



Strategies of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Curriculum Development in Indonesian Junior High Schools

Husnatur Rahmi¹, Seprian Ilham¹, Rizal Safarudin¹

¹STAI Ar-Risalah Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

 rhusnatur@gmail.com *

Article Information:

Received February 10, 2026

Revised March 18, 2026

Accepted April 10, 2026

Keywords: *Teacher strategies, Islamic religious education, curriculum development, junior high school*

Abstract

Although studies on Islamic Religious Education curriculum development have been widely conducted, research specifically examining teachers' strategies within school-level practices remains limited. This study investigates teachers' strategies in developing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum at the junior high school level. This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design, with data collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that teachers' curriculum development strategies encompass four main stages; in-depth understanding of the curriculum, systematic instructional planning, contextualized teaching implementation, and continuous evaluation. In addition, this study identifies supporting factors, including teachers' professional competence, institutional support, and the availability of facilities and infrastructure, as well as constraining factors such as limited instructional time and diverse student abilities. These findings highlight the strategic role of teachers in ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum to students' needs. This study contributes to the development of Islamic education curriculum discourse by emphasizing the importance of teacher-centered strategies in dynamic educational contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is a fundamental component of the education system, as it serves as the primary framework guiding the learning process (Adrivat et al., 2024; Akmalayah et al., 2021). In the context of Islamic Religious Education, the curriculum is not only oriented toward the acquisition of cognitive knowledge but also emphasizes the development of students' religious attitudes and character in a holistic manner (Latifa et al., 2022; Suri & Chandra, 2021). Therefore, the development of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum requires an adaptive and contextual approach to address students' needs amid dynamic social changes and evolving educational policies. Teachers play a strategic role in curriculum development, as they function not only as implementers but also as curriculum developers at the practical level (Engkizar et al., 2026; Hasan et al., 2025; Masani & Fabanjo, 2026). Islamic Religious Education teachers are required to translate the

How to cite:

Rahmi, H., Ilham, S., Safarudin, R. (2026). Strategies of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Curriculum Development in Indonesian Junior High Schools. *Ahlussunnah: Journal of Islamic Education*, 5(1), 191-197.

E-ISSN:

2827-9573

Published by:

The Institute for Research and Community Service

curriculum into instructional planning and learning practices that are relevant, innovative, and meaningful. Previous studies indicate that the success of curriculum implementation is largely determined by teachers' professional competence, creativity, and adaptive capacity in responding to diverse student characteristics and learning environments (Dudung, 2018; Engkizar 2025; Han & Abdrahim, 2023; Yusnita et al., 2018).

In the context of contemporary education, the demands for curriculum development have become increasingly complex due to technological advancements, globalization, and changes in student characteristics. The curriculum is no longer static but dynamic, requiring continuous development to remain relevant to current needs. This condition requires Islamic Religious Education teachers not only to understand the curriculum normatively but also to integrate Islamic values with contextual, inclusive, and character-oriented learning approaches (Engkizar et al., 2024; Syaifudin et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the development of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum faces various practical challenges in the field, such as limited instructional time, heterogeneous student abilities, and varying levels of institutional support. These conditions require teachers to adopt appropriate strategies to ensure that the designed curriculum can be implemented effectively. Therefore, understanding teachers' strategies in curriculum development becomes essential, particularly within real school contexts (Defriyanto et al., 2026; Htay et al., 2025; Masani & Fabanjo, 2026).

However, studies specifically examining teachers' strategies in Islamic Religious Education curriculum development within school-level practices remain limited, especially at the junior high school level (Az-Zahra et al., 2025; Kassymova et al., 2025). Most existing studies tend to focus on general curriculum implementation without deeply elaborating on the strategies employed by teachers in developing the curriculum in real educational settings. This limitation highlights the need for more contextual and practice-based research.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine in depth teachers' strategies in developing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum by employing a qualitative approach with a case study design at the junior high school level. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic education curriculum studies and practically to support teachers and policymakers in improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning in schools.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore teachers' strategies in developing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum within a real school context. A case study design was selected to enable an in-depth understanding of practices, processes, and contextual factors influencing curriculum development at the institutional level. The study was conducted in a public junior high school in Indonesia. Research participants were purposively selected based on their roles and involvement in curriculum development, including the school principal, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, and teachers of Islamic Religious Education (Engkizar et al., 2025; Ummah et al., 2025). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The researcher served as the primary instrument, supported by interview guidelines, observation protocols, and documentation tools to ensure systematic data collection (Baxter & Jack, 2015; Brennen, 2021; Shuhufi & Purkon, 2023).

