

Curriculum Development and Educational Practices for Islamic Education: An Analysis of the Merdeka Curriculum at Integrated Islamic Junior High School in Indonesia

Mundiatul Mila*, Muhammad Zuhdi

Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

*Correspondence: ✉ mundiatumila05@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.51214/biis.v4i2.1652>

ABSTRACT

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at Integrated Islamic Junior High School SMPIT Al Haraki still encounters several challenges, particularly in maintaining consistent execution, teachers' readiness to adapt learning modules, and disparities in students' digital literacy. This study aims to analyze how the curriculum is developed, implemented, and evaluated within the context of an integrated Islamic school. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, using interviews, observations, and document analysis involving PAI teachers, school leaders, and students. The findings reveal that curriculum development follows a grass-roots model positioning teachers as the primary drivers, supported by philosophical, religious, sociological, psychological, and scientific foundations. Its implementation integrates religious habituation with digital technology using Chromebooks, Google Workspace, and interactive applications such as Quizizz, Wordwall, and Padlet. Evaluation is conducted holistically through academic assessments, moral observations, and tahfiz achievement tracking. The main challenges involve students' concentration, classroom conditions, and variations in digital competencies. This study contributes by offering an integrative model of PAI curriculum evaluation that combines academic, spiritual, and character dimensions, while also providing practical insights for other schools aiming to develop an adaptive and Islamic-oriented Merdeka Curriculum.

ABSTRAK

Pelaksanaan Kurikulum Merdeka pada mata pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di SMPIT Al Haraki masih menghadapi beberapa kendala pada konsistensi implementasi, kesiapan guru dalam memodifikasi modul ajar, serta kesenjangan literasi digital antar siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana kurikulum tersebut dikembangkan, diimplementasikan, dan dievaluasi pada konteks sekolah Islam terpadu. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, dengan subjek guru PAI, kepala sekolah, dan siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengembangan kurikulum mengacu pada model *grass roots* yang menempatkan guru sebagai motor utama, didukung landasan filosofis, religius, sosiologis, psikologis, dan IPTEK. Implementasinya memadukan pembiasaan keagamaan dengan pemanfaatan teknologi digital berbasis Chromebook, Google Workspace, serta aplikasi interaktif seperti Quizizz, Wordwall, dan Padlet. Evaluasi dilakukan secara holistik melalui asesmen akademik, pengamatan akhlak, dan capaian tahfiz. Kendala yang muncul terutama berkaitan dengan fokus belajar siswa, kondisi kelas, dan variasi kemampuan digital. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan menawarkan model evaluasi kurikulum PAI yang integratif antara aspek akademik, spiritual, dan karakter, memberikan rujukan praktis bagi sekolah lain dalam mengembangkan Kurikulum Merdeka yang adaptif dan Islami.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: 27-10-2025

Revised: 22-11-2025

Accepted: 26-11-2025

Keywords:

Curriculum Development;
Islamic Religious Education;
Merdeka Curriculum.

Histori Artikel

Diterima: 27-10-2025

Direvisi: 22-11-2025

Disetujui: 26-11-2025

Kata Kunci:

Kurikulum Merdeka;
Pendidikan Agama Islam;
Pengembangan Kurikulum.

A. INTRODUCTION

The field of education today is required to continuously adapt to social, technological, and cultural changes in order to produce learners with competencies relevant to contemporary needs. Such adaptation is manifested through curriculum development that is flexible, adaptive, and oriented toward twenty-first-century skills.¹ As a guideline for organizing learning, a curriculum encompasses objectives, content, methods, and evaluation, all of which are interrelated; if one component does not function optimally, the learning process will not achieve its intended outcomes.² For this reason, curriculum development must be comprehensive, well-planned, and sustainable so that it can respond to the evolving dynamics of society.

In the context of modern education, learners must not only master academic content but also develop digital literacy, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, and character competencies aligned with the demands of the industrial revolution 4.0 and society 5.0 era.³ The Merdeka Curriculum is introduced as a governmental initiative to address the rigidity of previous curricula, which overly emphasized theoretical content and offered limited space for meaningful learning experiences, differentiated instruction, and interdisciplinary project-based learning.⁴ Its implementation requires educational institutions to innovate, develop contextual teaching materials, and tailor learning to the needs of students.

Integrated Islamic Junior High School SMPIT Al Haraki Depok is one of the educational institutions officially designated as a *Sekolah Penggerak* Cohort 1 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, as listed in the official database of *Sekolah Penggerak* and supported by publications from the Depok City Education Office from 2021 to 2024. This external recognition indicates that SMPIT Al Haraki meets the criteria for school management quality, commitment to learning improvement, and readiness to implement the Merdeka Curriculum according to national standards. The school has also served as a benchmarking reference for other schools in Depok and the Greater Jakarta area, further positioning it as a representative institution for an in-depth study of Merdeka Curriculum development and implementation.

As an Islamic integrated school, SMPIT Al Haraki adapts the Merdeka Curriculum by integrating Islamic values into various aspects of learning. Signature programs such as Qur'an memorization (*tahfidz*), congregational prayer, Islamic studies, Islamic literacy, and value-based entrepreneurship serve as forms of curricular enrichment. In the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subject, curriculum development is directed toward balancing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains through the selection of essential content, daily religious practice, project-based learning, and the integration of digital literacy. This approach enables

¹ Mulik Cholilah et al., "Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Dalam Satuan Pendidikan Serta Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Abad 21," *Sanskara Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 1, no. 02 (2023): 56–67, <https://doi.org/10.58812/spp.v1i02.110>.

² Rizal Kailani, "Model Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Inovasi Kurikulum* 2 (2021): 178–95.

³ Varary Mechwafanitiara Cantika, "Prosedur Pengembangan Kurikulum (Kajian Literatur Manajemen Inovasi Kurikulum)," *Inovasi Kurikulum* 19, no. 2 (2022): 171–84.

⁴ Elisa Rosa et al., "Inovasi Model Dan Strategi Pembelajaran Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka," *Journal of Education Research* 5, no. 3 (2024): 2608–17.

students to understand Islamic teachings theoretically while applying them contextually in their daily lives.

Research on the Merdeka Curriculum in recent years has been conducted in various contexts, yet most studies have focused on general implementation rather than curriculum development for Islamic Religious Education in Islamic integrated schools. Abdul Rahmat et al examine project-based learning but do not address the integration of Islamic values.⁵ Studies by Nana Adelina et al.⁶ and Muhammad Noor Fauzi⁷ highlight teachers' limited understanding of religious integration in the Merdeka Curriculum, while Harend Abdul Hakim and Triono Ali Mustofa focus on implementation challenges concerning technical and managerial aspects rather than spiritual integration.⁸ Other studies, such as Suci Kurnia emphasize cognitive, physical, and psychological readiness without addressing religious dimensions.⁹

A review of these ten studies indicates that previous research predominantly explores implementation strategies, teacher readiness, teaching modules, assessment, or digital literacy. However, studies focusing specifically on the development of the Merdeka Curriculum within PAI learning in Islamic integrated schools, particularly those with official recognition as *Sekolah Penggerak*, remain limited. It is within this gap that the present study is positioned. Rather than refuting previous findings, this research extends their scope by examining an unexplored context: the integration of Islamic values, religious practices, and school-specific programs within the Merdeka Curriculum framework for the PAI subject.

