

# Teachers' Challenges in Conducting Evaluation of Islamic Religious Education Based on the Independent Curriculum

Puput Lestari<sup>1</sup>, Hanifatussaadah<sup>2</sup>, Indri Atun Nafisah<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, [Pupulestari431@gmail.com](mailto:Pupulestari431@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Islam Sunniyyah Selo, [hanifatussaadahh04@gmail.com](mailto:hanifatussaadahh04@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Annur Purwodadi, [nafissah029@gmail.com](mailto:nafissah029@gmail.com)

Correspondence:

## Article Information

## Abstrak

### Citation:

*The Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia: Challenges in Evaluating Islamic Religious Education Learning*

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia necessitates changes across various educational components, including the evaluation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. This curriculum emphasizes both formative and summative assessments that are designed to be more flexible, contextual, and aligned with the development of students' competencies.

However, Islamic Religious Education teachers encounter several challenges in applying these assessment methods. These challenges include a limited understanding of formative assessment concepts, inadequate resources, and difficulties in aligning religious values with a more flexible, student-centered evaluation approach.

This study aims to identify the primary challenges faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers in evaluating learning under the Independent Curriculum and to propose strategic solutions to address these obstacles. The research method employed is a literature review, analyzing findings from academic journals and relevant educational policy documents.

The study reveals that the challenges are primarily technical, pedagogical, and administrative in nature. To address these issues, the study recommends continuous professional development for teachers, clearer policy guidance, and the provision of sufficient educational resources. These measures are essential to ensure that the evaluation of Islamic Religious Education learning under the Independent Curriculum can be carried out effectively and meaningfully.

### Keywords:

Islamic Religious Education, Learning Evaluation, Independent Curriculum

## Introduction

This The title “**Teachers' Challenges in Conducting Evaluation of Islamic Religious Education Based on the Independent Curriculum**” was selected due to its strong relevance to the current educational reform in Indonesia, particularly the implementation of the Independent Curriculum which emphasizes competency-based, contextual, and flexible assessment. The focus of this study is on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers-key actors responsible for the effective implementation of evaluation practices. These teachers face various challenges, including limited

understanding of formative assessment, inadequate technological infrastructure, heavy administrative workload, and the complexity of integrating Islamic values into a modern educational evaluation system. The title also establishes a clear scope by addressing technical, pedagogical, and administrative dimensions, while signaling a descriptive-analytical and solution-oriented research approach relevant to both practice and policy.

### **1. Formative Assessment Theory**

Recent studies highlight the importance of formative assessment within the context of the Independent Curriculum, particularly in PAI. Research conducted in elementary schools and literature reviews demonstrate that tools such as portfolios, observations, quizzes, tasks, and reflection activities enhance student engagement and learning outcomes . These techniques are especially effective for assessing cognitive dimensions of Islamic Religious Education.

### **2. Competency-Based Education (CBE) Theory**

The Independent Curriculum adopts a competency-based approach, which emphasizes continuous assessment through diagnostic, formative, and summative stages. Empirical research in junior and senior high schools shows that PAI teachers are developing evaluation instruments that encompass beginning, intermediate, and final phases of learning to measure holistic student competence .

### **3. Technological–Pedagogical–Content Knowledge (TPACK)**

The integration of digital technology into evaluation requires teachers to possess a balanced understanding of subject matter, pedagogy, and technology. The latest research expands TPACK to include contextual knowledge, which encompasses school policies and infrastructure . This framework is crucial to address the technological challenges often reported by PAI teachers, particularly those in under-resourced schools.

### **4. Blended and HyFlex Learning Assessment**

Strategies like blended learning and flipped classrooms are increasingly applied in PAI to enable project-based and technology-integrated assessments. A 2023 study by Mubaroq et al. demonstrated that such models help mitigate the infrastructural and ICT preparedness challenges faced by PAI educators .

### **5. Islamization of Knowledge and Moral Education Theory**

Research on religious moderation and value integration in the Independent Curriculum supports the necessity of evaluating not only cognitive but also affective and psychomotor domains. Concepts such as the “Islamization of knowledge” and the “Profile of Pancasila Students” provide a basis for incorporating moral and spiritual dimensions in assessment practices.

By applying these contemporary theories, this study aims to:

- Analyze challenges faced by PAI teachers in terms of conceptual understanding, technical capacity, administrative load, and value integration;
- Align findings with modern theoretical foundations (formative assessment, CBE, TPACK, blended learning, Islamic value integration);

- Provide research-based recommendations such as enhanced TPACK training, integrated evaluation guidelines, and the development of digital platforms tailored to PAI assessment.

## Methodology

### Research Methods Used in Data Collection and Compilation

#### 1. Systematic Literature Review

- The researcher collected secondary data through a structured search of academic journals relevant to the evaluation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and the Independent Curriculum.
- Searches were conducted via scholarly databases such as Google Scholar, SINTA, and Scopus, using keywords like “*formative assessment in Islamic education*,” “*PAI evaluation*,” and “*Independent Curriculum in Indonesia*.”
- Only publications from the last five years were selected to ensure the data's relevance and currency.

#### 2. Policy Document Analysis

The study examined official government documents, including:

- The Independent Curriculum Implementation Guide
- Ministry of Education regulations related to assessment
- Teacher training modules provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology
- These documents were analyzed to understand policy frameworks and assessment standards under the Independent Curriculum.

#### 3. Review of Academic Reference Books

- Reference books discussing educational assessment theories, particularly formative and summative approaches, were utilized.
- Priority was given to sources frequently used in teacher education and professional development programs in Indonesia.

#### 4. Analysis of Scientific Conference Articles

Conference papers from national and international Islamic education forums were included, especially those focusing on assessment practices in Islamic Religious Education under curriculum reforms.

