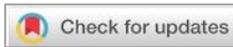# Strategy for Improving the Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Implementing the Islamic Religious Education Curriculum at SDN 10 Lebong

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Abstract

Background of study: The Islamic Religious Education Curriculum implemented in elementary schools must be able to adapt to the times and the needs of students. This requires teachers to not only master the subject matter but also possess adequate pedagogical skills to deliver the material in an engaging and effective manner.

Aims and scope of the paper: The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges and strategies for improving the competence of Islamic religious education teachers in implementing the curriculum at SDN 10 Lebong.

Methods: The principal and Islamic religious education teachers at SD N 10 Lebong were the subjects of this study, which used a descriptive qualitative approach involving observation, data collection, interviews, and documentation.

Results: According to the survey, teachers faced a number of difficulties, including repetitive instructional strategies, little use of digital media, a lack of pertinent training, and sporadic supervision. Additionally, the curriculum's content was frequently out of step with the real-world situations that students encountered. A number of tactics were used to solve these problems, such as frequent training on cutting-edge techniques, senior teacher mentorship, ongoing assessment, integrating technology into the classroom, and creating teacher learning communities.

Conclusion: These techniques successfully raised student interest in learning, teacher proficiency, and pedagogical confidence. According to the study's findings, the effective implementation of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum in elementary schools depends on collaborative and sustainable professional development that is backed by the education office and schools. The results also emphasize how crucial it is for educators to take an active role in professional development initiatives in order to maintain competence.

A. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education in elementary schools plays an important role in the formation of character and morals of students from an early age. This education is not only aimed at transferring religious knowledge, but also at instilling Islamic values that form the basis of students' behavior and attitudes in

everyday life. Therefore, the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers is a key factor in the successful implementation of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. According to Hasanah, competent Islamic Religious Education teachers will be able to deliver material in a contextual and down-to-earth manner so that it is easier for students to understand and practice (Sugesti, 2025). Thus, the success of Islamic education is not only determined by the content of the curriculum but also by how teachers apply these values in the learning process. According to (Ananda, 2023), competent teachers can create an effective and enjoyable learning environment, manage their classrooms well, and apply curriculum values in their teaching.

To meet the anticipated learning objectives, must overcome obstacles in its attempts to enhance the proficiency of its Islamic Religious Education instructors in carrying out the curriculum. The curriculum for Islamic Religious Education taught in primary schools must be flexible enough to change with the times and meet the requirements of the pupils. This requires teachers to not only master the teaching material, but also have qualified pedagogical skills to deliver the material with interesting and effective methods (Naibaho et al., 2025). In the view of the Humanistic Theory developed by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, education must be able to develop individual potential as a whole, including spiritual and moral dimensions. As a result, Islamic education teachers are not only educators but also serve as mentors and role models in religious life.

In addition, Isamic Religious Education teachers must have good social and personality competencies, so that they can be role models for students in behaving and interacting. This is in accordance with Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007 concerning academic qualification standards and teacher competencies, which lists four main competencies of teachers, namely pedagogical, professional, personality, and social. However, the reality in the field shows that there are still various obstacles faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers in implementing the curriculum optimally. These challenges include a lack of creativity in pedagogy, restricted training opportunities, and difficulties in putting Islamic ideals into perspective in the classroom (Huda et al., 2024). A study by revealed that some Islamic Religious Education teachers are still unable to integrate Islamic values in the context of enjoyable learning and in accordance with the characteristics of elementary school students (Situmorang et al., 2025).

While a number of studies have looked at PAI teachers' professional growth, the majority of them concentrate on urban or macro-policy contexts. Few discuss the internal tactics used by rural schools to get over the difficulties they face on a daily basis. This study attempts to close the gap that is created by this.

One of the main obstacles is the lack of ongoing training and professional development for Islamic Religious Education teachers. Many teachers feel that they do not get enough opportunities to improve their competence through relevant and quality training programs. According to research by Lestari, only around 35% of Islamic Religious Education teachers in rural areas routinely attend annual training. In addition, supervision and monitoring carried out by schools are often not optimal, so that the feedback given to Islamic Religious Education teachers has not been able to encourage significant improvements in the learning process (Lisa Anggraini et al., 2025). The absence of a community of practitioners or discussion groups among Islamic Religious Education teachers is also an obstacle to sharing experiences and knowledge that can improve their competence (Kusnita, 2023). Numerous studies demonstrate that, especially in religious education contexts, teacher learning communities like MGMP or KKG can increase teaching quality, foster collaboration, and lessen professional isolation (Nor et al., 2024). This research has significant academic and practical value at the national level because the issue of improving the competence of Islamic religious education teachers is not only a problem in the Lebong region but also a strategic issue for improving the quality of Islamic education throughout Indonesia, especially in areas that do not have access to professional training and mentoring.