Based on this overview, the present study examines comprehensively the development of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education at SMPIT Al Haraki Depok, including curriculum adaptation processes, instructional strategies, evaluation mechanisms, and the challenges encountered. This study is expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of PAI curricula in Islamic integrated schools during the Merdeka Curriculum era and to serve as a reference for educators and policymakers in designing curricula that are more adaptive, contextual, and applicable.

B. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, which enables the researcher to understand the processes, experiences, and practices involved in developing the Merdeka Curriculum within the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subject in depth. This approach was selected because the study does not aim to test hypotheses, but rather to provide a detailed description of how the curriculum is designed, adapted, and implemented within the context of an integrated Islamic school. Through this method, the researcher is able to interpret the

⁵ Abdul Rahmat, Mohamad Zubaidi, and Mira Mirnawati, *Desain Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek* (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2023).

⁶ Nana Adelina Makalalag, Kamila Nangune, and Yusnaini, "Tantangan Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Dalam Pembelajaran PAI Di SMAN 2 Limboto," *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Kearifan Lokal* 5, no. 1 (2025): 197–205.

⁷ Muhammad Noor Fauzi, "Problematisasi Guru Mengimplementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Pada Pembelajaran PAI Di Sekolah Dasar," *Al-Madrasah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 7, no. 4 (2023): 1661–74.

⁸ Harend Abdul Hakim and Triono Ali Mustofa, "Tantangan Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Studi Kasus SMP El Dzikir Islamic Boarding School," *Kamaya: Jurnal Ilmu Agama* 8, no. 2 (2025): 193–203.

⁹ Suci Kurnia, "Kesiapan Guru Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum MERdeka Di Sekolah Dasar Islam (SDI) Surya Buana Kota Malang" (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2023).

meanings that emerge from the statements, actions, and documents directly related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Integrated Islamic Junior High School SMPIT Al Haraki Depok.

Primary data in this study were obtained through in-depth interviews with the principal, curriculum coordinator, PAI teachers, and students who are directly involved in Merdeka Curriculum, based learning practices. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded with the participants' consent to ensure data accuracy. In addition to interviews, the researcher conducted direct observations of PAI learning activities and school programs such as *tahfidz*, congregational prayer, and project-based learning. These observations were carried out to obtain an authentic picture of how the curriculum operates in the classroom and the broader school environment. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected through document analysis of syllabi, teaching modules, lesson plans, school policies, and curriculum evaluation reports used by SMPIT Al Haraki Depok.

The research was conducted at SMPIT Al Haraki Depok, located on Jl. Belimbing III No.1, Pancoran Mas, Depok, West Java. The site was selected purposively because the school is an officially designated *Sekolah Penggerak* by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, and has fully implemented the Merdeka Curriculum while integrating it with the school's distinctive Islamic curriculum. This position makes the school a relevant setting for exploring curriculum development processes that combine Islamic values, 21st-century skills, and contextual learning approaches within PAI.

The research process consisted of several interrelated stages. In the initial stage, the researcher designed the study, conducted a literature review on the Merdeka Curriculum in integrated Islamic schools, and secured research permission from the institution. The researcher then selected key informants using purposive sampling based on their involvement in the planning and implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Subsequently, data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. In practice, interviews were used to explore how the school interprets the Merdeka Curriculum, how PAI teachers develop instructional materials, and the strategies they employ in classroom teaching. Observations were conducted to examine the alignment between instructional plans and classroom practices. Document review was used to trace curriculum development from the administrative and planning perspectives.

Data credibility was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The researcher compared information obtained from the principal, PAI teachers, and students to identify consistency in perspectives. Interview data were also cross-checked with observation findings and curriculum documents to ensure accuracy and reliability. Triangulation was carried out continuously throughout data collection to minimize bias and strengthen the validity of the findings.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In this study, data reduction involved selecting and organizing information from interviews, observations, and documents according to the research focus, such as curriculum adaptation processes, instructional strategies, and PAI evaluation. The reduced data were then presented in thematic narrative form to help identify relationships among findings. The final stage involved drawing conclusions by interpreting emerging patterns and verifying them through document

review and field notes. The analysis process was conducted simultaneously with data collection, allowing the findings to be in-depth, contextual, and valid.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Model of Merdeka Curriculum Development at Integrated Islamic Junior High School SMPIT Al Haraki Depok

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Integrated Islamic Junior High School SMPIT Al Haraki Depok is strongly reflected in the way teachers design flexible, contextual, and learner-centered instruction. Teachers do not rely solely on government-issued teaching modules but actively enrich them by creating supplementary materials tailored to the characteristics of their students. These adjustments are made because the school recognizes significant variations in students' interests, learning styles, and ability levels. For instance, the Indonesian language teacher developed a digital literacy project in the form of multimedia-based short story writing, allowing students interested in animation and design to express their creativity more optimally. These findings align with the principle of differentiated instruction, which is a core feature of the Merdeka Curriculum, granting teachers the autonomy to adapt strategies and content to student needs.¹⁰ However, teachers also acknowledge that such flexibility demands higher creativity and longer preparation time, making regular training and mentoring essential to maintain consistent implementation.

Digital technology integration is another prominent characteristic of curriculum implementation at SMPIT Al Haraki. Field data show that all students use Chromebooks as their primary learning device, accessing materials, completing assignments, and collaborating on projects. Teachers also utilize Google Workspace for Education for task management, assessment, and presentation. This practice not only enhances instructional interactivity but also strengthens digital literacy as a fundamental 21st-century competence. Nevertheless, the school faces challenges related to students' varying degrees of digital literacy, particularly among seventh graders transitioning from elementary school. To address this, the school provides a digital onboarding session at the beginning of the academic year to ensure all students develop a uniform foundation in technology use. This technological integration aligns with studies showing that the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes not only freedom of thought but also the development of literacy, competence, and technological skills as essential assets in the digital era.¹¹

Furthermore, the enactment of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMPIT Al Haraki is evident through four major focus areas: digital learning, essential content prioritization, instructional flexibility, and the implementation of the *Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (P5). Digital learning is strengthened through Chromebook use and Google for Education, which promote collaboration and student autonomy. Teachers also prioritize essential content to ensure that learning focuses on deep conceptual understanding rather than merely completing all available material. In terms of flexibility, teachers adjust instructional methods and assessments based on classroom conditions, such as forming heterogeneous study groups and providing differentiated task options aligned with students' abilities. The implementation of P5 is conducted collaboratively through themes such as environmental awareness, digital

¹⁰ Khoirurrijal et al., *Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka* (Malang: Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2022).

¹¹ Selamat Ariga, "Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Pasca Pandemi Covid-19," *Edu Society: Jurnal Pendidikan, Ilmu Sosial Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 2, no. 2 (2022): 662–70.

creativity, and Islamic values. Field observations show that P5 activities contribute to the development of students' empathy, collaboration, and reflective capabilities, consistent with research demonstrating the effectiveness of P5 in shaping students' character.

