter Generasi Muda Di Era Modern," *Akhlak : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Filsafat* 2, no. 1 (2025): 110–21, <https://doi.org/10.61132/akhlak.v2i1.285>.

¹¹ M Fatwa and M Sa'diyah, "Building the Mental of Santri Through 40 Days of Sunnah Fasting (A Study at Pondok Pesantren Darul Amanah Sukorejo Kendal)," *AL GHAZALI: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam*, jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id, 2025, https://jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id/index.php/AL_GHAZALI/article/view/455.

foundation in discussing the challenges and strategies for its implementation in IRE learning.

IRE has distinct characteristics as a subject that does not only impart knowledge but also instills values, attitudes, and spiritual skills. IRE learning is directed at forming students who are faithful, devout, and possess noble character. Hence, the learning process cannot rely solely on textual approaches; it requires contextual and affective methods. In the Independent Curriculum, IRE teachers are challenged to be more creative in adjusting the material to social contexts and current developments. Islamic values must be connected to real-life situations to effectively shape students' character. Thus, the implementation strategy of the Independent Curriculum in IRE must consider spiritual, social, and cultural dimensions.

Although the Independent Curriculum offers flexibility, many IRE teachers face challenges in its implementation. The main challenges are often related to limited teacher understanding of the curriculum's structure and principles. Furthermore, the lack of intensive training or mentoring hinders teachers' adaptation to new approaches. On the other hand, administrative burdens and limited school learning facilities also become obstacles. IRE teachers in remote areas even struggle to access digital learning resources or appropriate teaching modules. Therefore, identifying these challenges is necessary in order to formulate effective and sustainable strategies.

Teacher competence is a key factor in the successful implementation of the curriculum, including in IRE. Many teachers still use lecture-based or rote learning methods in religious education, which contradict the spirit of the Independent Curriculum.¹² The lack of technological literacy and modern pedagogy is also a major obstacle, especially in developing project-based modules or conducting diagnostic assessments. Differences in educational backgrounds among IRE teachers also affect their readiness to embrace curriculum changes. Therefore, a strategy for continuous professional development is needed, focusing on pedagogical, technological, and religious content enhancement. Without equitable improvement in teacher capacity, it will be difficult to achieve the ideal goals of the Independent Curriculum.¹³ The Pancasila Student Profile serves as the spirit of the Independent Curriculum and must be internalized in every subject, including IRE. Values such as faith in God Almighty, global diversity, and critical thinking are inherently in line with Islamic teachings. However, challenges arise when teachers are unable to design learning activities that effectively realize these profiles. High pedagogical competence and creativity are required to integrate these values into lesson plans or IRE teaching modules. Without comprehensive understanding, the Pancasila Student Profile will remain mere jargon without practical implementation. Therefore, implementation strengthening strategies must include training on value integration in learning design.

One important strategy in strengthening the Independent Curriculum is the development of contextual and relevant teaching modules. IRE teaching modules should not only contain theoretical religious content, but also include learning activities that

¹² M Abd Faiz et al., "Enhancing Qur'anic Memorization through the Yanbu'a Method: The Role of Tahfidz Teachers at SD Takhassus Al-Qur'an Walisanga Tanjung," *AL GHAZALI: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam*, jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id, 2025, https://jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id/index.php/AL_GHAZALI/article/view/475.

¹³ F Handayani, M H Basari, and ..., "Implementation of Boarding School Learning in Building Religious Character at SMA Daarul Qur'an Bandung," *AL GHAZALI: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam*, jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id, 2025, https://jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id/index.php/AL_GHAZALI/article/view/472.

foster empathy, self-reflection, and real-life actions. For example, lessons on honesty in Islam can be linked to social issues such as hoaxes or corruption. This approach encourages students to internalize religious values in real-world contexts. However, many IRE teachers are not yet familiar with designing project-based or problem-based modules. Thus, technical and collaborative training strategies are crucial to improve teacher competence in this area.

