

## Learning Strategies in the Implementation of the Islamic Education Curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten in Teluk Pulau Dalam, North Labuhanbatu

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### Abstrak

Pendidikan anak usia dini (PAUD) memiliki peran penting dalam pembentukan karakter dan perkembangan anak, terutama dalam konteks pendidikan berbasis Islam. Taman Kanak-Kanak Al-Qur'an (TKQ) Nurul Ikhwan Teluk Pulau Dalam, Labuhanbatu Utara, merupakan salah satu lembaga pendidikan yang mengimplementasikan kurikulum pendidikan Islam di tingkat TKQ. Namun, terdapat tantangan dalam penerapan strategi pembelajaran yang efektif di tengah keterbatasan fasilitas dan waktu yang ada. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi pembelajaran dalam implementasi kurikulum pendidikan Islam di TKQ Nurul Ikhwan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif analitik. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara dengan kepala sekolah dan guru, serta analisis dokumen terkait kurikulum yang diterapkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi kurikulum pendidikan Islam di TKQ Nurul Ikhwan berfokus pada pengajaran Al-Qur'an dan pengembangan karakter sosial anak melalui metode ceramah, tanya jawab, dan permainan. Namun, terdapat kendala terkait keterbatasan fasilitas dan waktu, yang mempengaruhi variasi metode pembelajaran. Para guru berperan penting dalam proses pembelajaran, tetapi mereka membutuhkan pelatihan yang lebih intensif untuk menghadapi tantangan tersebut. Meskipun demikian, dampak positif terhadap perkembangan karakter sosial anak terlihat jelas, terutama dalam aspek keagamaan dan interaksi sosial mereka.

**Kata kunci:** Strategi; Pembelajaran; Kurikulum; Pendidikan Islam.

### Abstrack

Early childhood education (PAUD) plays a crucial role in character formation and child development, particularly within the context of Islamic-based education. Nurul Ikhwan Al-Qur'an Kindergarten (TKQ) in Teluk Pulau Dalam, North Labuhanbatu, is one of the educational institutions implementing the Islamic education curriculum at the TKQ level. However, implementing effective learning strategies amid limited facilities and time is challenging. This study aims to analyze the learning strategies used in implementing the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan TKQ. This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive analytical approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews with the principal and teachers, and analysis of documents related to the implemented curriculum. The results show that the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan TKQ focuses on teaching the Quran and developing children's social character through lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and games. However, there are obstacles related to limited facilities and time, which affect the variety of learning methods. Teachers play a crucial role in the learning process, but they require more intensive training to address

these challenges. Nevertheless, the positive impact on children's social character development is evident, particularly in their religious development and social interactions.

**Keywords:** Strategy; Learning; Curriculum; Islamic Education.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is the most powerful means to educate people for success in society. (Mursal Aziz et.al, 2019). Islamic education, in particular, is a form of physical and spiritual guidance based on Islamic religious laws. (Aziz, 2025). Islamic education is an essential part of the national education system. (Mursal Aziz et.al., 2024b). The Islamic education curriculum is an essential aspect in forming a generation that excels academically, has a deep understanding of religion, and demonstrates commendable morals. (Aziz, Ashshiddiqi, & Ariyanto, 2025).

Early childhood education (PAUD) plays a crucial role in shaping a child's character and basic skills. One early childhood education institution that implements an Islamic-based curriculum is the Al-Qur'an Kindergarten (TKQ). TKQ plays a strategic role in developing Islamic values, which are expected to shape a generation that is not only intelligent but also virtuous. The Qur'an serves as a moral, spiritual, and cultural guideline, the lifeblood of the Muslim community. (Aziz & Nasution, 2025). In its implementation, the Islamic education curriculum should be adapted to local context and conditions, as seen at the Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten in Teluk Pulau Dalam, North Labuhanbatu.

The curriculum is the most essential part of the educational process, serving as a guide to academic goals. According to the Qur'an, the ideal curriculum is integrated and holistic. (Aziz et al., 2021). The Islamic education curriculum implemented in TKQ requires effective learning strategies to achieve its goals. (Prihatin et al., 2023). However, while numerous studies have addressed Islamic education curricula at the elementary level, few have focused on implementation strategies at the TKQ level, particularly within the context of local communities like those in Teluk Pulau Dalam. Research on effective learning strategies in this context remains limited, and this presents an interesting gap for further investigation.