Beyond implementing the nationally mandated Merdeka Curriculum, SMPIT Al Haraki also develops an internal curriculum aligned with the identity of an integrated Islamic school. The direction of curriculum development is guided by the school's vision: "*Building a God-conscious Generation that is Technologically Skilled and Globally Minded.*" This vision reflects an integration of Islamic spirituality, technological proficiency, and global orientation within the educational process. The resulting mission emphasizes not only academic excellence but also the cultivation of Islamic character, effective school management, the application of Islamic values in daily life, and the development of entrepreneurship and life skills. Field findings demonstrate that this vision and mission are not merely administrative statements but serve as operational foundations in curriculum design, classroom instruction, assessment, and non-academic activities.

SMPIT Al Haraki's internal curriculum is developed through two main pathways: teacher competency enhancement and the creation of supplementary programs. Teacher development is consistently carried out through monthly training sessions as part of the school's commitment to continuous improvement. These sessions cover differentiated teaching strategies, instructional design, assessment techniques, and technological integration. Meanwhile, the supplementary curriculum focuses on two key areas: entrepreneurship and Qur'anic studies. The entrepreneurship curriculum is designed to provide hands-on experiences in fields such as photography, cooking, event organizing, design, animation/programming, and broadcasting. Observations indicate that these programs enhance students' creativity, independence, and confidence in developing ideas and products. Qur'anic learning is strengthened through a minimum memorization target of one *juz* (Juz 27), the *Tahfidz Camp*, and the *Imtihanul Qur'an* as the final assessment. Qur'an teachers report that intensive sessions during *Tahfidz Camp* significantly improve memorization progress, although maintaining consistency remains the main challenge given students' packed academic schedules.

The findings of this study indicate that the curriculum development model adopted by SMPIT Al Haraki most closely aligns with the *grassroots* model, which places teachers and the school as the main actors in designing, implementing, and adapting the curriculum. This approach is evident in teachers' active involvement in preparing teaching materials, adjusting instructional methods, and developing internal curricula based on local needs. These findings support the conclusions of Rouf, Said, and HS who argue that grassroots curriculum development produces a more contextual, responsive, and student-relevant curriculum.¹² However, the school also recognizes challenges such as the need for continuous training and increased coordination among teachers, reflecting the natural dynamics of grassroots models in practice.

In conclusion, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMPIT Al Haraki not only complies with national standards but is further developed to align with the vision of an integrated Islamic school. Instructional flexibility, technological integration, the strengthening

¹² Muhammad Rouf, Akhmad Said, and Dedi Eko Riyadi HS, "Pengembangan Kurikulum Sekolah: Konsep, Model Dan Implementasi," *Al-Ibrah* 5, no. 2 (2020): 24–41.

of Islamic values, and the development of internal curricula demonstrate the school's success in bridging national demands with local educational needs. The grassroots model ensures that the curriculum remains relevant and adaptive, enabling the school to address 21st-century educational challenges while preserving its Islamic identity.

2. Foundational Principles of Curriculum Development

The curriculum development at SMPIT Al Haraki Depok is grounded in four key foundations: the philosophical foundation of the Qur'an, sociological considerations, psychological principles, and the advancement of science and technology. Based on document analysis and interviews with the curriculum team, it is evident that Qur'anic values serve as the primary reference in formulating the school's internal curriculum. This is reflected in the school's vision and mission, which emphasize the aim of "building a God-conscious (*robbani*) generation," as well as the prioritization of moral education, devotional practices, and the integration of Islamic values across all subjects. The curriculum team explained that specific Qur'anic verses—particularly QS. An-Nahl 16:125—function as their philosophical guide in articulating the principle of *dakwah bil-hikmah*, which they interpret as wisdom-based and exemplar-based education. One curriculum team member stated, "Our foundation is simple: education must instill wisdom and noble character according to the teachings of the Qur'an. That is why even general subjects are directed to cultivate Qur'anic character." This confirms that the use of QS. An-Nahl 16:125 is not an analytical assumption from the researcher, but a reference explicitly used by the school in shaping its educational approach.

This integration of Qur'anic values is clearly embedded within the curriculum structure. Mathematics, science, social studies, and language subjects run alongside *tahfidzul Qur'an*, *aqidah akhlak*, *fiqh*, Arabic, and *sirah nabawiyah*. Teachers are not positioned merely as transmitters of knowledge but as *murabbi* who guide students' moral and spiritual development through role modeling. Religious routines such as congregational prayer, daily Qur'an recitation, etiquette observance, and social service activities are designed to instill moral values consistently. The school's eight core character attributes—moral integrity, high ethical standards, independence, global awareness, resilience, responsibility, cultural refinement, and Indonesian identity—are translated into concrete programs including entrepreneurship training, social outreach, and student leadership initiatives. This approach aligns with Rahmania & 'Alaniah,¹³ who emphasize that religious foundations in education significantly contribute to self-regulation and character formation among youth.

From a sociological standpoint, curriculum development considers the socio-cultural context of students as well as the needs of the local and national community. Indonesia's pluralistic society—with its diversity of religions, ethnicities, and cultural norms—requires a curriculum capable of fostering inclusive and tolerant attitudes. Interviews with the curriculum team revealed that the school strives to align its programs with current social challenges, including bullying, adolescent social issues, and exposure to digital media. Accordingly, the curriculum is designed not only to achieve academic outcomes but also to create a safe, healthy, and inclusive school environment. Programs such as anti-bullying, anti-drug awareness, and tolerance education are strengthened through thematic activities and

¹³ Savira Rahmania and Almas Sharfina 'Alaniah, "Peta Posisi Landasan Pengembangan Kurikulum Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *Ibrah* 9, no. 1 (2024): 121.

student projects. The *Find Writing* program, for example, is used to train students to articulate their perspectives on tolerance, while *Alkindi Fest*, which involves international participants, provides direct multicultural experiences. These practices are consistent with Ma'arif,¹⁴ who argues that education must address the needs of modern society by cultivating academic competence alongside national character.

Psychological foundations also play a central role in the school's curriculum development. Interviews revealed that lesson planning consistently accounts for students' psychological characteristics, including cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions. The curriculum team noted, "We design instruction that accommodates students' pace and learning styles while also considering their emotional state to ensure effective learning." This approach is reflected in differentiated instruction, the use of formative assessments, and flexible grouping strategies. Additionally, the weekly Guidance and Counseling (BK) program is integrated into the curriculum to help students manage emotions, develop self-understanding, and navigate adolescent challenges. The curriculum team emphasized that all activities—including BK—are intended to support critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. This aligns with Yuliawati,¹⁵ who stresses that curriculum design must correspond to children's psychological development to ensure meaningful and effective learning.

With regard to science and technology, curriculum implementation at SMPIT Al Haraki demonstrates intensive use of digital tools as part of instructional strategy. Observations show that students use Chromebooks as their primary device to access materials, complete assignments, and collaborate on projects. Teachers utilize Google Workspace, Google Classroom, and Google Sites to enable accessible and flexible learning. Assessment is conducted not only through written examinations but also through digital project evaluations, online portfolios, and interactive quizzes such as Quizizz or Kahoot. The school also enriches learning with digital literacy and 21st-century skills, including basic coding, digital photography, and graphic design. These findings correspond with Majir,¹⁶ who notes that advances in science and technology require curriculum adjustments in content, strategies, learning media, and evaluation systems.

