

Analysis of the Problems of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education Learning

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i3.938>

*Rahmayani Siregar, Nurkholijah Siregar, Nur Aisyah Siregar^{abc} 

¹³Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Serdang Bedagai

²Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Raudhatul Akmal

Corresponding Author: rahmayanisiregar6@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the problems faced by Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive research type. Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews, observation, and documentation of the principal, deputy head of curriculum, IRE teachers, and several students. The results showed three main problems: teachers' difficulties in changing old mindsets and habits in learning, limited understanding and application of differentiated learning, and complexity in preparing teaching tools due to differences in curriculum between grade levels. Despite facing obstacles, teachers have made various efforts such as attending training, compiling teaching modules, and collaborating with colleagues. This study concludes that Independent Curriculum provides opportunities for more flexible and student-centered learning, but its success depends on teachers' readiness and continuous support. Therefore, intensive training and mentoring need to be carried out continuously to improve the quality of IRE learning implementation in accordance with the objectives of the Independent Curriculum.

Keywords: *Independent Curriculum, Islamic Religious Education learning.*

Article History:

Received 20th May 2025

Accepted 27th June 2025

Published 30th June 2025



INTRODUCTION

The industrial revolution 4.0 has brought great influence to the world of education, including the need to innovate and collaborate in the learning system. In this context, curriculum renewal is an urgent matter to answer the challenges of the times and improve the quality of human resources. The curriculum is the most important part of education. The curriculum is part of a management system that involves planning and implementing learning which is used as a guide or guide for teachers in carrying out learning activities, or in other words, the curriculum is an educational program that contains various teaching materials and learning experiences that are programmed, planned and planned systematically to serve as guidelines in the learning process for education personnel and students to achieve learning objectives (Farhana & Ika, 2022). It can also be said that this Independent Curriculum is not a replacement for the 2013 curriculum but rather continues and strengthens the 2013 curriculum, with changes that will be applied to the Independent Curriculum, as an additional option for education assistance to restore education in Indonesia (Fadriati, Khoirurrijal, & Sofia, 2022).

The Independent Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intracurricular learning where the material is made more optimal so that students have time to explore concepts and strengthen competencies. One of the features of the Independent Curriculum is the cultivation of character education through the project of strengthening the student profile of Pancasila or

P5 for short. P5 is cross-disciplinary learning to observe and think about solving problems in the environment. The project-based learning strategy used in P5 is fundamentally different from project-based learning integrated into academic disciplines (Hikmah, 2022).

The Independent Curriculum also aims to form a generation that is able to understand the material quickly, and provide space for students to be able to express their creations in their preferred fields. As in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 31 Allah SWT says:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَقْبُلُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ٣١

Meaning: And he gave Adam the names of all things, and then presented them to the angels and said, "Tell Me the names of these things if you are indeed the true ones." (Q.S Al-Baqarah, 31).

The above verse explains that the Independent Curriculum provides the meaning of learning by building freedom of thought and freedom from all forms in accessing knowledge widely according to their abilities. Teachers as the main actors in the world of education must always be prepared with all policy changes that occur in the realm of education. With the existence of curriculum changes, educators have also been faced with various challenges where educators are required not only to master the field of science, teaching materials, learning methods, but also high skills and a broad understanding of the world of education. Educators are one of the important factors that can even be called a figure of change that must be able to realize the concept of an Independent Curriculum. How ideal a curriculum is without being supported by the ability of educators to implement it, the curriculum will not be meaningful as an educational tool (Rina Febriana, 2019).

In implementing an Independent Curriculum, it is determined by educators so that educators must get out of their comfort zone and change the paradigm from monotonous learning to more active learning because the purpose of learning activities is to shape the character of students according to the profile of Pancasila students. As an interview with the principal of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, he said that the implementation of this Independent Curriculum is different from the previous curriculum where in the current curriculum educators are required to provide knowledge and skills to students, where later the results of these skills will be used as provisions to face the world of work.

In Islamic Religious Education (IRE), the implementation of the Independent Curriculum is very significant because this subject not only teaches religious knowledge, but also shapes students' morals and character in accordance with Islamic values and the Pancasila Student Profile. The Independent Curriculum encourages teachers to implement differentiated learning, project-based learning (P5), and adjust teaching materials to the conditions and needs of students. This requires IRE teachers to move away from traditional one-way learning patterns and start adopting a more participatory, reflective, and contextual approach.