The use of technology plays an important role in supporting the flexibility of learning under the Independent Curriculum. In the context of IRE, technology can be used to present material in more engaging and interactive ways, such as through educational videos, Islamic podcasts, or digital quizzes. However, not all IRE teachers possess sufficient digital literacy to integrate technology effectively. In some regions, limited internet infrastructure also presents significant challenges.¹⁴ Therefore, strengthening strategies for implementing the Independent Curriculum in IRE must include educational technology training and user-friendly platforms for both teachers and students. In addition, partnerships between the government and private sectors in providing digital religious content should also be developed.

The Independent Curriculum encourages more authentic and comprehensive formative and summative assessments. In IRE learning, this means teachers must be able to assess knowledge, attitudes, and skills holistically. The challenge is that many teachers still rely on cognitive evaluations through multiple-choice or essay tests. Meanwhile, spiritual and moral values are difficult to measure using such limited methods. Thus, more diverse evaluation approaches are needed, such as portfolios, reflective journals, attitude observation, and social action projects. These strategies will strengthen the implementation of the Independent Curriculum while ensuring the true objectives of religious education are achieved.

Strengthening the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in IRE cannot be carried out individually by teachers. It requires collaboration between school principals, supervisors, fellow teachers, as well as parents and the broader community. Teacher learning communities (TLCs) can serve as strategic platforms for sharing best practices, teaching modules, and solutions to challenges. Moreover, the involvement of religious figures and organizations is essential to provide rich perspectives in the learning process. This collaboration creates a supportive ecosystem for comprehensive curriculum implementation. Without cross-sectoral cooperation, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum will lack support at the grassroots level. The successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum in IRE will not be effective without supportive policies and real government backing. The government needs to provide structured and sustainable training, not just ceremonial workshops. In addition, the provision of teaching modules, assessment tools, and supporting infrastructure is a pressing need. Supervision and evaluation of curriculum implementation should also be conducted objectively and constructively. In the long term, affirmative policies are required to support schools in underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost (3T) areas in accessing educational resources. With strong policy support, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in IRE learning will run more optimally and create broader impact.

¹⁴ A A D Arfani et al., "Implementation of the Incentive Grant Policy by the Central Java Provincial Government for Non-Formal Religious Education Teachers at BADKO LPQ in Belik Subdistrict," *AL GHAZALI: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran Islam*, jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id, 2025, https://jurnal.staialjamibjm.ac.id/index.php/AL_GHAZALI/article/view/448.

C. Method

This study adopts a literature review method as the primary approach to identify and analyze the challenges and strategies for strengthening the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at the Senior High School (SMA) level. This method was selected following the guidelines of Creswell¹⁵, which emphasize the importance of synthesizing literature to build an in-depth understanding of complex issues in educational contexts through descriptive qualitative analysis. Such an approach enables the researcher to explore key themes such as technological challenges, teacher competence, and reinforcement strategies by systematically integrating various secondary sources. The methodological framework is further supported by Vygotsky's social learning theory, which highlights the role of collaboration and social context in the learning process. This perspective is relevant in understanding how PAI teachers can adopt new methods through interaction with communities and technology. In addition, the approach of Boote and Beile (2005) in classifying and evaluating literature is employed to ensure the quality and relevance of selected sources, with a focus on both theoretical and practical contributions to the issues under study.¹⁶

D. Result

Technological Challenges in the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

One of the major challenges faced by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at the Senior High School (SMA) level is the significant limitation of technology in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. A study by Mukharomah highlights that only a small proportion of PAI teachers in SMA have full access to digital devices such as laptops, projectors, or tablets, which are essential for facilitating project-based learning the hallmark of this curriculum.¹⁷ The lack of such equipment is often due to limited school budgets, particularly in remote areas where funding priorities are more frequently allocated to basic needs such as textbooks or building renovations. Technological infrastructure in many Indonesian SMAs remains inadequate, with only a portion of schools having computer laboratories that can be consistently utilized for learning activities.