Overall, the foundations of curriculum development at SMPIT Al Haraki are not merely theoretical frameworks but are visibly operationalized through the integration of Qur'anic values, responsiveness to socio-cultural needs, attention to students' psychological development, and the strategic use of digital technology. Together, these foundations form a curriculum design that is adaptive, character-driven, and aligned with contemporary educational demands.

3. Implementation of the Islamic Education Curriculum

a. Curriculum Planning for Islamic Religious Education

Curriculum planning is a fundamental stage in ensuring that the learning process runs effectively and purposefully. Zenger and Zenger describe curriculum planning as a work instruction that serves as a standard guideline for all learning activities, while Dedi Lazuardi

¹⁴ Mohammad Ahyar Ma'arif, "Paradigma Baru Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Pedagogik* 05, no. 01 (2018): 109–23.

¹⁵ Lilis Yuliawati, "Pentingnya Landasan Psikologis Dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan," *Inovasi Kurikulum* 5, no. 1 (2021): 99–112.

¹⁶ Abdul Majir, *Dasar Pengembangan Kurikulum* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2017).

emphasizes that planning functions as a systematic reference for teachers and schools in developing and implementing the curriculum.¹⁷ In the context of SMPIT Al Haraki, the planning process for the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum is not only oriented toward fulfilling national standards or the Merdeka Curriculum, but also toward integrating Islamic values with the developmental needs of students.

The planning process begins with a comprehensive evaluation of the previous year's curriculum. This evaluation includes reviewing learning outcomes, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and challenges encountered during the learning process. Based on interviews with the curriculum team, the evaluation is conducted to ensure that PAI learning remains relevant to students' character and spiritual development, not merely their cognitive achievement. Input from subject teachers, homeroom teachers, and educational staff is also gathered to ensure that the upcoming curriculum plan reflects actual needs in the field. This practice aligns with the findings of Rahmania and Alaniah which highlight that curriculum design responsive to students' needs can enhance the effectiveness of character-based education.¹⁸

To manage the planning process more structurally, the school forms a specialized team consisting of the Principal, Vice Principal, Vice Principal for Curriculum, and three curriculum assistants who hold both coordinative and technical roles in program development. This team formulates annual programs, prepares class schedules and extracurricular activities, determines thematic projects, and coordinates school culture programs that characterize SMPIT Al Haraki. All these elements are formally discussed in Annual Meetings held in two stages: the first with school leaders and staff, and the second involving all teachers and homeroom teachers. Through this mechanism, every teacher understands the curriculum direction and is given space to propose improvements.

In the context of PAI learning planning, teachers are granted professional autonomy to develop teaching modules aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum while maintaining the school's distinctive character. The PAI modules contain core components such as learning objectives, students' initial competencies, mapping of learning outcomes, teaching methods, time allocation, learning media, formative–summative assessments, and both teacher and student reflections. Field observations show that the modules are complemented by student worksheets (LKPD), visual materials, and question banks that support differentiated learning. The availability of these tools demonstrates teachers' readiness to conduct learning that not only meets standards but is also adaptive to varying student abilities, as recommended by Yuliawati.¹⁹

Beyond academic aspects, the planning of the PAI curriculum at SMPIT Al Haraki is also directed toward developing students' character and spirituality. Non-curricular programs such as dhuha prayer, tahfidz sessions, Islamic mentoring, social activities, and daily etiquette routines are designed as an integral part of classroom learning. This integration is reflected in the explanation of the Vice Principal for Curriculum, who stated, "our main goal is not only to teach theories, but to ensure that religious values grow in students' behaviors." Thus, non-

¹⁷ Dedi Lazuardi, "Manajemen Kurikulum Sebagai Pengembangan Tujuan Pendidikan," *Al-Idarah: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (2017): 99–112.

¹⁸ Rahmania and 'Alaniah, "Peta Posisi Landasan Pengembangan Kurikulum Dalam Pendidikan Islam."

¹⁹ Yuliawati, "Pentingnya Landasan Psikologis Dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan."

curricular activities are not supplementary; they are essential components of the school's strategy to cultivate robbani (God-conscious) character.

This comprehensive planning, which integrates evaluation, needs analysis, character development, and systematic teaching tools, forms a crucial foundation for ensuring that the PAI curriculum is implemented effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with the school's educational goals. Thorough planning also facilitates monitoring, minimizes obstacles during implementation, and ensures that PAI learning responds to students' academic, moral, and spiritual needs.

b. Implementation of the Islamic Education Curriculum

1) Teaching Materials

The implementation of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMPIT Al Haraki demonstrates that teaching materials play a central role in shaping meaningful learning processes. Findings indicate that PAI teachers do not rely solely on textbooks as the primary source but also develop various instructional materials such as teaching modules, student worksheets, visual presentations, and digital media integrated with the school's learning ecosystem. The use of diverse teaching materials enables teachers to deliver content in a more contextual, engaging, and student-centered manner. This aligns with Syafei who asserts that teaching materials help learners access alternative learning resources while supporting teachers in designing systematic learning experiences.²⁰

Furthermore, this variety of teaching materials significantly enhances the quality of PAI instruction. Classroom activities become more interactive, students' participation increases, and their critical thinking and creativity develop through project-based tasks and class discussions. Field observations reveal that teachers frequently integrate PAI content with real-life cases or contemporary phenomena packaged in videos or digital articles, enabling students to understand Islamic teachings within the context of everyday life. Thus, teaching materials function not merely as tools for information delivery but as strategic instruments for developing students' analytical, collaborative, and problem-solving skills.

The internalization of Islamic values also takes place through the strategic use of teaching materials. Strengthening students' Qur'an literacy, daily prayers, and etiquette is carried out not only through non-academic activities but also through integration within the teaching modules. Teachers embed values such as morality, piety, responsibility, honesty, and social awareness into every learning topic. This approach illustrates that PAI learning at SMPIT Al Haraki goes beyond cognitive development, touching affective and psychomotor domains consistent with the holistic nature of Islamic education. This also aligns with Arief's view regarding the function of PAI as a means of forming students' morals and personality to prepare them for future challenges.²¹

In addition, the implementation of PAI learning consistently supports the goals of national education as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003, which emphasizes the importance of nurturing students who are faithful, pious, morally upright, creative, independent, and responsible. Field data show that the learning strategies combining diverse teaching materials and the

²⁰ Imam Syafei, "Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Problem Based Learning Untuk Menangkal Radikalisme Pada Peserta Didik Sma Negeri Di Kota Bandar Lampung," *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 1 (2019): 137–58.

²¹ Armai Arief, *Pengantar Ilmu Dan Metodologi Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Ciputat Press, 2002).

strengthening of Islamic values create a learning environment that balances intellectual mastery with spiritual development. Religious programs such as tahfidz, collective prayers, and Islamic literacy activities demonstrate that character strengthening is not an add-on but an integral part of curriculum implementation.

These findings confirm that the implementation of the PAI curriculum at SMPIT Al Haraki is not merely administrative but genuinely serves as a medium for character formation and the habituation of Islamic values. Curriculum success is not measured by the completion of material delivery alone but by its ability to encourage students to behave according to religious values, develop noble character, and acquire competencies relevant to contemporary challenges. Thus, the strategic use of varied teaching materials at SMPIT Al Haraki can be considered effective in supporting the Merdeka Curriculum while strengthening the role of PAI as the foundation of character education in the school.