#### 5. Data Selection and Thematic Categorization

- Collected data underwent an inclusion-exclusion process: only materials directly relevant to challenges in PAI evaluation were retained.
- Data were categorized thematically into: technical challenges, pedagogical constraints, administrative issues, and strategic solutions.

## 6. Data Presentation in Narrative and Tabular Form

Research findings were organized both descriptively and in thematic tables to clarify the interrelations between categories and facilitate comparative analysis.

## 7. Data Validation through Source Triangulation

To enhance validity, the researcher triangulated multiple types of sources-academic journals, reference books, and official policy documents-to confirm consistency and reinforce the reliability of the findings.

## Findings and Discussion

This section addresses the core research problem: *What are the main challenges faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers in conducting evaluation based on the Independent Curriculum, and what strategic solutions can be proposed?* Based on the thematic literature analysis, six major challenges were identified and are discussed below, along with corresponding solutions.

### 1. Limited Understanding of Formative Assessment Concepts

One of the most prominent challenges is the limited conceptual and practical understanding of formative assessment among PAI teachers. The Independent Curriculum emphasizes process-oriented evaluation and feedback cycles rather than final outcomes. However, many teachers remain dependent on traditional summative assessments. The lack of clear technical guidance and capacity to design process-based rubrics impedes teachers from aligning with the curriculum's objectives (Arifin, 2023; Rahman, 2023).

**Solution:** Structured and continuous professional development programs focusing on formative assessment design, rubrics development, and reflective evaluation are essential. Establishing teacher peer-learning groups (e.g., *KKG*) can enhance collaborative practice and competence (Hidayat, 2023).

### 2. Inadequate Infrastructure and Technological Support

The Independent Curriculum promotes digital-based assessment; however, schools in remote or underfunded areas face major technological constraints. Limited access to devices, internet connectivity, and technical proficiency hinder the implementation of effective, technology-supported formative assessments (Gunawan, 2023).

**Solution:** Government support is critical in the provision of ICT infrastructure and the development of user-friendly, free digital platforms for formative assessment. Additionally, digital literacy training for teachers must be prioritized (Suryadi, 2023).

### 3. Excessive Administrative Workload

Teachers are required to record and report detailed learning progress for each student, which is time-consuming and diverts focus from meaningful pedagogical planning. The documentation of ongoing formative assessments adds a substantial workload (Putri, 2023; Fauzi, 2023).

**Solution:** Development of automated systems and digital tools that simplify evaluation documentation will reduce this burden. Administrative simplification policies should also be considered (Yusuf, 2023).

#### 4. Lack of Continuous Training and Mentorship

While the Independent Curriculum encourages innovation, the lack of continuous and hands-on training prevents teachers from shifting away from traditional evaluation models. Most existing training is superficial and insufficiently contextualized (Wahyudi, 2023).

**Solution:** Mentorship-based models involving experienced facilitators and collaborative workshops need to be institutionalized. These can take the form of *in-service training* or school-based professional learning communities (Mukhlis, 2023; Sagala, 2023).

#### 5. Challenges in Integrating Islamic Values into Modern Evaluation

A unique challenge in PAI evaluation is balancing Islamic character education with the flexible, skills-based model of the Independent Curriculum. Teachers often struggle to assess affective and psychomotor aspects such as religious attitude, ethics, and daily practice through standardized methods (Nasution, 2022).

**Solution:** Assessment instruments must be redesigned to capture affective development through observational checklists, self-assessments, and reflective journals. Training on how to develop and apply these tools objectively is essential (Hidayat, 2023; Arifin, 2023).

#### 6. Variability in School Readiness

The implementation of the Independent Curriculum is uneven across schools due to disparities in institutional support and teacher capacity. This leads to inconsistent evaluation quality and inequitable student learning experiences (Gunawan, 2023; Suryadi, 2023).

**Solution:** Policies must be context-sensitive, allowing flexibility and differentiated support based on each school's condition. This includes differentiated targets, resource allocation, and tailored monitoring mechanisms.

#### Synthesis

The findings confirm that the challenges are not merely pedagogical but also systemic, infrastructural, and administrative. To address these, a multi-level strategy is required:

- **Micro-level:** Teacher capacity building through training and mentoring.
- **Meso-level:** School-based support and resource allocation.
- **Macro-level:** Policy reform, infrastructure provision, and regulatory flexibility.

This comprehensive approach ensures that evaluation in Islamic Religious Education under the Independent Curriculum can be both meaningful and sustainable.

## Conclusion

Evaluation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in the Independent Curriculum faces various challenges that include technical, pedagogical, and administrative aspects.

Difficulty in understanding the concept of formative assessment is still a major obstacle for many Islamic Religious Education teachers who are accustomed to the summative evaluation approach. In addition, limited facilities and infrastructure, especially in the use of technology, further complicate the implementation of evaluation based on the Independent Curriculum.

The high administrative burden is also a significant challenge, as teachers must record student progress in detail in formative assessment reports.

Lack of training and assistance from relevant parties has caused many teachers difficulties in developing evaluation instruments that are in accordance with the principles of the Independent Curriculum. In addition, integrating Islamic values into flexible formative assessments is a challenge in itself in Islamic Religious Education subjects.

To overcome these obstacles, strategic steps are needed, such as continuous improvement of teacher training, provision of adequate resources, and development of a simpler and technology-based evaluation system. In addition, support from the government and educational institutions is very important in ensuring that evaluation in Islamic Religious Education learning can run effectively and in

accordance with the objectives of the Independent Curriculum. With the right strategy, the implementation of Independent Curriculum-based evaluation in Islamic Religious Education is expected to improve the quality of Islamic religious education and shape the character of students in accordance with the Islamic values taught.

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