ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MATERIALS IN THE KURIKULUM MERDEKA FROM A SWOT PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a compulsory subject at all levels of education in Indonesia, as regulated in PP No. 55 of 2007. In an effort to improve the quality of PAI learning, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is used to evaluate the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. This study used a qualitative method with PAI teacher participants at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari. The results showed that the Independent Curriculum gives teachers the freedom to innovate in learning, but is constrained by limited resources and variations in implementation. The SWOT analysis identified opportunities such as strengthening religious values through collaboration with the community, as well as threats in the form of differences in curriculum interpretation. The resulting strategies include improving teacher professionalism, use of technology, and facility support. This study concludes the importance of synergy between teachers, the community, and educational institutions in supporting effective PAI learning that is relevant to the demands of the times.

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, SWOT Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

In PP Number 55 of 2007, the material of Religious Education (in the context of Islam is Islamic Religious Education) in educational institutions is a subject that must be applied at all levels of education in Indonesia. Especially from elementary school to high school. Therefore, the development of Islamic Religious Education learning must always be carried out by considering the needs of today's society. Currently, teachers are continuously studying various effective ways to be implemented together with students.

Like other subjects, Islamic Religious Education also experiences developments in terms of curriculum, methods, and learning approaches that must be followed by teachers in order to provide quality learning. Along with the development of the current era, Islamic Religious Education also participates in the use of technology. However, there are still many teachers who have not been able to utilize technology or electronic media for Islamic Religious Education learning to be more enjoyable and interactive. Thus, further study is needed on why and how to make Islamic Religious Education learning more enjoyable.

To find out the opportunities, challenges, and weaknesses in the process of learning Islamic religious education, one method that can be used is a SWOT

analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). The SWOT analysis aims to identify internal and external factors that influence the implementation of the independent curriculum in Islamic Religious Education learning in driving schools. By conducting this analysis, it is hoped that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the independent curriculum in Islamic Religious Education subjects can be identified. So that the process of implementing Islamic religious education learning always has new innovations that can answer the demands of the times and are in accordance with what is needed in the field.

Based on several previous studies from Hakim, (2024) stated that the results of the search, researchers found an idea that SWOT Analysis is related to Islamic Religious Education institutions. In Suparman et al., (2023) stated that the results of this study identified strength factors (Strengths) in Islamic education management, such as teacher expertise, the effectiveness of online marketing campaigns, and financial stability. In addition, the results of the study also revealed weakness factors (Weaknesses), including limited funds, lack of training for administrative staff, and problems in inventory management. In the analysis of external factors, the study highlighted opportunities (Opportunities) such as the development of learning technology and increased student interest in Islamic religious education. However, the study also identified threats (Threats) such as competition with other educational institutions and uncertainty in forecasting. This study provides valuable insights for the development of Islamic education management by utilizing strong internal factors, overcoming existing weaknesses, and taking opportunities and facing threats in the external environment. SWOT analysis is a relevant and useful framework in the context of Islamic education management, enabling more informed and strategic decision making.

Previous research above explains that SWOT analysis can help in conducting analysis in Islamic Religious Education, but from the research above, none has conducted research on the analysis of Islamic Religious Education material in the Independent Curriculum based on SWOT. Thus, the researcher intends to conduct research with the title analysis of islamic religious education material in the independent curriculum from a swot perspective.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach using the SWOT matrix method. Participants in this study were Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari. Teachers will receive a questionnaire containing statements to collect information about the SWOT aspects in Islamic Religious Education learning. The questionnaire is given to teachers in the form of a print out. The data obtained is processed and analyzed using the SWOT matrix approach, the answers from respondents will be grouped into four SWOT aspects, namely strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. After that, the identification results will be entered into the SWOT Matrix for analysis. then a conclusion can be drawn which is the result of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results

The results of the respondents' answers in this study are presented in the form of a table that has been adjusted to the SWOT aspects as follows:

Internal	(*Strengthens*)	(*Weakness*)