2) Learning Activities

The findings reveal that learning activities in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMPIT Al Haraki are carried out systematically through interconnected opening, core, and closing stages. In the opening stage, teachers begin the lesson with attendance, collective prayer, motivation, and an apperception activity that links students' prior experiences to the new material. These opening activities are not merely administrative; they serve as spiritual and psychological conditioning that helps students enter the learning atmosphere with greater readiness and focus. This religious habituation, as emphasized by Muna et al. enhances learning readiness because prayer and apperception act as a bridge between students' personal lives and the learning objectives to be achieved.²²

During the core stage, learning is conducted using active approaches that involve exploration, discussion, analysis, and reflection. Teachers utilize various learning resources such as texts, short videos, case studies, and activity sheets to promote student participation. Field findings show that the core activities are designed to balance cognitive understanding with critical and collaborative thinking skills. Through discussions and case analyses, students not only comprehend Islamic teachings but also learn to relate these values to real-life situations such as social issues, interpersonal interactions, worship practices, and digital ethics. This approach makes learning more relevant and meaningful because students are positioned as active meaning-makers rather than passive recipients. This aligns with Nofmiyati, Miftahuddin, and Zatrachadi who found that exploration- and collaboration-based learning strategies effectively increase intrinsic motivation, active participation, and students' problem-solving abilities.²³

The core activities also demonstrate that PAI instruction at SMPIT Al Haraki is not narrowly focused on rote memorization or textual understanding; instead, it aims to develop critical awareness and contextual religious attitudes. Student engagement in discussions, observations, and problem-solving exercises strengthens their ability to reflect on religious

²² Dwiva Zumarul Muna et al., "Penerapan Pendekatan ADLX (Active Deep Learner Experience) Dalam Pembelajaran PAI : Studi Kasus Pada Praktik Pembiasaan Sholat Di SD Negeri 1 Mantingan" 4, no. 3 (2025): 555–66.

²³ Nofmiyati Nofmiyati, Miftahuddin Miftahuddin, and M. Fahli Zatrachadi, "Analisis Partisipasi Siswa Dalam Pembelajaran Agama Islam: Analisis Studi Literatur," *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan & Konseling Pendidikan* 4, no. 1 (2023): 7.

teachings, enabling deeper internalization of Islamic values in everyday situations. Thus, the core stage functions as a crucial setting for forming students' character in ways that are responsive to the demands of modern life.

In the closing stage, teachers summarize key concepts, engage students in Q&A, provide brief feedback, and close the lesson with collective prayer. This concluding process not only ensures that students understand the main points of the lesson but also provides space for reflection. Reflection helps students reconnect the material with personal experiences, ensuring that the knowledge gained does not remain at the cognitive level but also influences attitudes and behaviors. Research by Yogi Tri Gustian, Rahmat, and Gusmaneli affirms that closing activities involving summaries and reflection help strengthen students' metacognitive skills, their ability to assess, understand, and regulate their own learning processes.²⁴

Thus, PAI learning activities at SMPIT Al Haraki do not operate mechanically but follow a pedagogical design that encourages emotional, spiritual, and intellectual engagement. Learning that begins with spiritual conditioning, reinforced through active learning in the core stage, and concluded with structured reflection demonstrates that curriculum implementation in this school not only transfers religious knowledge but also instills values, shapes attitudes, and strengthens students' Islamic character in real-life contexts.

3) Learning Methods

The learning methods used in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMPIT Al Haraki are dominated by the Discovery Learning approach, which is integrated with 21st-century skills (4C). This method is not only intended to transmit religious knowledge but also to ensure that learning becomes a transformative process. Discovery Learning encourages students to uncover concepts through direct exploration, while the integration of the 4C, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration, addresses the demands of modern learning that require students to be more active, reflective, and collaborative. The use of this method aligns with contemporary research showing that discovery-based learning models can enhance motivation and understanding of abstract concepts because students feel engaged in constructing their own knowledge.²⁵

The implementation of this method is carried out through four structured core meetings. The first stage consists of exploration and observation using guiding questions that stimulate curiosity and prompt students to observe religious phenomena more critically. The second stage focuses on group analysis and discussion, allowing students to develop understanding through social interaction and the exchange of ideas. The third stage emphasizes concept discovery through case studies and creative activities that enable students to connect Islamic values with their real-life contexts. The fourth stage involves evaluation and reflection, reinforcing understanding while cultivating self-awareness so that learning does not stop at the cognitive level. This stepwise structure is aligned with the notion that the effectiveness of a method depends on how well it corresponds to systematically and meaningfully designed learning activities.²⁶

²⁴ Yogi Tri Gustian, Zul Hafriadi Rahmat, and Gusmaneli Gusmaneli, "Peran Strategi Pembelajaran Reflektif Dalam Menumbuhkan Kesadaran Religius Siswa," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dirgantara* 2, no. 2 (2025): 54–68.

²⁵ Ubabuddin and Umi Nasikhah, "Variasi Metode Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Jurnal Edukatif* V, no. 2 (2019): 115–23.

²⁶ Bruce R. Joyce and Marsha Weil, *Model Of Teaching* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000).

The integration of Discovery Learning with the 4C at SMPIT Al Haraki has been shown to produce comprehensive impacts on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students. In terms of critical thinking, students learn to analyze Islamic values more reflectively in response to contemporary issues and the dynamics of digital life. Regarding communication, discussion- and presentation-based learning helps students articulate religious messages coherently and in ways that are relevant to the current context. For collaboration, project-based activities promote teamwork in understanding and applying Islamic teachings while fostering social awareness and reducing individualistic tendencies common among digital-era students. As for creativity, students are trained to explore Islamic teachings through digital projects, writing, and other creative media, making religious values more contextual and engaging. These findings are strengthened by recent studies showing that reinforcing 4C skills through innovative models such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, collaboration, and gamification effectively increases active participation, creativity, and adaptive character in facing moral challenges of the digital age.²⁷

Thus, the learning methods implemented at SMPIT Al Haraki can be understood as pedagogical innovations that expand the function of Islamic Religious Education from a mere instrument of knowledge transmission to a comprehensive strategy that integrates Islamic values with 21st-century skills. This approach not only strengthens conceptual understanding but also shapes religious character that remains relevant to the demands of the digital era, ensuring that Islamic values are internalized and applied meaningfully in students' daily lives.

4) Learning Media

This study shows that the effectiveness of digital learning at SMPIT Al Haraki does not solely depend on the availability of media but primarily on the teacher's creativity in utilizing it. Facilities such as Chromebooks and platforms like Google Classroom, Google Forms, Quizizz, Wordwall, Kahoot, and Padlet provide broad opportunities for interaction. However, these media become significantly impactful only when teachers transform them into meaningful and relevant learning experiences. This creative element explains why digital learning at the school does not stop at technical use of technology but becomes a pedagogical tool that strengthens conceptual understanding and 21st-century skills.