To overcome these obstacles, a comprehensive and planned competency improvement strategy is needed. Training and workshops that focus on improving understanding of teaching materials, innovative learning methods, and pedagogical skills need to be held regularly. The Learning Organization-based approach as proposed by Peter Senge can be adopted in the school environment so that teachers become lifelong learners. Supervision and monitoring must be carried out periodically by providing constructive feedback that can help teachers improve the learning process. In addition, the formation of a community of practitioners among Islamic Religious Education teachers needs to be encouraged to create a space for

sharing knowledge and experience, as recommended in research by Mulyasa, which emphasizes the importance of Professional Learning Communities to support teacher professional development.

Based on the above description, the problems in this study are: (1) What are the challenges faced in improving the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong? (2) What strategies can be applied to improve the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers in implementing the curriculum at SDN 10 Lebong? Therefore, a study was conducted titled "Strategy for Improving the Competence of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Implementing the Islamic Religious Education Curriculum at SDN 10 Lebong." The focus of this research is highly relevant in the context of the need to improve the quality of religious education at both the local and national levels.

B. Research Methods

This study used a descriptive qualitative methodology. As key informants, the researcher selected students, teachers, and principals of Islamic Religious Education as subjects. Techniques for gathering data include documentation, in-depth interviews, and direct observation. While secondary data came from supporting literature and school papers, primary data came from firsthand encounters in the field. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model through the stages of data collection, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. To enable field observations, data collection, and thorough analysis, the study was conducted over a period of three months, from February to April 2025

Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which informants are purposively selected based on criteria relevant to the research focus, especially those directly involved in curriculum implementation and teacher competency development. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method used to select participants based on specific features or attributes relevant to the research (Memon et al., 2025). The research instruments consisted of observation sheets, document review lists, and interview guidelines. This study only discusses the internal strategies and problems faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong. It does not discuss education policy or compare other schools.

To maintain the validity of the data, this study applies triangulation of sources and methods, extended observations, discussions with colleagues, and confirmation to informants (member check). Data validity is strengthened by the criteria of Lincoln and Guba: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. With this approach, it is expected that the results of the study will be able to provide an in-depth picture of the practices and challenges of Islamic Religious Education teachers in improving competency and implementing the curriculum in the real field.

C. Results and Discussion

Observations were conducted in several classes during the Islamic Religious Education learning process. Findings from the observation results were that teachers tended to use lecture methods and did not apply interactive and innovative learning methods. This shows limitations in the variety of teaching techniques used. Limited use of modern learning media. Some teachers only use textbooks and whiteboards, without utilizing technology or more interesting visual aids. Principals and instructors of Islamic Religious Education were interviewed. Key conclusions from the interviews include the following: Islamic Religious Education Teacher at Lebong 10 Elementary School stated that *"We rarely get training that is relevant to the Islamic Religious education curriculum updates. Usually, the training we receive is not specific to our needs in the field."* Apart from that, the Islamic Religious Education Teacher at SDN 10 Lebong also stated that *"The books and teaching materials available are often not up-to-date with the latest curriculum. We also lack interactive learning media."* The Principal also explained the monitoring that was carried out, he stated that *"We do supervise, but it is not scheduled regularly and we often lack the manpower to do it optimally."*

Internal factors such as power relations and the orientation of Islamic Education (LPI) can also be obstacles. An educational orientation that is too ideal and does not match the pragmatic needs of society can make it difficult for Islamic Education teachers to integrate the curriculum with the needs and developments of society (Addakhil & Jadid, 2019). Difficulty in integrating the curriculum with the needs of the community, Islamic Education teachers may experience difficulties in integrating the curriculum with the needs of the community, so that the curriculum does not match the needs and developments of the community (Hsb & Ramadhani, 2024).

Several key factors are preventing Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong from implementing the Islamic Religious Education Curriculum, according to the findings of the research that has been done. These challenges were found by observing classes and speaking with the principal and instructors of Islamic Religious Education.