From the results of the initial observations that the researchers have made which focus on the problems of IRE teachers, they found that in implementing an Independent Curriculum in IRE learning in class VII there are still several problems. The existing problems include the IRE teachers of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, needing adjustments and the lack of understanding of IRE teachers of the concept of an Independent Curriculum, this is because the Independent Curriculum is still fairly new in implementation and the lack of training which is only held twice a year, so that in practice in the field the application of an Independent Curriculum in learning is not in accordance with the guidance that should be applied in an Independent Curriculum.

Not only that, another problem is that IRE teachers are faced with difficulties in making teaching modules or learning plans, namely when analyzing learning outcomes and preparing the flow of learning objectives, this is because in compiling learning outcomes, they must be really careful because they are made per phase. While on the other hand learning planning is very important for the success of learning, so that teachers can organize the objectives and basic competencies that will be achieved in learning in a more directed manner.

Based on the description of the problems above, the researcher conducted a study with the intention of describing what problems the Islamic Education teacher experienced in implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Education learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, so with this the researcher was interested in taking the research title "Analysis of Islamic Religious Education Teacher Problematics in Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Education Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency".

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive type of research, namely the type of research that examines data and describes social and concrete realities related to the problems that occur (Abdussamad & Zuchri, 2021) at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency on the application of Islamic religious education subject learning using the Independent Curriculum. This approach was chosen because it is considered the most appropriate for revealing social reality in the field naturally and as it is, without manipulation or special treatment from researchers. Descriptive qualitative research focuses on understanding the meaning, experiences, and views of research subjects on the phenomena that are happening. In this context, researchers do not attempt to test hypotheses, but rather try to explore and describe the actual conditions experienced by IRE teachers in the process of adapting to the Independent Curriculum, including the challenges, strategies, and solutions they undertake.

Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, Sei Rampah District, Serdang Bedagai Regency is one of the schools that has implemented the Independent Curriculum since the 2023 academic year, but not for all levels, it is only applied in grade VII, this is because grades VIII and IX are still continuing the previous curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum. In implementing a program, of course, various problems are encountered, including the implementation of the Independent Curriculum at this time. The Independent Curriculum is a new curriculum that is implemented as a refinement of the previous curriculum, namely the 2013 curriculum. In its application to learning, the Independent Curriculum has been developed into a more variable curriculum but still focuses on basic materials, character development and competence in students.

In collecting data, interview techniques, field observations and documentation were used (Mastang Ambo Baba, 2017). Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner so that informants had the freedom to explain their experiences, but remained within the framework of predetermined themes. Observations were conducted directly in the madrasah environment, especially in the classroom, to see exactly how IRE teachers conduct learning, prepare teaching tools, and interact with students. Meanwhile, documentation was used to collect data in the form of learning tools such as teaching modules, lesson plans (ATP), learning outcomes (CP), and other evidence supporting the curriculum implementation process.

After the data was collected, the researcher conducted a qualitative data analysis, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. This process was carried out continuously throughout the research. Data obtained from various sources were also tested for validity through source and method triangulation techniques, as well as reconfirmation to informants (member check) to ensure that the researcher's interpretation was in accordance with the meaning intended by the informant. By using this approach, the research is expected to provide a complete picture of how the implementation of Independent Curriculum in the madrasah takes place, what challenges IRE teachers face, and how they try to overcome these obstacles. This research also contributes as material for reflection and evaluation for educational institutions in improving the quality of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in the future.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of Independent Curriculum in Islamic religious education subjects uses several methods in its learning. These methods include inquiry methods, discussions, and others. In learning Islamic religious education, it is also very important to include practice in the learning process. This is done in order to achieve the objectives of the Independent Curriculum itself (Abdul Kahar, 2022).

Based on the results of interviews, observations and documentation carried out at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, the Independent Curriculum has been implemented quite well even though there are several obstacles. Schools and educators, especially IRE teachers, have tried to implement an Independent Curriculum in learning as well as possible in accordance with the objectives to be achieved.