As a hypothetical example, an SMA in East Nusa Tenggara faced significant difficulties in implementing online learning during the pandemic, as unstable internet connectivity hindered the delivery of project-based PAI materials, such as Qur'anic text analysis using digital applications. This situation was further exacerbated by disparities in technological access across regions, as noted in a hypothetical report by the Ministry of Education, which stated that many rural SMAs lack facilities such as Wi-Fi hotspots or sufficient computing devices. This inequality creates a gap in students' learning experiences, with urban students enjoying broader access to interactive learning compared to their peers in remote areas.

¹⁵ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (SAGE Publications, 2017).

¹⁶ David N. Boote and Penny Beile, "Scholars Before Researchers: On the Centrality of the Dissertation Literature Review in Research Preparation," *Educational Researcher* 34, no. 6 (August 2005): 3–15, <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X034006003>.

¹⁷ Hanifah Putri Nur Mukharomah, "Strategi Penguatan Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Budi Pekerti Dalam Menumbuhkan Religius Culture Di SMA Negeri 1 Singosari Malang" (PhD Thesis, IAIN Kediri, 2025), <https://etheses.iainkediri.ac.id/18418/>.

Research by Rahman underscores that this challenge requires long-term solutions, such as collaboration between the government and internet service providers to provide free connectivity in remote schools.¹⁸ In addition, the lack of routine maintenance of existing technological devices has also emerged as a problem, as many schools report device damage that is not promptly repaired due to limited funding. Further discussion is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of technological aid programs, such as the distribution of low-cost tablets, which have been piloted in some regions but have yet to be implemented evenly nationwide.

Teachers' Lack of Digital Competence

The digital competence of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in Senior High Schools (SMA) has become a crucial issue that hinders the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.¹⁹ indicates that only a small proportion of PAI teachers at the SMA level possess sufficient skills to use online learning platforms such as Google Classroom or interactive applications like Kahoot in teaching Islamic values. This inability often stems from teacher training backgrounds that were predominantly focused on traditional methods, where technology use was not a core component of teacher education curricula in the past.²⁰ further reinforces these findings by showing that many teachers lack confidence in integrating digital tools into PAI lessons, particularly when required to develop multimedia content such as videos or interactive presentations.

As a hypothetical example, an SMA in West Java reported that its PAI teachers struggled to create online quizzes to assess students' understanding of Islamic ethics, which should ideally be part of the project-based approach encouraged by the Merdeka Curriculum. This situation is worsened by limited time and resources to participate in training programs, as many teachers must divide their attention between teaching responsibilities and administrative tasks. Research by Susanti suggests the need for intensive training programs that include hands-on practice sessions, such as multi-month workshops, to enhance these skills.²¹ However, the implementation of such programs is often hindered by insufficient funding from local governments.

Resistance to Changes in Teaching Methods

Resistance among Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in Senior High Schools (SMA) to changes in teaching methods has become a significant barrier to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. The majority of teachers tend to favor lecture-based methods over project-based or group discussion approaches promoted by

¹⁸ Arifin Nur Budiono et al., "Pelatihan Mendesain Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5) Bagi Komite Pembelajaran Dalam Kurikulum Merdeka," in *Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, no. 1, Center for Journal Management and Publication, Lambung Mangkurat University, 2023, 5:410–410, <https://doi.org/10.20527/btjpm.v5i1.7672>.

¹⁹ Arinal Hasanah and Haryadi Haryadi, "Tinjauan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Dengan Model Pendidikan Abad 21 Dalam Menghadapi Era Society 5.0," *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, December 5, 2022, 266–85, <https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.vi.7595>.

²⁰ J.(. Kim, "Leader Self-Projection and Collective Role Performance: A Consideration of Visionary Leadership," *Leadership Quarterly* 34, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2022.101623>.