The factors that become obstacles for Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong in implementing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum are very diverse, ranging from less varied learning methods, limited use of modern learning media, lack of training and professional development, limited resources and facilities, to less than optimal supervision and monitoring. In addition, teaching materials are often not tailored to the needs and cultural context of local students. This leads to a discrepancy between the written curriculum and what occurs in the classroom. To overcome these obstacles, comprehensive and structured efforts are needed, including providing relevant training, improving learning facilities and resources, and increasing the frequency and quality of supervision. Thus, it is hoped that Islamic Religious Education teachers can implement the Islamic Religious Education curriculum more effectively and have a positive impact on the quality of Islamic religious education at SD N 10 Lebong.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, here are some strategies that can be applied to improve the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong: Organize regular training on innovative teaching methods and the use of technology in learning Islamic Religious Education. This training can involve speakers who are experts in the field of Islamic Religious Education. With this kind of training, teachers are expected to be able to apply various teaching approaches that align with the characteristics of elementary school students, making learning more interesting and effective.

A mentoring program in which more experienced Islamic Religious Education teachers guide teachers who are new or need help in implementing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. In this case, senior teachers or school supervisors can act as mentors and help teachers create lesson plans, select learning media, and conduct evaluations. For example, microteaching activities can be used to mentor and provide direct feedback. This strategy is useful for providing practical direction and increasing teachers' confidence in implementing the curriculum effectively.

Conduct periodic evaluations of Islamic Religious Education teachers' performance and provide constructive feedback for improvement. Specific assessment instruments, regular classroom observations, and reflective discussions with the principal are ways in which evaluations can be conducted. For example, principals share observation notes about teachers' teaching processes and then work together to make improvements. This strategy allows for continuous and systematic improvement in the quality of teaching.

Encourage teachers to utilize technology to make learning more engaging and interactive. Teachers should promote the use of learning apps such as E-learning, Wordwall, Canva, or the YouTube education platform. According to Various types of digital media, such as audiovisual tools, e-learning platforms, and applications, significantly increase students' motivation, creativity, and understanding of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Results from multiple studies that demonstrate how using Wordwall, YouTube Edu, and Canva into PAI lectures can improve student engagement and moral value retention lend credence to this (Jannah & Jannah, 2024). With effective use, these media facilitate the delivery of material, increase student interaction, and enable students to overcome temporal and spatial limitations. For example, in moral education, teachers can play animated videos about the Prophet's story to enhance students' understanding. This kind of media is proven to increase students' engagement and interest in learning activities.

Form a learning community among Islamic Education teachers to share experiences, challenges, and solutions in teaching. At the cluster or sub-district level, a learning community or discussion forum for Islamic Education teachers can serve as a platform for sharing materials, learning strategies, and problem solutions. For example, there can be monthly discussions on how to apply Islamic principles in the thematic curriculum. This collaborative effort also helps teachers feel better emotionally and reduces feelings of isolation, which are common in rural schools.

According to the findings of the study carried out at SDN 10 Lebong, enhancing the proficiency of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) instructors is essential to the successful execution of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. Through interviews with the principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and school supervisors, as well as observations of the implementation of learning, several challenges and urgent needs were revealed. The principal emphasized the importance of regular training and workshops for

teachers, supported by the local education office. Islamic Religious Education teachers stated the need for more training on innovative teaching methods and educational technology, considering that new curriculum materials are often difficult to implement without clear guidance. Observations in the classroom showed that some teachers still use traditional teaching methods, which are less interesting for students, while some have started to adopt active learning methods.

Classroom observations show that Islamic Religious Education teachers are starting to implement more diverse and interactive learning methods. The use of technological media such as videos and digital learning applications is starting to appear. Students appear more active and involved in the learning process. Group discussions and collaborative activities are more frequent, which helps improve students' understanding of the material. The results are in line with interviews conducted with the principal and Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong, who emphasized similar issues and needs related to teacher training and assistance.

The principal of SDN 10 Lebong stated that after the implementation of various trainings and workshops, there was an improvement in the teaching methods used by Islamic Religious Education teachers. Teachers were more confident and innovative in delivering materials. Support from the local education office was very helpful in providing resources for the training. Islamic Religious Education teachers feel more helped by the mentoring program that is implemented. They are better able to overcome difficulties in implementing the new curriculum. The use of technology in learning is increasing, and this makes students more enthusiastic in following lessons.

The implementation of the Islamic Religious Education teacher competency improvement strategy at SDN 10 Lebong has proven effective in implementing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. Training, mentoring, evaluation, use of technology, collaboration between teachers, and parental involvement all contribute to improving the quality of learning. Furthermore, this process of reform has created opportunities to include local values and real-world student experiences in the curriculum, making Islamic education more significant. Teachers feel more confident and able to use more innovative teaching methods, while students become more involved and enthusiastic in learning.