	1. In the Kurikulum Merdeka, teachers are given the freedom to develop innovative and creative learning methods. 2. Islamic Religious Education teaching can be adjusted to the needs and characteristics of students so that it is more in line with their real lives. 3. Collaboration between schools and local communities or religious institutions can add to the richness of Islamic Religious Education learning.	1. For educators, the Kurikulum Merdeka requires greater dedication and effort in planning and implementing Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning that is in accordance with the needs of students. 2. Limited resources and adequate facilities can hinder the development of quality PAI learning. 3. The Kurikulum Merdeka does not provide clear directions regarding the assessment and evaluation of PAI learning.
Eksternal	**(*Opportunity*)**	**(*Thread*)**
	1. Islamic Religious Education learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka provides wider opportunities for the development of character and religious values in students. 2. Cooperation with local religious institutions can expand the network and resources that can be used in Islamic Religious Education learning. 3. Quality Islamic Religious Education learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka can be a magnet for parents and students in choosing schools.	1. Differences in interpretation and implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka by teachers can result in variations in the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning between schools. 2. In the development of Islamic Religious Education learning, there is potential for conflict or tension with groups or individuals who have different religious views. 3. The existence of a flexible Kurikulum Merdeka can be a reason for some teachers to reduce the intensity or quality of Islamic Religious Education learning.

SO	W-O
1. Teachers carry out PAI learning innovations optimally 2. Teachers expand relations with the community and kiai (Increase social competence)	1. Islamic Religious Education teachers must be enthusiastic and continue to improve their professionalism in carrying out academic tasks 2. Increase the willingness of support from the education office and school leadership in facilitating Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning activities.
S-T	**W-T**
1. Improve the ability and solidarity of Islamic Religious Education teachers in understanding the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum. 2. Improve the quality of Islamic Religious Education teachers in the realm of professionalism and understanding of the concept of religious moderation.	1. Equipping teachers in preparing interesting and effective PAI learning for students. 2. Communicating with school leaders and education offices to provide and prepare supporting facilities in PAI learning

The table above clearly shows from an internal perspective that Islamic Religious Education teachers are free to design the curriculum in a way that best suits the needs of their students. The shortcomings of institutions, especially those related to facilities and resources that have a significant impact on the educational process, are still a weakness of Islamic Religious Education teachers (Putri, 2020).

From an external perspective, Islamic Religious Education Learning has more opportunities to foster Islamic religious beliefs based on individual talents. The community shows interest in educational institutions when they collaborate with figures around them, just as teachers interact with figures to improve students' understanding (Munadi, 2020). However, there is a risk that different teacher interpretations can cause conflict and division, which can reduce the level of quality and intensity of Islamic Religious Education teaching (Putong, 2003).

Islamic Religious Education teachers must implement several strategies based on these internal and external factors. First, teachers must be able to implement the best Islamic Religious Education learning innovations. Second, teachers must improve social competence by fostering relationships with the community and Kiai. Third, Islamic Religious Education teachers must be enthusiastic and continue to be more professional in carrying out academic tasks. Fourth, school administrators and education offices must be more active in helping to advance Islamic Religious Education learning activities. Fifth, Islamic Religious Education teachers must improve their understanding of the implementation of the autonomy curriculum and a sense of unity. Sixth, Islamic Religious Education teachers must improve their professionalism and

understanding of the idea of religious moderation. Seventh, Islamic Religious Education teachers must have the tools needed to create interesting and successful Islamic Religious Education learning for students. Eighth, Islamic Religious Education teachers must coordinate with the education office and school administrators to develop and provide facilities and infrastructure that support Islamic Religious Education learning (Hasanah et al., 2021)

DISCUSSION

Based on the evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats involved in the SWOT Analysis, four strategic options can be formulated to be used as evaluation materials by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari.

Strengths – Opportunities (SO) Strategy

This strategy is designed with the aim of optimizing all existing potentials in order to achieve and utilize opportunities as much as possible (Alfarizi et al., 2022). From this strategy, there are several steps that can be taken by PAI teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari to optimize existing potentials.

First, PAI teachers of SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari are required to learn most innovatively. Teachers today must continue to innovate in responding to the demands of society. Teachers can use various acceptable learning materials to help students feel comfortable during the PAI learning process. PAI learning must continue to innovate by using information technology to provide various sources of information, learning resources, and teaching materials for teachers and students (Putong, 2003).

Second, Islamic Religious Education teachers of SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari are required to call for increasing social competence and expanding relationships with Kiai and the community. This is necessary because kiai and community leaders have a significant influence on social life. There are historical resources that can collaborate.

Kiai who is knowledgeable about Islamic history in the context of Islamic Religious Education teaching. Students can be more enthusiastic about learning Islamic Religious Education material as a result. In addition, teachers must have extraordinary social skills because they have a great influence on how well students learn. Teachers act as the focal point of learning activities in addition to acting as leaders and facilitators of learning (Hasanah et al., 2021).