Essentially, learning media serve as channels of message delivery, and their success depends on the teacher's ability to select, adapt, and combine them according to students' learning needs. This research reinforces such views, showing that digital media function optimally only when used for collaborative and reflective activities, such as Padlet-based discussions or interactive evaluations via Quizizz. In this context, the teacher's role is central as the connector between technology and classroom dynamics, ensuring that media use does not become mere entertainment but supports critical thinking, communication, and the reinforcement of religious values.

Successful use of media at SMPIT Al Haraki is also influenced by the school's monthly teacher evaluation mechanism, which acts as a quality control measure. This routine evaluation ensures that teachers continuously update their strategies and avoid stagnation in media selection. The findings show that teacher mastery of subject matter and ability to

²⁷ Lu Mukarromah and Achmad Fawaid, "Konstruksi Keterampilan 4C Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam Untuk Memintasi Dekadensi Moral Gen Z," *Edukasiana: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan* 4, no. 3 (2025): 674–82.

operate digital media are key factors determining learning quality. This evaluation encourages teachers to explore new media such as Edpuzzle or Jamboard, keeping instruction adaptive to technological advancements and student needs.

For students, digital media increase motivation and participation by making learning more interactive, visual, and contextual. Audio-visual media help students grasp abstract concepts and enable experiential learning rather than relying solely on verbal explanations. These findings are consistent with recent studies asserting that digital media can enhance information retention, active participation, and student engagement when used pedagogically rather than merely as technical tools.²⁸

Thus, the use of digital media at SMPIT Al Haraki functions as an integrated pedagogical strategy that combines teacher creativity, technological innovation, and continuous evaluation systems. The synergy among these three aspects explains why digital learning at the school is able to produce an effective, adaptive, and relevant learning process. Learning media do not appear as supplementary tools, but as strategic instruments that strengthen curriculum goals and improve the quality of students' learning experiences.

5) Learning Constraints

The results of this study show that lack of concentration is the primary obstacle in the learning process at SMPIT Al Haraki. Several students were easily distracted, unfocused, and tended to engage in unrelated activities during lessons. Low concentration can be explained by the cognitive developmental characteristics of elementary-level students, who generally have shorter attention spans; thus, insufficiently varied learning activities cause them to lose focus quickly. This aligns with recent findings indicating that primary school students are highly prone to distraction when learning does not involve continuous stimulation or multisensory activities.²⁹ This condition requires teachers to design more dynamic lessons to sustain students' attention.

In addition to concentration problems, classroom conditions that were sometimes less conducive also posed challenges in implementing PAI learning. During some discussion and presentation sessions, certain students were passive or unserious, making the classroom atmosphere harder to manage. Such irregularities indicate that student participation is still uneven, even though collaborative learning can only succeed when all students are actively involved. Positive social interaction in the classroom is essential because it allows every student to participate without psychological or physical obstacles. A less conducive learning environment ultimately disrupts instructional flow and reduces the effectiveness of collaborative strategies applied.³⁰

Another challenge relates to differences in students' abilities, both in terms of content understanding and digital literacy. These variations require teachers to repeatedly adjust strategies so that all students can follow the lessons at a similar pace. Students with lower digital literacy often need more intensive support, especially when learning involves the use of applications or digital platforms. This finding aligns with recent studies showing a positive

²⁸ Kaiful Umam, "Penerapan Media Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Apresiasi Batik Kelas X SMA Negeri 1 Blega," *Jurnal Pendidikan Seni Rupa* 1, no. 1 (2017): 100–105.

²⁹ Mic Finanto Ario Bangun, *Perilaku Belajar* (Malang: Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2023).

³⁰ Arianti, "Urgensi Lingkungan Belajar Yang Kondusif Dalam Mendorong Siswa Belajar Aktif," *Didaktika* 11, no. 1 (2017): 43, <https://doi.org/10.30863/didaktika.v11i1.161>.

correlation between students' digital literacy and the quality of learning in Indonesia, where higher digital literacy is associated with stronger engagement, motivation, and academic achievement.³¹ Such differences create gaps among students and affect the overall effectiveness and efficiency of instruction.

Thus, these constraints reflect that PAI learning at SMPIT Al Haraki faces various psychological, social, and technological complexities. Challenges such as low concentration, less conducive classroom conditions, and varying student abilities require teachers to design learning that is more adaptive, varied, and responsive to individual needs and classroom dynamics.

c. Evaluation of the Islamic Education Curriculum

Evaluation of the curriculum is a crucial component for ensuring that it operates effectively, efficiently, and in alignment with educational goals. Theoretically, curriculum evaluation is necessary to determine whether a curriculum should be maintained, revised, or replaced, as Sukmadinata explains that evaluation functions to ensure the curriculum's relevance to context and learner needs. This idea is reinforced by Mulyasa, who emphasizes that curriculum evaluation must be continuous and comprehensive in order to remain relevant to developments in knowledge and technology. In the context of SMPIT Al Haraki, evaluation of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum is conducted through formative and summative assessments. These assessments measure not only academic achievement but also the processes, quality, and sustainability of curriculum implementation, aligning with modern curriculum evaluation orientations that include developmental purposes, accountability, and knowledge expansion.³²

Formative assessment at SMPIT Al Haraki is carried out periodically at the beginning, midpoint, and end of instruction to provide quick feedback for teachers regarding the effectiveness of teaching strategies. Teachers can adjust methods and media based on student responses, making learning more adaptive to classroom needs. Meanwhile, summative assessment measures the final achievement of learning objectives through academic reports that include knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This evaluation pattern demonstrates coherence between curriculum evaluation theory and school practice, as evaluation does not stop at measuring results but also assesses the effectiveness of curriculum implementation as a whole, consistent with Ornstein and Hunkins' argument that evaluation must consider the implementation process, not merely learning outputs.

SMPIT Al Haraki evaluates students in three major domains—attitudes, knowledge, and skills, in line with the core competencies of the national curriculum. Attitude assessment includes spiritual and social dimensions through observation, communication with parents, and behavior documentation. Knowledge assessment is conducted through written tests, oral tests, and varied assignments. Skills assessment uses performance tasks, projects, and portfolios. Each evaluation result is presented in numerical form, predicates, and descriptive feedback to provide a comprehensive picture of student development. In addition, class

³¹ Loso Judijanto, "Analisis Pengaruh Tingkat Literasi Digital Guru Dan Siswa Terhadap Kualitas Pembelajaran Di Era Digital Di Indonesia," *Sanskara Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 2, no. 02 (2024): 50–60, <https://doi.org/10.58812/spp.v2i02.391>.

³² Ahmad Helmi, "Evaluasi Kurikulum Pelatihan Penyusunan Renstra Kementerian ESDM Berdasarkan Kebutuhan Dan Harapan Alumni Pelatihan Di PPSDMA," *Aparatur* 4, no. 2 (2020).

promotion criteria at SMPIT Al Haraki are fairly strict, including achieving the minimum competency standards (KKM) for PAI and Qur'an subjects, having no more than three core subjects below KKM, and meeting minimum attendance requirements. These criteria reflect the school's commitment to academic integrity and discipline.