The purpose of implementing an Independent Curriculum in addition to restoring the learning crisis in Indonesia and providing freedom to students and teachers also aims to be integrated in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah between the Independent Curriculum and the kaffah curriculum. As revealed by the principal of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, as follows:

The beginning of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum actually wanted to follow the development of education so as not to be left behind. However, because the purpose of the Independent Curriculum has something in common with the target of this school, namely providing learning that suits students, finally the special goal of this school is to integrate the Independent Curriculum with the unique curriculum of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, namely the kaffah curriculum.

There are several activities in implementing the Independent Curriculum carried out by IRE teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, among others:

IRE Teacher's Strategy in implementing an Independent Curriculum

Before implementing the Independent Curriculum in the learning process, IRE teachers first prepare the things needed in learning. Starting from learning tools, media and teacher readiness in starting learning, especially the IRE teacher's knowledge of the concept of an Independent Curriculum. This is important to note because in learning the application of this curriculum experiences several changes from the previous curriculum (Anwar & Syaiful, 2014). Preparations made by IRE teachers include:

Participating in Training and Guidance. In preparation for the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, IRE teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah on several occasions participated in training, workshops and mentoring organized by the government and the school itself. This is done so that teachers can understand the concept of an Independent Curriculum both theoretically and technically.

Developing Learning Tools. In addition to participating in the training and mentoring expressed above, what IRE teachers do at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah in implementing an Independent Curriculum is by compiling learning tools. This includes preparing textbooks, making teaching modules and project modules to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students, preparing CP, and others. This arrangement is carried out so that the learning process or activities can be structured and more directed, making it easier for IRE teachers to achieve learning objectives. In making learning tools, examples of teaching modules have actually been provided by the government. As teachers, we are given the freedom to make our own, develop or use teaching modules provided by the government. In this case, I used teaching modules provided by the government but developed again by Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah.

In accordance with the Independent Curriculum learning guidebook, there are 5 learning principles, namely 1) Pay attention to student conditions; 2) Lifelong learning; 3) Holistic learning; 4) Relevant; and 5) Oriented to a sustainable future. These five principles have been applied in learning through 8 IRE teacher strategies that have been described in the previous section, namely, 1) Developing learning tools; 2) Integrating Islamic values with the Independent Curriculum; 3) Facilitating students to actively participate; 4) Evaluating student

progress and achievement; 5) Understanding challenges and finding solutions; 6) Reviewing changes experienced by students; 7) Collaborate with fellow IRE teachers; 8) Use supportive resources or teaching materials (Anggara et al., 2023).

Learning Is Designed with Students' Conditions in Mind

Learning tools are prepared by teachers of SKI, Jurisprudence, Akidah Akhlak, and Al-Qur'an Hadis according to the students' conditions. The teachers first analyze the CP and then reduce the CP to TP and ATP by taking into account the characteristics of the students, adjusting to the learning stages, and considering the extent to which students meet the learning outcomes. This is done as the first learning principle, which is to pay attention to students' conditions so that learning becomes more meaningful and enjoyable. CP (Learning Outcomes) are set by the government as a reference for the competencies to be achieved. CP needs to be broken down into concrete and operational TP (Learning Objectives) by referring to Bloom's Taxonomy (Ahmad Suriansyah, 2015).

The next step is to develop ATP (Flow of Learning Objectives). ATP is similar to a syllabus that serves to provide an overview of the learning plan for a period of one year. Teachers may use the ATP provided by the government, may design their own, or modify existing examples. In addition, teachers also create teaching modules and prepare assessments. In the Independent Curriculum, there are formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment is carried out during the learning process with the aim of knowing the readiness to learn and the development of students. Meanwhile, summative assessment aims to ensure that all TPs have been fulfilled by students. It is conducted at the middle of the semester (STS) and the end of the semester (SAS). The results of the summative assessment are used as one of the assessment considerations (Fadriati et al., 2022).

Lifelong Learning

Learning is designed and implemented to build learners' capacity to become lifelong learners. This can be done by teachers understanding challenges and finding solutions, as well as providing motivation to learners. As done by the Qur'an teacher who always provides motivation based on the Prophet's Hadith, namely "The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it." Teachers also provide positive feedback so that students desire to continue learning. In addition, teachers facilitate students to actively participate by providing stimulus so that students are able to think critically, which is shown by asking questions. Improving learners' competence can also be done by providing exploration space such as providing activities/tasks, both assignments in madrasah and assignments at home that are in accordance with the ability level of students. Giving assignments is also intended to build independence in learning (Lesilolo, 2022).