Overall, this study shows that improving the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong requires structured and sustainable efforts. By implementing the strategies that have been identified, it is hoped that teachers can be more effective in implementing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum, which in turn will improve the quality of learning and student learning outcomes. Support from the school and the education office is very important to ensure the successful implementation of this strategy, as well as the proactivity of teachers in developing their own competence through various professional development programs.

By describing how internal school strategies training, mentoring, educational technology use, and collaborative learning forums can be operationalized and assessed in actual school settings, this study makes an empirical contribution. Efforts to improve the competence of Islamic Religious Education teachers through self-development, such as workshops, panel discussions, seminars, and the use of educational magazines, can improve teachers' abilities in teaching and developing materials in accordance with the Islamic Religious Education curriculum (Rodiya & Suklani, 2022).

By emphasizing that professional development and innovations are achievable even in schools with restricted access through internal support systems and strategic planning, the findings contribute to the discourse on rural education. Active learning strategies, such as motivating teachers to be creative and innovative in using learning strategies, can improve the quality of learning and implement the Islamic Religious Education curriculum more effectively (Rifa Nur Fauziyah, 2022).

The development of the Islamic Religious Education teacher profession must be carried out in an integrated manner with the teacher professional organization and the Islamic Religious College (PTAI). The development of academic competencies of Islamic Religious Education teachers must focus on the development of intra-personal and interpersonal skills, as well as the ability to communicate with others and manage oneself (Khoirunnisa, 2019).

Based on the results of research conducted at SDN 10 Lebong, the implementation of strategies to improve the competence of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers showed significant effectiveness in

implementing the Islamic Religious Education curriculum. Interviews with the principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and school supervisors, as well as classroom observations revealed that regular training and workshops succeeded in improving teachers' skills and knowledge about innovative teaching methods and the use of technology.

It is important to recognize the various limitations of this study. This study only discusses the internal strategies and problems faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong. It does not discuss education policy or compare other schools. Therefore, the findings' generalizability is constrained, particularly for schools situated in metropolitan regions or those subject to various administrative practices.

Additionally, the study's duration was constrained; three months of fieldwork could not have been enough to evaluate the methods' long-term effects. Additionally, although rich in context, the emphasis on qualitative data does not offer quantifiable measures of success, such as statistical changes in teacher competency or student academic performance. It would be beneficial to investigate policy-level implications and incorporate longitudinal monitoring of student success outcomes and teacher performance in future research.

Based on the study's presentation, it can be said that, first, a wide range of factors, including fewer diverse teaching methods, a limited use of contemporary learning media, a lack of professional development and training, a lack of facilities and resources, and subpar supervision and monitoring, make it difficult for Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 10 Lebong to implement the curriculum. Second, systematic and long-term efforts are needed to raise the proficiency of Islamic Religious Education instructors at SDN 10 Lebong. Third, the Islamic Religious Education curriculum has been successfully implemented at SDN 10 Lebong, thanks to the techniques put in place to increase the proficiency of the teachers.

These findings suggest that district-level education offices should proactively provide PAI instructors with scheduled, need-based training. Along with material upgrades, these programs must incorporate practical technological pedagogical skill development. Teachers also require opportunities for introspective evaluation and ongoing mentoring.

Instead of focusing only on administrative evaluation, schools should develop systems for continuous supervision that prioritize constructive criticism. Teachers could develop professionally in a nurturing setting as a result. Teachers should also be encouraged to create or join professional learning communities in order to share contextual solutions and successful methods.

D. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify problems and methods to improve the ability of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers in implementing the curriculum at SDN 10 Lebong. The results of the study showed that teachers faced a number of problems. These included a lack of variety in teaching methods, low use of technology media, a lack of professional training appropriate to the needs of the field, and poor supervision. Additionally, teaching materials that are not fully contextualized pose an additional obstacle to achieving effective and meaningful learning. To address these issues, several approaches have been employed. These include receiving regular training on new teaching approaches and media, seeking assistance from senior teachers or supervisors, conducting continuous evaluations with constructive feedback, and forming learning communities where individuals can share experiences and find practical solutions. Collaborative, sustainable competency improvement strategies supported by schools and education authorities have proven effective in addressing the challenges faced in implementing the PAI curriculum in elementary schools. This has a positive impact on student engagement and overall learning quality.

E. Acknowledgement

F. Author Contributions

EY was in charge of the research conception, data collection and analysis, and manuscript writing. DPS helped improve the research methodology, made important changes to the manuscript, and assisted in interpreting the results. The final draft of the work has been read and approved by both authors.

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