Weaknesses – Opportunities (WO) Strategy

This strategy is implemented by utilizing available opportunities and reducing existing weaknesses (Alfarizi et al., 2022). The following are some steps that can be used by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari:

First, Islamic Religious Education teachers must be enthusiastic and continue to improve their professionalism in carrying out academic tasks. A teacher must be energetic in teaching. Because teachers also influence student learning achievement. Improving professionalism when interacting with students in class is indeed difficult, but still necessary. There are several ways to enhance professionalism (Suparjo et al., 2021). One of them is to continue to increase self-awareness and insight. The four professional competencies of teachers, namely pedagogical competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence, can be used to realize this. Considering that many instructors only carry out teaching responsibilities without having clear goals in the learning process, improving these competencies can help teachers become more professional in their work (Walidah et al., 2021).

Furthermore, it is very important to strengthen the commitment of the

principal and the education office to support PAI learning initiatives in each school. Support from related organizations, especially the government, is very important for the smooth running of the education process in schools. To improve teacher standards (Hidayat et al., 2023).

Strengths – Threats (ST) Strategy

This strategy aims to face threats by utilizing the potential of the institution (Alfarizi et al., 2022). The following are some steps that can be used by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari:

First, strengthen the cohesiveness and understanding of PAI instructors regarding the implementation of the autonomous curriculum. Holding training for PAI teachers in a certain location and playing an active role in the PAI teacher organization is one way to improve the cohesiveness and skills of educators (Tambak & Sukenti, 2024). Cooperation and familiarity of teachers in understanding the implementation of the autonomous curriculum can be strengthened by joining the Teacher Working Group (KKG). Teachers can also discuss their interests and problems faced so that educators can be involved and communicate effectively to understand the meaning of PAI (Citraningsih, 2022).

Second, improving professionalism and understanding of the idea of religious moderation among Islamic Religious Education teachers. The quality of Islamic Religious Education teaching will increase as long as the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers is maintained. The idea of religious moderation must be strengthened for Islamic Religious Education teachers to reduce the potential for disputes caused by differences in interpretation (Tan & Hasman, 2024). Cooperation with the Ministry of Religion which acts as a promoter appointed by the President to support and socialize religious moderation by Presidential Regulation Number 18 of 2007 can help improve the quality of teacher professionalism and deepen understanding of the idea of religious moderation (Hidayat et al., 2023).

Weaknesses – Threats (WT) Strategy

This plan is based on a defensive strategy that aims to reduce weaknesses and avoid possible threats (Alfarizi et al., 2022). The following are some steps that can be used by Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari:

First, equipping teachers in preparing interesting and effective Islamic Religious Education learning for students. This is very urgent to implement because whether or not learning is interesting depends on the creativity of the teacher in teaching. Therefore, teachers must be able to manage Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning using methods that are appropriate to the characteristics of their students (Suparjo et al., 2021). Teachers must also be able to understand the characteristics and needs of students by using various methods. These methods must be able to stimulate student creativity so that students are motivated to learn. By demonstrating the right teaching materials, students can understand how the class works (Putong, 2003).

Second, collaborate with the education office and school principals to develop and provide facilities and infrastructure that support Islamic Religious Education learning. As previously mentioned, the central and regional governments are tasked with providing learning facilities in educational institutions(Firman, 2022) . However, it would be better if the leaders of the institutions could provide their learning facilities. In addition, the leaders of the foundations have full authority over the institutions they lead, especially in private schools. Thus, it is hoped that the institutions tasked with providing these facilities and infrastructure can provide better services to students (Suparman et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

In Islamic Religious Education learning, SWOT analysis functions to determine the steps to be taken in the learning process. Based on the SWOT analysis of Islamic Religious Education learning at SMP Negeri 1 Blimbingsari. In order for the Islamic Religious Education learning process and its objectives to run well, the following procedures need to be carried out: First, educators must be as creative as possible in teaching Islamic Religious Education. Second, to improve social competence, educators must expand relationships with the community and kiai. Third, in carrying out academic tasks, Islamic Religious Education educators must be enthusiastic and continue to improve their professionalism. Fourth, greater dedication and assistance are needed from the education office and school administrators to support Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning activities. Fifth, Islamic Religious Education teachers must further improve their abilities and solidarity in understanding the implementation of the independent curriculum. Sixth, the professionalism of Islamic Religious Education teachers and their understanding of the idea of religious moderation need to be improved. Seventh, educators must have the ability to create interesting and successful Islamic Religious Education learning for students. Eighth, to develop and prepare supporting facilities for Islamic Religious Education learning, communication is needed with the education office and school leaders.

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