The existing literature indicates that learning strategies in Kindergartens (TKQ) should not only focus on Quranic learning but also on developing children's social and moral character in line with Islamic teachings. Implementing the Quranic curriculum plays a crucial role in developing Islamic character in children from an early age (Aziz, Napitupulu, & Khairani, 2025). Previous research, such as that conducted by Sakila et al. (2023), showed that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Early Childhood Islamic Education through the Project-Based Learning

(PjBL) learning model was proven to have a significant positive impact (Sakila et al., 2023). Jf and Azmi's (2022) research found that by implementing active learning strategies, students can more easily understand the material and absorb lessons quickly, so that they remain interested and do not feel bored (Jf & Azmi, 2022). Research by Saripudin and Faujiah (2018) shows that learning at Pelangi Kindergarten in Cirebon City applies the concept of edutainment, namely the integration of education and entertainment to create a more enjoyable learning experience in line with the initial learning objectives (Saripudin & Faujiah, 2018).

The purpose of this study is to explore and analyze the learning strategies used in implementing the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten (TKQ) in Teluk Pulau Dalam. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how teachers and educational administrators at the TKQ can implement the curriculum more effectively, tailored to the needs and conditions of the children and the local community. Furthermore, this research is also expected to provide practical recommendations for other Islamic educational institutions in optimizing the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum in early childhood education.

This research is expected to broaden insights into the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum in TKQ and to provide guidance for developing more effective learning strategies within the context of Islamic-based early childhood education. The findings are also expected to make a significant contribution to the development of a curriculum that is more relevant and adaptive to local socio-cultural conditions.

## METHOD

This study employed qualitative research to gain a deeper understanding of the learning strategies used in implementing the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten (TKQ) in Teluk Pulau Dalam, North Labuhanbatu. The approach employed in this study was a descriptive-analytical one, in which the researcher explored and analyzed the data to gain a comprehensive understanding of educational practices at the TKQ.

The data used in this study consisted of two types: primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through direct observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation conducted at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten. Interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and parents to gain a holistic perspective on curriculum implementation and the learning strategies employed. Secondary data were obtained from documents related to the TKQ curriculum, such as syllabi, lesson plans, and reports on educational activities.

Data collection techniques included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted in TKQ classrooms to observe ongoing learning activities directly. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the experiences and perspectives of teachers and principals regarding the challenges and successes in implementing the Islamic education curriculum. Meanwhile, document analysis was conducted to review teaching materials, methods used, and reports on learning activities conducted at TKQ.

After data collection, thematic analysis was used. Data from interviews and observations were categorized into key themes related to learning strategies and curriculum implementation. This analysis involved coding the data to identify emerging patterns, then interpreting the findings to develop a deeper understanding of educational practices at TKQ. This analysis also connected field findings to relevant Islamic education theories, providing a broader perspective on the research.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Implementation of the Islamic Education Curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten in Teluk Pulai Dalam

Learning objectives are aligned with the established curriculum. (Mursal Aziz. et al., 2020). Interviews with the principal and direct field observations revealed that Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten integrates the Ministry of Religious Affairs curriculum with an Islamic character approach. The primary focus of this curriculum implementation is the introduction of the hijaiyah alphabet, memorization of daily prayers and short surahs, and the development of noble moral habits.

Classroom observations indicate that the hijaiyah alphabet is taught in stages, using a variety of methods to facilitate memorization. Memorization of prayers and short surahs is also conducted daily using fun approaches, such as singing or playing, which encourage active and enthusiastic participation. The development of noble moral habits is implemented in every interaction, through direct examples and reinforcement through daily activities.

The teachers revealed that although this curriculum has been quite effective in instilling religious and moral values in children, they also identified several challenges, especially in managing limited time to achieve all existing learning targets. (Andriani et al., 2019). Limited learning facilities are also an obstacle to developing more diverse and interactive methods.