Another significant finding is the strategic role of the *Imtihanul Qur'an* as part of the final evaluation system. This tahfiz program assesses students' memorization of Juz 27, fluency of recitation, and consistency in maintaining their memorization from Grade 7 to Grade 9. The presence of qualified *hafiz* and *hafizah* as examiners adds a strong spiritual dimension, showing that evaluation measures not only cognitive ability but also the cultivation of Qur'anic character. This evaluative approach differs from many schools that tend to separate academic assessment from tahfiz or religious practice, positioning SMPIT Al Haraki as an institution that integrates academic and spiritual evaluation in a balanced manner.

Beyond the intraclass components, evaluation is also applied to religious extracurricular programs. In *Alki Tahfidz Camp* and *Imtihanul Qur'an*, assessment focuses on memorization accuracy, fluency, and tajwid comprehension. *Alki Smart Camp* evaluates the ability to apply Islamic values within integrated activities, while *Alki in D'Fest* and *Alki EXPO* assess students' Islamic creativity through arts, *nasyid*, and da'wah performances. Meanwhile, WE Day measures students' social concern as part of character development, and national/international student visits evaluate their global Islamic literacy. These activities demonstrate that PAI curriculum evaluation at SMPIT Al Haraki goes beyond academics, encompassing social, spiritual, and creative Islamic domains in an integrated manner.

The findings of this study differ significantly from prior research on PAI curriculum evaluation. Most previous studies focus on academic, administrative, or cognitive achievement-centered evaluation. The Al Haraki findings reveal a far more comprehensive, integrative evaluation approach oriented toward Islamic character development. For example, Judijanto emphasizes the relationship between digital literacy and learning quality but does not address the integration of academic and spiritual evaluation as seen in Al Haraki's model.³³ Likewise, other PAI curriculum evaluation studies highlight knowledge and skill assessment, whereas this study identifies tahfiz, akhlak, Islamic creativity, and social responsibility as inseparable indicators. Thus, the Al Haraki evaluation model offers a holistic evaluative framework rarely explored extensively in previous literature.

This study contributes by presenting a PAI curriculum evaluation model that integrates academic, spiritual, social, and creative assessments into a single cohesive system. The findings enrich curriculum evaluation scholarship by demonstrating that schools can develop a more comprehensive evaluation model through a combination of formative and summative assessments, *tahfiz* evaluation, character observation, Islamic creativity appraisal, and social responsibility evaluation. The implications for PAI curriculum development in Indonesia are significant: first, schools should expand evaluation indicators beyond cognition to include students' moral and spiritual integrity; second, integrating intraclass and extracurricular evaluation effectively strengthens students' religious character; and third, these findings open opportunities for applying holistic evaluation models in other schools, particularly in digital

³³ Judijanto, "Analisis Pengaruh Tingkat Literasi Digital Guru Dan Siswa Terhadap Kualitas Pembelajaran Di Era Digital Di Indonesia."

contexts, so that PAI curricula remain adaptive to contemporary demands without abandoning core Islamic values.

Beyond offering a comprehensive depiction of PAI curriculum evaluation mechanisms at SMPIT Al Haraki, this research also provides important contributions for curriculum development in Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that integrating academic and religious evaluation can produce a more holistic assessment model compared to the patterns typically found in previous research, which tend to separate cognitive evaluation from character formation. By combining formative assessment, summative assessment, evaluation of worship practices, and systematic reinforcement of Qur'anic memorization, this study shows that curriculum evaluation not only measures student achievement but also facilitates spiritual growth and character formation. This approach contributes new insights to the discourse on national curriculum development, especially at a time when Indonesia is shifting learning orientation toward character strengthening and the Profil Pelajar Pancasila.

These findings also have significant implications for curriculum implementation at the school level. Evaluation that encourages parental involvement, through report retrieval and direct dialogue with students, illustrates that assessment can serve as a collaborative medium between school, students, and family. This model can be replicated elsewhere to strengthen character education, especially in schools seeking to integrate value-based learning with academic achievement. Additionally, the integrated evaluation of religious extracurriculars with core curriculum activities shows that assessment need not be confined to classroom contexts. This highlights that curriculum evaluation can be expanded to assess learning experiences more broadly and deeply, encouraging schools to redesign evaluations of religious activities so they are not merely ceremonial but function as valid instruments for tracking spiritual competency development.

At the policy level, this research provides implications for strengthening Indonesia's national PAI curriculum by recommending the development of measurable standards for spiritual evaluation. Spiritual attitude assessment within the national curriculum has been frequently criticized for lacking strong operational indicators, whereas this study shows that schools can concretely develop observation procedures, worship portfolios, or memorization achievements relevant to their educational contexts. This contribution reinforces the idea that curriculum development should allow creative space for schools in designing value-based assessments, rather than relying solely on uniform standardized formats. Thus, this study not only enriches the literature on PAI curriculum evaluation but also offers a new direction indicating that integrating spiritual values and academic competencies can be conducted in a structured, measurable, and contextually relevant manner.

D. CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze how the Merdeka Curriculum is developed, implemented, and evaluated in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at Integrated Islamic Junior High School SMPIT Al Haraki Depok. Based on the findings, the research objectives have been clearly addressed. The curriculum development in this school follows a grass-roots model in which teachers serve as the primary drivers, while its implementation integrates modern pedagogical approaches with Islamic values through the use of digital technology, religious habituation, and both intra- and extracurricular Islamic programs. Curriculum evaluation is carried out comprehensively through formative and summative assessments, moral

observations, and tahfiz achievements, providing a holistic picture of students' academic, spiritual, and character development. Therefore, this study convincingly demonstrates that the Merdeka Curriculum at SMPIT Al Haraki operates in an adaptive and relevant manner, aligned with the demands of 21st-century learning as well as the principles of Islamic education. The main contribution of this research lies in presenting an integrative and holistic model of PAI curriculum evaluation, which differs from previous studies that often separate academic assessment from religious character development. This study shows that strengthening spiritual and moral values can be systematically designed by integrating intra- and extracurricular evaluation. In addition, the findings highlight the importance of digital innovation in supporting the Merdeka Curriculum without diminishing the Islamic identity of educational institutions. These contributions offer practical insights for other schools seeking to develop an adaptive PAI curriculum, as well as theoretical contributions to the broader conceptual development of PAI curriculum evaluation in Indonesia. Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, it was conducted at only one educational institution, meaning that the findings cannot yet be generalized to other integrated Islamic schools with different characteristics. Second, the study did not explore in depth the long-term impact of the holistic evaluation model on students' spiritual development after graduation. Third, student participation as research subjects was limited to observation and short interviews, which prevented a more comprehensive understanding of their perspectives regarding the effectiveness of digital learning. In light of these limitations, future research is recommended to involve a wider range of schools with diverse characteristics in order to compare different models of Merdeka Curriculum implementation in PAI learning. Further studies should also examine the long-term impact of digital integration and value-based learning on students' moral and spiritual development. Moreover, an in-depth exploration of students' learning experiences within technology-based PAI instruction may open new opportunities for more relevant pedagogical innovations tailored to the needs of the digital generation.