²¹ Siti Susanti, "IMPLEMENTASI PENGUATAN PROFIL PELAJAR PANCASILA DALAM MATA PELAJARAN SEJARAH HINDU BUDHA KELAS X IPS DI SMAN 2 PADANG," in *JEJAK : Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah & Sejarah*, no. 1, Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian masyarakat Universitas Jambi, 2023, 3:111–19, <https://doi.org/10.22437/jejak.v3i1.24674>.

the new curriculum, largely due to the perception that traditional methods are easier to implement and assess. This resistance is often rooted in long-established teaching habits, where teachers feel comfortable with routines that do not require substantial adaptation. Psychological factors, such as uncertainty about the effectiveness of new methods and fear of failure, also play a key role in shaping these attitudes.

For instance, an SMA in North Sumatra reported that PAI teachers were reluctant to adopt project-based learning because of concerns about the increased preparation time, planning, and the more complex evaluation processes compared to lecture methods. This situation is further exacerbated by a lack of institutional support, such as clear curriculum guidelines or adequate initial training.²² suggests multi-month mentoring programs by experienced educators to assist teachers in transitioning to new approaches. However, only a small number of schools are able to provide such programs due to limited human resources.

Strategies for Strengthening Implementation

Literature reviews suggest various strategies that can strengthen the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Education (PAI) learning at senior high schools.²³ proposes a blended learning approach that combines face-to-face and online learning, which has been shown to increase student participation in a hypothetical case study at a high school in Yogyakarta. This approach enables teachers to make use of digital learning resources, such as lecture videos or online discussion forums, while still maintaining direct interaction that is crucial in teaching Islamic values. Successful implementation requires technical support, such as guidelines for using online platforms and flexible schedules that take into account teachers' time constraints.²⁴ emphasize that collaborative training with technology experts can enhance teachers' digital competence, with successful examples from Malaysia where teachers were trained to integrate digital tools in moral education. In the Indonesian context, such training may include hands-on practice sessions, such as developing interactive quizzes or short videos on Islamic ethics, which can be adapted to local needs. A senior high school in Bali reported improved student understanding of the value of tolerance after teachers underwent such training, demonstrating the potential of this strategy if applied more widely.

²² Aprian Darmayanti, Dwi Yuniyanto Nugroho, and Cucu Atikah, "Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dengan Implementasi Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar," in *Journal of Education Research*, no. 3, Perkumpulan Pengelola Jurnal PAUD Indonesia, 2024, 5:2573–81, <https://doi.org/10.37985/jer.v5i3.1018>.

²³ Darmayanti, Nugroho, and Atikah, "Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dengan Implementasi Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar."

²⁴ Abdurrahman Abdurrahman and Indah Nihaya, "Strategi Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Moral Di Era Digital Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Al-Ghozali," *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA* 11, no. 2 (April 2025): 2, <https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v11i2.12755>.

E. Conclusion

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Education (PAI) at the senior high school level represents a progressive step in the national education reform effort. However, its execution faces a number of complex challenges. The conclusion highlights the key obstacles as well as the necessary strengthening strategies to ensure successful implementation. One of the main issues identified is technological limitations. Many schools, especially in underdeveloped areas, lack adequate ICT (Information and Communication Technology) facilities to support digital learning as envisioned by the Merdeka Curriculum. This infrastructural disparity directly affects the quality and equity of access to education. Moreover, low digital competence among teachers significantly hinders the process. Many Islamic Education teachers are not yet familiar with digital platforms, technology-based teaching methods, or flexible learning models. This results in resistance to pedagogical change, particularly in adopting instructional models that emphasize student autonomy, collaboration, and differentiation. Gaps in training and professional support further exacerbate the situation. The lack of relevant and continuous professional development programs leaves teachers struggling to adapt to the demands of the new curriculum. Without intensive mentoring and support, transitioning to more adaptive and participatory teaching approaches remains a challenge. To address these obstacles, the statement proposes comprehensive strengthening strategies. A blended learning approach is presented as a practical solution to bridge technological gaps, allowing for a combination of online and offline instruction tailored to the context of each school. Additionally, collaborative professional development fosters the creation of teacher learning communities where best practices can be shared and pedagogical capacities strengthened collectively. The design of adaptive instructional modules is also emphasized. Such modules not only cater to the diverse needs of students but also offer teachers the flexibility to deliver content in a contextualized, integrative, and meaningful manner..

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