Based on observations, interviews with teachers and the principal, and document analysis, it can be concluded that Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten in Teluk Pulai Dalam implements an Islamic education curriculum that emphasizes character development and mastery of the Quran. Teachers use lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and game-based learning to engage children. This aligns with the curriculum document, which prioritizes values-based learning and Islamic moral teaching. Teachers also integrate religious instruction with social skills and good habits, such as prayer, supplication, and good manners.

Interviews with teachers revealed limitations in utilizing more varied learning methods due to limited facilities and time. Several teachers suggested the need for further training in innovative teaching methods, including the use of technology. This suggests that despite reasonable efforts in curriculum implementation, challenges remain in developing more dynamic learning strategies.

The integration of the Ministry of Religious Affairs curriculum with an Islamic character approach has a positive impact on children's character development. Introduction to the hijaiyah alphabet, memorization of daily prayers, and short surahs (chapters) is carried out through fun methods, such as games and songs. (Siratjudin & Citra, 2024). This helps children more easily remember and apply the material taught in their daily lives. Cultivating noble morals is also an integral part of every learning activity, reflected in children's attitudes and interactions within the school environment. Teachers play an active role in instilling these values, both inside and outside the classroom, which reinforces the teaching of the religious curriculum.

This approach is reasonably practical, but several challenges remain in its implementation. Time constraints for learning activities are one of the obstacles teachers face in achieving all curriculum targets. This is particularly evident in sessions that require more attention, such as teaching noble morals and memorizing the Quran. Furthermore, although the methods used are varied, limited learning facilities, such as visual aids and technology, also impact learning effectiveness. Therefore, improving facilities and developing more innovative and flexible methods are crucial to support the smooth implementation of the curriculum in the future.

## Learning Strategies in the Implementation of the Nurul Ikhwan Teluk Pulau Dalam Kindergarten Curriculum

Children at an early age have a strong learning capacity. They tend to be curious and observe everything around them. (Aziz et al., 2022). Interviews with teachers at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten revealed that the Islamic education curriculum emphasizes a fun, interactive approach. Teachers use play-based learning, storytelling, singing Islamic songs, and simulating religious practices to teach children religious values. They believe that young children learn most effectively through fun activities, such as play. Therefore, they choose educational games with Islamic elements, such as guessing the hijaiyah letters, assembling Quranic puzzles, and role-playing games to simulate religious practices like prayer and ablution.

Field observations indicate that teachers are making the most of the play-based learning method in the classroom. Children appear very enthusiastic about participating in activities involving games, such as singing Islamic songs or participating in simulated religious practices. This creates a more lively and enjoyable learning environment. Learning documentation also shows various activities that combine elements of play with religious education, such as singing and storytelling sessions accompanied by discussions about moral values and Islamic teachings. The teacher organizes these activities well, ensuring that each child is actively involved and understands the material taught through an age-appropriate approach.



Figure 1: Playing while Learning Learning Strategy TKQ Nurul Ikhwan Teluk Pulau Dalam

The play-while-learning approach is efficient for young children. Children who are still in the cognitive and emotional development stages need fun methods to prevent the learning process from feeling boring (Ashfarina et al., 2023). Through activities such as storytelling, singing Islamic songs, and simulating religious practices, children not only learn religious material directly but also engage in immersive experiences that support their character development. By incorporating Islamic elements into educational games, teachers can convey moral values and Islamic teachings in a more engaging and accessible way for children.

Furthermore, observations indicate that the play activities implemented have a positive impact on children's motivation and engagement in learning. Children appear more enthusiastic and eager to participate in activities that involve active interaction, such as singing or role-playing in simulated religious practices. This demonstrates that this activity-based learning method is not only fun but also effective in enhancing their understanding of religious values. With an age-appropriate approach, such as that implemented at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten, children learn in ways that suit their needs and development, making the learning experience more meaningful and enjoyable.