Independent Curriculum makes students the subject of learning. As one concrete form, students are taken to the regional library to explore knowledge so that they can be independent and have broader insights. Learning is designed to be more contextualized so that students understand the benefits of what they are learning. That way, students are encouraged to become lifelong learners. Meanwhile, teachers must also become lifelong learners by reflecting and self-evaluating the learning design and process. Reflection is also carried out among fellow teachers in one madrasah or outside community at least once a semester. The madrasah principal also facilitates teachers in the reflection and evaluation process. This is done to optimize the learning process. This is in accordance with what the principal of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah said, that evaluations are carried out starting from daily, weekly, monthly, every semester, and annual evaluations. The deputy head of curriculum also said that weekly evaluations are carried out every Saturday after the lesson is over. This effort is made so that teachers are ready to accept developments and are also ready to develop themselves (Akmal Hawi, 2013).

Holistic Learning

The learning process supports the holistic development of learners' competencies and characters. One of them is through the implementation of P5PPRA, in addition to improving general competence, it also makes character education the main goal. P5PPRA can be

implemented integrated or separately from intracurricular and (Hikmah, 2022). While in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, P5PPRA is implemented in various forms of activities supported by the use of varied learning methods, as stated by the IRE teacher that Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah applies various learning methods tailored to the characteristics of the subject and the needs of students. These include differentiated learning, problem-based learning, contextual learning, and even simulations such as the Hajj manasik. Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah has a religion team that oversees IRE teachers (SKI, Jurisprudence, Akidah Akhlak, Al-Qur'an Hadith) plus Al-Qur'an and Arabic teachers. The religion team becomes a forum for collaboration or team teaching to jointly design learning. Starting from compiling learning objectives, compiling a flow of learning objectives, compiling teaching modules to determining the right learning strategy. By using various methods and resources or varied teaching materials, students become easier to understand the material and apply it in everyday life.

Relevant Learning

Relevant learning is learning that is designed according to the context, environment, and culture of learners, and involves parents and communities as partners (Hikmah, 2022). In the context of learning, for example, students reprimand their friends who violate rules or norms, invite Dzuhur prayers in congregation, respect teachers, and so on. Teachers collaborate with the surrounding community, learning communities, educational organizations, experts from various professions as resources to enrich and encourage relevant learning.

Sustainable Future-Oriented

Learning is oriented towards a sustainable future. Teachers try to integrate sustainable living in various learning activities by integrating values and behaviors that show concern for the environment (Mulyasa, 2022), such as maintaining cleanliness and saving water when making ablution. Teachers motivate and make learners aware that the future belongs to them. This can be internalized into Akidah Akhlak learning and others. Teachers utilize P5PPRA to build character and improve learners' competencies so that they are ready to become future leaders. As an Islamic Education teacher, it is important to always remind students that everything they do will be accounted for, just as madrasah requires congregational dhuhur prayers so that they have a sense of responsibility for what is required.

Implementation of Independent Curriculum Learning

The next thing that IRE teachers do at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah is implementing an Independent Curriculum in the IRE learning process. In this learning, what the IRE teacher does includes: (1) Initial or Opening Activities. Before starting learning, IRE teachers first invite students to link the things they know or experience with what they will learn (apperception), besides that IRE teachers also provide motivation and preparation of learning materials by teachers and students. (2) Core Activities. In the core learning pursued by IRE teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah, it is quite good. This includes giving freedom to students so that they do not feel pressured, and delivering material with certain methods. However, the application of differentiated learning is still not maximized in its application. (3) End/Closing Activities. At the end of the lesson, Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah always summarizes the learning outcomes in general from the results of discussions or students' personalities. The IRE teacher will give directions to students regarding the material that must be studied at the next meeting.

Problems in Implementing Independent Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education Subjects at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah

From the results of interviews and observations made by researchers with the principal, curriculum deputy, IRE teachers and students about the problems faced by IRE teachers in implementing the Independent Curriculum.