References

- Arianti. "Urgensi Lingkungan Belajar Yang Kondusif Dalam Mendorong Siswa Belajar Aktif." *Didaktika* 11, no. 1 (2017): 43. <https://doi.org/10.30863/didaktika.v11i1.161>
- Arief, Armai. *Pengantar Ilmu Dan Metodologi Pendidikan Islam*. Jakarta: Ciputat Press, 2002. [Google](#)
- Ariga, Selamat. "Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Pasca Pandemi Covid-19." *Edu Society: Jurnal Pendidikan, Ilmu Sosial Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 2, no. 2 (2022): 662–70. <https://doi.org/10.56832/edu.v2i2.225>
- Bangun, Mic Finanto Ario. *Perilaku Belajar*. Malang: Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2023. [Google](#)
- Cantika, Varary Mechwafanitiara. "Prosedur Pengembangan Kurikulum (Kajian Literatur Manajemen Inovasi Kurikulum)." *Inovasi Kurikulum* 19, no. 2 (2022): 171–84. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jik.v19i2.44220>
- Cholilah, Mulik, Anggi Gratia Putri Tatuwo, Komariah, and Shinta Prima Rosdiana. "Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Dalam Satuan Pendidikan Serta Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Abad 21." *Sanskara Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 1, no. 02 (2023): 56–67. <https://doi.org/10.58812/spp.v1i02.110>
- Dedi Lazuardi. "Manajemen Kurikulum Sebagai Pengembangan Tujuan Pendidikan." *Al-Idarah: Jurnal Kependidikan Islam* 7, no. 1 (2017): 99–112. [Google](#)

- Fauzi, Muhammad Noor. "Problematika Guru Mengimplementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Pada Pembelajaran PAI Di Sekolah Dasar." *Al-Madrasah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 7, no. 4 (2023): 1661–74. <https://doi.org/10.35931/am.v7i4.2688>
- Hakim, Harend Abdul, and Triono Ali Mustofa. "Tantangan Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Studi Kasus SMP El Dzikir Islamic Boarding School." *Kamaya: Jurnal Ilmu Agama* 8, no. 2 (2025): 193–203. <https://doi.org/10.37329/kamaya.v8i2.4264>
- Helmi, Ahmad. "Evaluasi Kurikulum Pelatihan Penyusunan Renstra Kementerian ESDM Berdasarkan Kebutuhan Dan Harapan Alumni Pelatihan Di PPSDMA." *Aparatur* 4, no. 2 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.52596/ja.v4i2.2>
- Joyce, Bruce R., and Marsha Weil. *Model Of Teaching*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000. [Google](#)
- Judijanto, Loso. "Analisis Pengaruh Tingkat Literasi Digital Guru Dan Siswa Terhadap Kualitas Pembelajaran Di Era Digital Di Indonesia." *Sanskara Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 2, no. 02 (2024): 50–60. <https://doi.org/10.58812/spp.v2i02.391>
- Kaiful Umam. "Penerapan Media Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Apresiasi Batik Kelas X SMA Negeri 1 Blega." *Jurnal Pendidikan Seni Rupa* 1, no. 1 (2017): 100–105. [Google](#)
- Kailani, Rizal. "Model Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam." *Inovasi Kurikulum* 2 (2021): 178–95. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jik.v18i2.35798>
- Khoirurrijal, Fadriati, Sofia, Anisa Dwi Mkarufi, Sunaryo Gandi, Abdul Muin, Tajeri, Ali Fakhruddin, Hamdani, and Suprapno. *Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka*. Malang: Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2022. [Google](#)
- Kurnia, Suci. "Kesiapan Guru Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum MERdeka Di Sekolah Dasar Islam (SDI) Surya Buana Kota Malang." Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijpgmi.v2i2.3264>
- Ma'arif, Mohammad Ahyar. "Paradigma Baru Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam." *Jurnal Pedagogik* 05, no. 01 (2018): 109–23. [Google](#)
- Majir, Abdul. *Dasar Pengembangan Kurikulum*. Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2017. [Google](#)
- Makalalag, Nana Adelina, Kamila Nangune, and Yusnaini. "Tantangan Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Dalam Pembelajaran PAI Di SMAN 2 Limboto." *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Kearifan Lokal* 5, no. 1 (2025): 197–205. [Google](#)
- Mukarromah, Lu, and Achmad Fawaid. "Konstruksi Keterampilan 4C Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam Untuk Memintasi Dekadensi Moral Gen Z." *Edukasiana: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan* 4, no. 3 (2025): 674–82. <https://doi.org/10.56916/ejip.v4i3.1398>
- Muna, Dwiva Zumarul, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Islam, Nahdlatul Ulama, Informasi Artikel, Islamic Education, Active Learning, Deep Learning, and Experiential Learning. "Penerapan Pendekatan ADLX (Active Deep Learner Experience) Dalam Pembelajaran PAI: Studi Kasus Pada Praktik Pembiasaan Sholat Di SD Negeri 1 Mantingan" 4, no. 3 (2025): 555–66. <https://doi.org/10.54259/diajar.v4i3.4703>
- Nofmiyati, Nofmiyati, Miftahuddin Miftahuddin, and M. Fahli Zatrachadi. "Analisis Partisipasi Siswa Dalam Pembelajaran Agama Islam: Analisis Studi Literatur." *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan & Konseling Pendidikan* 4, no. 1 (2023): 7. <https://doi.org/10.24014/japkp.v4i1.24983>
- Rahmania, Savira, and Almas Sharfina 'Alaniah. "Peta Posisi Landasan Pengembangan Kurikulum Dalam Pendidikan Islam." *Ibrah* 9, no. 1 (2024): 121. <https://doi.org/10.61815/alibrah.v9i1.377>

- Rahmat, Abdul, Mohamad Zubaidi, and Mira Mirnawati. *Desain Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2023. [Google](#)
- Rosa, Elisa, Rangga Destian, Andy Agustian, and Wahyudin Wahyudin. "Inovasi Model Dan Strategi Pembelajaran Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka." *Journal of Education Research* 5, no. 3 (2024): 2608–17. <https://doi.org/10.37985/jer.v5i3.1153>
- Rouf, Muhammad, Akhmad Said, and Dedi Eko Riyadi HS. "Pengembangan Kurikulum Sekolah: Konsep, Model Dan Implementasi." *Al-Ibrah* 5, no. 2 (2020): 24–41. [Google](#)
- Syafei, Imam. "Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Problem Based Learning Untuk Menangkal Radikalisme Pada Peserta Didik Sma Negeri Di Kota Bandar Lampung." *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 1 (2019): 137–58. <https://doi.org/10.24042/atjpi.v10i1.3631>
- Ubabuddin, and Umi Nasikhah. "Variasi Metode Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam." *Jurnal Edukatif* V, no. 2 (2019): 115–23. <https://doi.org/10.30659/jpai.2.2.15-24>
- Yogi Tri Gustian, Zul Hafriadi Rahmat, and Gusmaneli Gusmaneli. "Peran Strategi Pembelajaran Reflektif Dalam Menumbuhkan Kesadaran Religius Siswa." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dirgantara* 2, no. 2 (2025): 54–68. <https://doi.org/10.59841/ihsanika.v2i4.2028>
- Yuliawati, Lilis. "Pentingnya Landasan Psikologis Dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan." *Inovasi Kurikulum* 5, no. 1 (2021): 99–112. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jik.v5i1.35627> <https://doi.org/10.17509/jik.v5i1.35627>