### **The Role of Teachers in the Implementation of the Islamic Education Curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten, Teluk Pulai Dalam**

A professional teacher can make learning materials more engaging because they should be engaging to begin with. (Mursal Aziz et.al., 2024a). Teachers at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten play a vital role in the successful implementation of the curriculum. Interviews with teachers and the principal, along with field observations, revealed that teachers serve as facilitators and motivators in the learning process. They not only teach but also guide students in developing their social character, instilling values such as tolerance, honesty, and responsibility. Furthermore, teachers take the initiative to connect lessons to everyday life, helping children more easily understand the religious values taught.

In an interview with the principal, he stated: "We incorporate Islamic values into all activities, such as greetings, praying before and after activities, and providing direct examples of behavior from teachers." Interviews with teachers and the principal, as well as field observations, revealed that teachers at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten play a crucial role in implementing the Islamic education curriculum. Teachers are not only responsible for teaching curriculum material, but also for incorporating Islamic values into every activity,

both inside and outside the classroom. Each learning activity begins with greetings, a prayer before and after, and examples of good behavior for the children. This approach aims not only to instill religious understanding but also to form habits that reflect Islamic morals.

Field observations show that teachers truly apply Islamic values in every interaction with students. During lessons, teachers consistently remind students to maintain good manners, such as speaking politely and respecting their peers. Documentation of learning activities also shows that teachers provide direct examples through their actions, for example, demonstrating patience, kindness, and honesty, which serve as models for the children. This creates a learning environment that emphasizes not only mastery of the material but also character development in accordance with the Islamic values implemented at the Kindergarten (TKQ).

Teachers function not only as instructors but also as role models who implement Islamic values in every aspect of daily life at school. Teachers at this Kindergarten consistently incorporate Islamic values into every learning activity, such as greeting, praying before and after activities, and providing direct examples through their behavior. This creates a holistic learning environment, where children not only acquire religious knowledge but are also taught to practice these values in their daily lives. In this way, teachers act as models who shape noble morals for students, which is important for their character development. (Rohman et al., 2023).

This approach is effective in strengthening students' character development, but challenges remain in maintaining the consistency and sustainability of implementing these values. Teachers' limited time and workload often influence the extent to which Islamic values can be optimally implemented in each activity. Furthermore, despite teachers' maximum efforts to provide direct examples, parents also play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of these values at home. Therefore, collaboration between teachers and parents needs to be strengthened to ensure that the Islamic values taught in schools are more easily accepted and implemented by children in their daily lives. (Nurlaela et al., 2024).

### **The Role of Parents in the Implementation of the Islamic Education Curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten, Teluk Pulai Dalam**

The early childhood education curriculum, based on the Qur'an, is oriented toward character formation through the integration of the values of monotheism, morality, worship, and social interaction. These Qur'anic values serve as an important foundation for developing

a curriculum that not only focuses on cognitive intelligence but also emphasizes spiritual, moral, and social aspects (Aziz, Ashshiddiqi, & Mahdiana, 2025). Interviews with the principal and teachers revealed that Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten regularly holds meetings with students' parents to strengthen communication and collaboration in supporting their children's learning. In addition to these meetings, the school also uses a daily liaison book to communicate information about children's development to parents directly. This book serves as a means of providing daily feedback on children's activities and school progress. Teachers also involve parents in various school activities, such as parenting classes, which aim to provide insight into children's education and ways to support learning at home. Furthermore, Islamic competitions held at the school also involve parental participation, thus creating a closer connection between school and home.

Field observations indicate that communication between the school and parents is quite active. Teachers regularly record children's progress in a daily logbook, and parents respond to these records during meetings and through the logbook. Documentation of school activities also shows that parenting classes and Islamic competitions are important opportunities for parents to be directly involved in their children's education. These activities not only strengthen the relationship between teachers and parents but also raise parents' awareness of their role in supporting their children's character development and religious education at home.

The approach implemented is quite effective in supporting children's development. Regular meetings with parents and the use of a daily logbook provide opportunities for teachers to provide updates on their children's progress, while parents can provide direct feedback. This creates two-way communication, which is crucial for supporting children's learning, particularly in strengthening the character and religious values taught at school. The daily logbook also facilitates both parties' continued connection and collaboration in monitoring children's development in greater detail. (Lutfi, 2023).