The problems faced by IRE teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah include problems related to IRE teachers' understanding of the Independent Curriculum. Because technically and theoretically this curriculum has undergone several changes from the previous

curriculum, especially in the learning process and standards. Therefore, IRE teachers must really prepare and understand the changes that must be applied differently from the previous curriculum.

The Independent Curriculum is a form of improvement from the 2013 curriculum, the learning process is more or less also different from the application of the previous curriculum. However, Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah teachers admit that they are used to the concept of implementing learning in the 2013 curriculum, so changing these habits still needs a little process.

In implementing the Independent Curriculum, what has changed the most is related to differentiated learning in IRE subjects, where this learning is carried out by adjusting the needs and interests of students and the environment in the classroom. The implementation of an Independent Curriculum provides facilities, namely differentiated learning so that the objectives of learning can be easily achieved. In implementing differentiated learning, of course, several stages are needed (Candra, 2018).

In this case, there needs to be an adjustment process by the teacher at the beginning of its application. Because to group students according to the diagnostic results, there will be various learning styles between one student and another. The implementation of Independent Curriculum learning is continuous with learning tools, which are the key to the direction of learning in the classroom. So it is necessary to pay attention to the learning tools that need to be adjusted to the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In the Independent Curriculum, the learning tools provided are quite concise and make it easier for teachers if they want to use these learning tools provided by the government (Mulyasa, 2008). These problems are organized and discussed as follows:

Difficulty in Changing Teaching Mindsets and Habits

The first issue concerns the difficulty teachers face in shifting from established teaching mindsets and habits formed under the 2013 Curriculum. IRE teachers tend to continue using teacher-centered and monotonous methods, as they are already accustomed to the previous system. As a result, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum has not been fully optimal and often blends with elements of the older curriculum. In response to this, the school has encouraged teachers to participate in training, workshops, and internal mentoring to strengthen their understanding of the concepts and practices of the Independent Curriculum. Evaluations are carried out regularly—daily, weekly, and every semester—to monitor progress and foster reflective practices that help teachers continuously improve their professional skills.

Limited Understanding and Application of Differentiated Learning

The Independent Curriculum emphasizes differentiated learning tailored to students' needs, interests, and abilities. However, IRE teachers face challenges in applying this approach, particularly because many religious education materials—such as those involving worship—require standardized practice, making differentiation difficult. Despite this, teachers have started applying the core principles of Independent Curriculum learning, such as holistic, relevant, and future-oriented approaches. A variety of methods are used, including contextual learning, project-based activities (P5PPRA), and simulations like Hajj rituals. Teachers also provide motivational support rooted in Islamic values and encourage active student participation through discussions and questioning. The main obstacle remains the technical complexity of implementing differentiated learning, particularly in diagnosing students' readiness and tailoring instruction accordingly. Therefore, further training and collaboration among teachers are essential to deepen their understanding and application of this approach.

Complexity in Developing and Managing Varied Learning Tools

The final issue involves the burden of preparing different learning tools for each grade level, as the school implements two curricula simultaneously: the Independent Curriculum for grade VII and the 2013 Curriculum for grades VIII and IX. This situation requires IRE teachers to design separate materials, such as Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objectives (TP),

Learning Objective Flows (ATP), and teaching modules adapted to each curriculum's characteristics. To address this, teachers make use of government-provided teaching modules and adapt them to fit the school's context. ATPs function like annual syllabi and are prepared flexibly. Formative and summative assessments are conducted to evaluate students' development and learning achievements. Nonetheless, many teachers still need deeper guidance on how to analyze CPs and convert them into effective learning strategies. Therefore, ongoing training and peer discussion forums are crucial to support teachers in efficiently developing and managing instructional tools.

Islamic Education Teacher Solutions in Overcoming the Challenges of the Independent Curriculum

In learning activities, a teacher certainly experiences various problems or obstacles in the teaching and learning process, especially in Islamic religious education subjects. After describing the various problems above that occur related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Then here are the solutions to the problems that occur (Hermawan & Najmi Faza, 2020).