Data analysis was carried out using an interactive model involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. This process was conducted iteratively to ensure a comprehensive understanding of emerging

patterns and themes. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, source triangulation and method triangulation were applied by comparing information obtained from different participants and data collection techniques (Engkizar et al., 2025; Lim, 2025; Neale, 2024; Pohontsch, 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that teachers possess a well-developed understanding of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum, which encompasses not only its formal structure but also its philosophical and pedagogical foundations. This understanding includes clarity regarding curriculum objectives, core competencies, basic competencies, and guiding principles of curriculum development (Rohmah & Roqib, 2024; Saputra, 2023; Sutrisno & Nasucha, 2022). Such comprehensive knowledge enables teachers to interpret the curriculum beyond its written form and to adapt it to the specific learning needs of students. In this context, teachers are not merely curriculum implementers but also active interpreters who translate curriculum frameworks into meaningful educational practices. This finding suggests that conceptual mastery of the curriculum is a prerequisite for effective curriculum development at the classroom level (Hussin & Tamuri, 2019; Wakifah et al., 2023; Zarkasyi, 2020).

In relation to the planning phase, the study shows that teachers engage in systematic and reflective processes when designing instructional activities. Instructional planning is carried out through the development of structured learning documents, including syllabi and lesson plans, which are aligned with curriculum standards while remaining responsive to students' characteristics (B & Elihami, 2021; Hendawi et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2022). Teachers demonstrate the ability to integrate religious values into instructional objectives, learning materials, and assessment strategies. This integration reflects a deliberate effort to ensure that the curriculum does not function solely as an academic guideline but also as a medium for value internalization. Furthermore, planning is not treated as a static administrative task but as a dynamic process that involves continuous adjustment based on classroom realities.

The implementation of the curriculum reflects a shift from teacher-centered instruction toward more interactive and context-based learning practices. Teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that encourage student participation, critical thinking, and the application of knowledge in real-life situations. Learning activities are designed to create an environment that supports both intellectual engagement and moral development (Lee & Kim, 2019; Marhamah, 2022; Matsuyama et al., 2019). As a result, students are not only able to understand religious concepts cognitively but also demonstrate their application in daily behavior. This indicates that effective curriculum implementation requires alignment between instructional methods, learning objectives, and the broader goal of character development.

In addition, the findings highlight that the success of curriculum development is significantly influenced by a combination of supporting and constraining factors. Supporting factors include teachers' professional competence, which allows them to design and implement adaptive learning strategies, as well as institutional support that facilitates access to resources and encourages collaborative practices. Adequate facilities and infrastructure also contribute to the effectiveness of instructional delivery (Darminto et al., 2025; Ergulec et al., 2023; Jimenez & O'Neill, 2021). On the other hand, several challenges were identified, particularly limited instructional time and the diverse range of student abilities. These challenges require teachers to adopt flexible strategies, differentiate instruction, and continuously refine their teaching approaches. The presence of these constraints demonstrates that curriculum

development is not a linear process but a complex and negotiated practice shaped by multiple contextual factors.

From a broader perspective, these findings emphasize the central role of teachers as key agents in curriculum development. Teachers operate at the intersection between policy and practice, where they actively shape how the curriculum is interpreted and enacted in the classroom. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and respond to contextual challenges determines the extent to which the curriculum achieves its intended outcomes (Daulay & Pulungan, 2024; Hendawi et al., 2024; Kholis & Mustofa, 2024). This study therefore reinforces the view that curriculum effectiveness is not solely determined by its design at the policy level but also by the quality of its enactment at the classroom level.

Furthermore, the findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical insights into how teacher-driven strategies function within the context of Islamic Religious Education. Unlike studies that focus primarily on curriculum implementation in a general sense, this study highlights the strategic dimension of teachers' roles in actively developing and transforming the curriculum in practice. This contribution is particularly relevant in the context of contemporary education, where flexibility, contextualization, and responsiveness are essential characteristics of effective curriculum development.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that teachers' strategies in developing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum are carried out through four interconnected stages: comprehensive curriculum understanding, systematic instructional planning, contextualized learning implementation, and continuous evaluation. These strategies demonstrate that curriculum development at the classroom level is an active and dynamic process shaped by teachers' professional capacity and contextual considerations. The study also reveals that curriculum development is influenced by both enabling and constraining factors, including professional competence, institutional support, limited instructional time, and diverse student abilities. These factors highlight the need for adaptive and flexible teaching strategies to ensure effective curriculum implementation. This study underscores the central role of teachers as key agents in curriculum development, emphasizing that the success of curriculum practices depends not only on formal design but also on teachers' ability to interpret and enact the curriculum in meaningful ways. Therefore, strengthening teachers' professional competence and enhancing institutional support are essential to improving the effectiveness and relevance of Islamic Religious Education in school contexts.

REFERENCES

- Adrivat, Z., Baihaqi, W., Tjasmini, M., Rohendi, A., & Musthafa, I. (2024). Konsep Pemikiran Pendidikan Konseptualisasi Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam Klasik-Modern. *Tihamah: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 2(01), 1–16. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61444/tihamah.v3i01.23>
- Akmaliyah, Hudzaifah, Y., Ulfah, N., & Pamungkas, M. I. (2021). Child-friendly teaching approach for arabic language in nn indonesian islamic boarding school. *International Journal of Language Education*, 5(1), 501–514. <https://doi.org/10.26858/IJOLE.V5I1.15297>
- Az-Zahra, D. W., Ediz, M. H., Nafian, Z. I., & Metriadi, M. (2025). Aberrant Behavior of Widows in Muslim Societies. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Thought and Research*, 1(2), 55–65. <https://mujoter.intischolar.id/index.php/mujoter/article/view/15%0Ahttps://mujoter.intischolar.id/index.php/mujoter/article/download/15/12>