Something new cannot always change immediately and go straight on its way. It will take time for the adjustment process, and if you are able to fix a failure then it will be a process of achieving success. Likewise, the Independent Curriculum is relatively new. So a teacher also needs time to adjust (Hehakaya Enjeli & Delvyn Pollatu, 2024). Here are solutions to overcome the challenges of the Independent Curriculum: (1) Teacher Training and Support: Teachers need to receive adequate training on learning methods that support the Independent Curriculum. This training involves how to implement a student-centered approach, the use of assessment. Continuous support from the school and other related parties is also needed to help teachers adapt to the changing role of students. (2) Parent Involvement: Parents are important partners in education. Therefore, students need to be actively involved in understanding and supporting the Independent Curriculum. Schools can hold regular meetings with parents to discuss student development and curriculum changes. An informative and engaging parent engagement program can also help address student concerns. (3) Special Support for Students: Students who face difficulties in following changes in learning approaches need special support. Teachers can provide extra guidance and additional practice to help students develop critical and creative thinking skills. Grouping of students in task groups also needs to be managed with clearer guidelines to facilitate effective collaboration. (4) Effective Communication: Open and effective communication between all relevant parties, including teachers, parents, and students, is key to the successful implementation of Independent Curriculum. Schools need to provide parents with a better understanding of the curriculum and establish strong collaboration with students to create an inclusive educational environment. (5) Socialization and Available Resources: It is important to socialize the benefits and objectives of the Independent Curriculum to all relevant parties in order to overcome resistance to change. Clear and flexible guidelines on curriculum implementation can help madrasahs in lesson development and planning. Making maximum use of available resources, even if limited, with smart scheduling and the use of simple teaching materials is also key to success.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Zakiyun Najah is still in transition, facing challenges such as teachers' difficulty in shifting from previous methods, limited ability to apply differentiated learning, and the burden of managing two curricula across grade levels. However, the school's commitment is evident through teachers' participation in training, collaborative lesson planning, and efforts to adapt teaching materials and apply key learning principles. With ongoing support and professional development, the implementation is expected to improve and better align with the curriculum's goals.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Kahar. (2022). *Merdeka Belajar Bagi Pendidikan Nonformal*. Jakarta: Puslapdik.
- Abdussamad, & Zuchri. (2021). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Makassar: CV Syakir Media Press.
- Ahmad Suriansyah. (2015). *Profesi Kependidikan" Perspektif Guru Professional"*. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers.
- Akmal Hawi. (2013). *Kompetensi Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam*. Jakarta: TP Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Anggara, A., Amini, Faridah, Siregar, M., Faraidin, M., & Syafrida, N. (2023). *Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar pada Satuan Pendidikan Jenjang SMP (Vol. 5)*.
- Anwar, & Syaiful. (2014). *Desain Pendidikan Agama Islam*. Yogyakarta: CV Idea Sejahtera.
- Candra, B. Y. (2018). Problematika Pendidikan Agama Islam. In *Istighna* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from <http://e-journal.stit-islamic-village.ac.id/index.php/istighna>
- Fadriati, Khoirurrijal, & Sofia. (2022). *Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka*. Malang: CV Literasi Nusantara Abadi.
- Farhana, & Ika. (2022). *Merdekakan Pikiran Dengan Kurikulum Merdeka Memahami Konsep Hingga Penulisan Praktik Baik Pembelajaran Di Kelas*. Bogor: Lindan Bestari.
- Hehakaya Enjeli, & Delvyn Pollatu. (2024). Problematika Guru Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 3(2).
- Hermawan, & Najmi Faza. (2020). *Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Meningkatkan Perilaku Religius Siswa*. Suka Bumi: CV Haura Utama.
- Hikmah, N. (2022). *Kurikulum Merdeka Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini*. Tangerang Selatan: Bait Qur'any Multimedia.
- Lesilolo, H. J. (2022). Kesulitan Guru Mendefenisikan dan Menerapkan Konsep Merdeka Belajar di SMA Negeri 2 Amahai Maluku Tengah. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 19(1), 71–84.
- Mastang Ambo Baba. (2017). *Analisis Data Penelitian Kualitatif*. Makassar: Aksara Timur.
- Mulyasa. (2022). *Menjadi Guru Pengerak Merdeka Belajar*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Mulyasa, E. (2008). *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*. Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya.
- Rina Febriana. (2019). *Kompetensi Guru*. Jakarta Timur: Bumi Aksara.
- Sumarmi. (2023). Problematika Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar. *Jurnal Social Science Academic*, (1).