- B, N., & Elihami, E. (2021). The Concept of Worldwide Education In the Review of Islamic Education. *Jurnal Edukasi Nonformal*, 1(1), 10–17.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2015). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544–559. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1573>
- Brennen, B. S. (2021). Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies, Third Edition. In *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies, Third Edition* (pp. 1–256). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003122388>
- Darminto, D., Handoyo, E., Wardani, S., Subali, B., & Widiarti, N. (2025). Effective Teaching Strategies to Enhance Critical Thinking Skills in Education: A Literature Review. *Edunesia: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 6(2), 948–964. <https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i2.1227>
- Daulay, M. R., & Pulungan, H. R. (2024). Efektivitas dan Kualitas Kepemimpinan dalam Manajemen Pendidikan Islam. *Al-Murabbi Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 2(1), 120–147. <https://doi.org/10.62086/al-murabbi.v2i1.668>
- Defriyanto, D., Dermawan, O., Pradana, S. A., & Khadijah, K. (2026). A Holistic Conceptual Model of Hamka's Contemporary Islamic Educational Thought. *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 39–54.
- Dudung, A. (2018). KOMPETENSI PROFESIONAL GURU. *JKKP (Jurnal Kesejahteraan Keluarga Dan Pendidikan)*, 5(1), 9–19. <https://doi.org/10.21009/JKKP.051.02>
- Engkizar, E., Jaafar, A., Alias, M., Guspita, B., & Albizar, R. (2025). Utilisation of Artificial Intelligence in Qur'anic Learning: Innovation or Threat? *Journal of Quranic Teaching and Learning*, 1(2), 1–17. <https://joqer.intischolar.id/index.php/joqer/index>
- Engkizar, E., Jaafar, A., Hamzah, M. I., Syafril, S., Febriani, A., Oktavia, G., & Satrial, A. (2026). Quran Teachers' Skills as Pedagogical Foundations: Conceptual and Practical Insights into Nine Competencies. *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 22–38.
- Engkizar, E., Jaafar, A., Sarianto, D., Ayad, N., Rahman, A., Febriani, A., Oktavia, G., Guspita, R., & Rahman, I. (2024). Analysis of Quran Education Problems in Majority Muslim Countries. *International Journal of Islamic Studies Higher Education*, 3(1), 65–80. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24036/insight.v3i1.209>
- Engkizar, E., Muslim, H., Mulyadi, I., & Putra, Y. A. (2025). Ten Criteria for an Ideal Teacher to Memorize the Quran. *Journal of Theory and Research Memorization Quran*, 1(1), 26–39. <https://joqer.intischolar.id/index.php/joqer>
- Ergulec, F., Kara, A., & Eren, E. (2023). The impact of flipped learning on the relationship between self-regulated online learning and academic procrastination. *Current Psychology*, 42(23), 1995–1996. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03136-5>
- Han, W., & Abdrahim, N. A. (2023). The role of teachers' creativity in higher education: A systematic literature review and guidance for future research. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101302>
- Hasan, F., Tomikal, T., & Gilling, M. (2025). Six Academic Attitudes of Muslim Scholars Toward Knowledge Sources in the Digital Era. *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning*, 1(3), 109–122.
- Hendawi, M., Al Murshidi, G., Fazlurrahman Hadi, M., Huda, M., & Lovat, T. (2024). The Development of Islamic Education Curriculum from the Quranic Perspective. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(2), 2024. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7401/hms52091>
- Htay, S. S., Po, E. T. H., & Kaewkanlaya, P. (2025). Building Student Character through Worship in Elementary Schools. *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning*, 1(2), 55–63.

- <https://doi.org/https://muaddib.intischolar.id/index.php/muaddib/article/view/11>
- Hussin, N. H., & Tamuri, A. H. (2019). Embedding values in teaching Islamic education among excellent teachers. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, 13(1), 2–18. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JME-07-2017-0040>
- Jimenez, R., & O'Neill, V. (2021). Strategies to Maximize Asynchronous Learning. In *Handbook of Research on Managing and Designing Online Courses in Synchronous and Asynchronous Environments* (pp. 499–521). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-8701-0.ch025>
- Kassymova, G. K., Talgatov, Y. K., Arpentieva, M. R., Abishev, A. R., & Menshikov, P. V. (2025). Artificial Intelligence in the Development of the Theory and Practices of Self-Directed Learning. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Thought and Research*, 1(3), 66–79. <https://mujoter.intischolar.id/index.php/mujoter/article/view/19>
- Kholis, N., & Mustofa, M. A. (2024). Development of Competency-Based Arabic Language Curriculum in Traditional Islamic Boarding Schools. *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 8(2), 827–848. <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v8i2.10819>
- Latifa, R., Fahri, M., Subchi, I., & Mahida, N. F. (2022). The Intention of Becoming Religiously Moderate in Indonesian Muslims: Do Knowledge and Attitude Interfere? *Religions*, 13(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060540>
- Lee, J. A., & Kim, C. J. (2019). Teaching and Learning Science in Authoritative Classrooms: Teachers' Power and Students' Approval in Korean Elementary Classrooms. *Research in Science Education*, 49(5), 1367–1393. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-017-9659-6>
- Lim, W. M. (2025). What Is Quantitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 33(3), 325–348. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241264622>
- Marhamah, M. (2022). Development of Picture Story Book Learning Media to Increase Elementary School Students' Interest in Reading English. *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama*, 14(2), 821–830. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v14i2.3680>
- Masani, N., & Fabanjo, I. A. (2026). Implementing Religious Moderation in Social Interactions of Tobelo Society: A Qualitative Analysis. *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 65–73.
- Matsuyama, Y., Nakaya, M., Okazaki, H., Lebowitz, A. J., Leppink, J., & van der Vleuten, C. (2019). Does changing from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered context promote self-regulated learning: a qualitative study in a Japanese undergraduate setting. *BMC Medical Education*, 19(1), 152. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-019-1550-x>
- Neale, B. (2024). Qualitative Longitudinal Research: Research Methods. In *Qualitative Longitudinal Research: Research Methods* (pp. 1–164).
- Pohontsch, N. J. (2019). Die Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse. *Die Rehabilitation*, 58(06), 413–418. <https://doi.org/10.1055/a-0801-5465>
- Putri, M., Indria, A., & Pasaleron, R. (2022). Improving Student's Skills in Reading the Al-Quran Through the Tahsin Program at the Islamic Boarding School. *Ahlussunnah: Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(2), 84–92. <https://doi.org/10.58485/jie.v1i2.116>
- Rohmah, N., & Roqib, M. (2024). Integration in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools; Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyyah (KMI) Gontor Curriculum. *Transformasi Manageria: Journal of Islamic Education Management*, 4(2), 141–154. <https://doi.org/10.47467/manageria.v4i2.5965>
- Saputra, H. Y. (2023). Metode Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam. *JURNAL ABSHAR: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam, Pendidikan*,

- Kajian Islam Dan Humaniora*, 2(1), 17–26.
<https://www.ojs.staisamorapematangsiantar.ac.id/index.php/samora/article/view/32>
- Shuhufi, M., & Purkon, A. (2023). Harmonization of Islamic Law and Local Culture: A Study of Indonesian Sundanese Ethnic Culture. *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Syir'ah*, 21(1), 138. <https://doi.org/10.30984/jis.v21i1.1870>
- Suri, D., & Chandra, D. (2021). Teacher's Strategy for Implementing Multiculturalism Education Based on Local Cultural Values and Character Building for Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 8(4), 271–285. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/937>
- Sutrisno, S., & Nasucha, J. A. (2022). Islamic Religious Education Project-Based Learning Model to Improve Student Creativity. *At-Tadzkiir: Islamic Education Journal*, 1(1), 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.59373/attadzkiir.v1i1.3>
- Syaifudin, M., Adam, M., & Affandi, A. (2025). Qur'anic Edu-Theology as a Framework for Holistic Education: A Critical Examination of Pedagogical Values in Surah al-Fātiḥah. *QOF*, 9(2), 261–278. <https://doi.org/10.30762/qof.v9i2.3282>
- Ummah, A. K., Kakoh, N. A., Mahmudi, M. B., Wardani, A. Z., & Ummah, A. K. (2025). Efforts of Dormitory Supervisors in Overcoming Problems in the Quran Memorization Dormitory. *Journal of Theory and Research Memorization Quran*, 1(1), 1–14. <https://joesmiq.intischolar.id/index.php/joesmiq/article/view/52>
- Wakifah, W., Fatimah, F., & Sulistiawati, M. (2023). Optimization of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Islamic Education towards the Era of Society 5.0. *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan*, 17(2), 55–63. <https://doi.org/10.30863/didaktika.v17i2.5750>
- Yusnita, Y., Eriyanti, F., Engkizar, E., Anwar, F., Putri, N. E., Arifin, Z., & Syafril, S. (2018). The Effect of Professional Education and Training for Teachers (PLPG) in Improving Pedagogic Competence and Teacher Performance. *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Tarbiyah*, 3(2), 123–130. <https://doi.org/10.24042/tadris.v3i2.2701>
- Zarkasyi, H. F. (2020). Imam Zarkasyi's modernization of pesantren in Indonesia: (A case study of darussalam gontor). *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 8(1), 161–200. <https://doi.org/10.21043/QIJIS.V8I1.5760>

Copyright holder:

© Rahmi, H., Ilham, S., Safarudin, R.

First publication right:

Ahlussunnah: Journal of Islamic Education

This article is licensed under:

CC-BY-SA