In addition, activities such as parenting classes and Islamic competitions involving parents also have a positive impact on strengthening the relationship between school and home (Sista & Sodikin, 2022). Parents are involved not only in supporting their children's academic education but also in shaping their children's social and moral character through Islamic-themed activities (Choirun Nijma et al., 2025). By actively involving parents in school activities, they better understand their role in supporting their children's education at home and how they can help develop the values implemented at school. This parental

involvement is expected to create consistency between what is taught in school and the habits practiced at home, thus optimizing the child's educational process.

### **Obstacles and Challenges in Implementing the Nurul Ikhwan Teluk Pulai Dalam Kindergarten Curriculum**

Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and love for God can be effectively instilled through play-based activities, by strengthening school culture, and by integrating the Pancasila Student Profile with Islamic teachings. A holistic, value-rich Islamic curriculum, combined with a holistic curriculum approach, can provide a strong foundation for developing children's personalities and spiritual awareness. (Aziz, Ashshiddiqi, Sari, et al., 2025).

Interviews with teachers revealed that one of the main challenges in implementing the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten is the children's varying abilities to absorb learning materials. Some children grasp the material more quickly, while others take longer to master it. This makes it challenging to adapt teaching methods to suit each student's needs. Teachers stated that they strive to provide more attention to children who need additional support, but limited time and resources hinder this. Furthermore, another challenge is the lack of support within the children's home environment for the instillation of values taught at school. Many parents are inconsistent in supporting the instillation of values at school, particularly in character building and religious practices.

Field observations show that teachers at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten are making every effort to address this challenge by strengthening communication with parents. The school holds monthly meetings with parents to discuss the children's development, particularly regarding the instilling of Islamic values at home. Documentation of these activities shows that teachers also provide progress notes to parents for evaluation and feedback. This demonstrates an effort to foster collaboration between the school and parents to support the learning process. However, there are still challenges in achieving consistency between what is taught in school and the practices at home, which can affect the success of instilling Islamic values in children.

The differences in children's ability to absorb learning materials are a significant obstacle (Andi Ridwan dan Samad Umarella, 2024). Children with varying levels of understanding require a more individualized approach, but limited time and resources make this process difficult to optimize. Although teachers strive to pay more attention to children

who need additional support, it remains challenging to tailor effective methods to each student. Therefore, teachers must find creative ways to bridge the gap in students' abilities, such as using a wider range of learning methods and providing more frequent practice for children who need more time.

Furthermore, the lack of parental support for instilling the values implemented in schools is also a significant challenge. (Sukmawati, 2022). Although schools strive to strengthen communication with parents through regular meetings and feedback on their children's progress, some parents still struggle to implement the same habits at home. This is due to various factors, such as busy schedules and a lack of understanding of the importance of consistency in children's character education. Closer collaboration between teachers and parents is essential to ensure the values taught in school are consistently implemented at home. A more open and educational approach to parents may help strengthen their support for their children's learning.

### **The Impact of Curriculum Implementation on Child Development**

Early childhood education (PAUD) plays an important role in developing social character. (Aziz, Napitupulu, & Windari, 2025). The education provided at this stage has a significant impact on the future development of the child's personality. (Aziz, Napitupulu, & Siregar, 2025). Observations of teacher-student interactions indicate that implementing the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten (TKQ Nurul Ikhwan) significantly impacts children's development. The children appear highly enthusiastic about participating in learning, particularly in activities related to Quranic teaching and character development. Interviews with parents revealed their satisfaction with their children's social and moral development after attending the kindergarten. They reported that their children have become more disciplined, diligent in their worship, and exhibit better attitudes in their social interactions.

However, from a cognitive perspective, several parents expressed the hope that their children would not only master religious material but also develop stronger basic academic skills, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic. This provides important input for management to balance religious instruction and basic skills development better.

Based on the results of this study, several recommendations can be made to improve the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten. First, facilities and resources are needed to support more effective learning. The use of technology,

such as multimedia or educational applications, can be an alternative to attract children's interest. Second, teachers need regular professional training to develop more innovative and modern learning methods. Third, it is important to balance religious instruction with the development of children's basic skills, so that children are not only religiously literate but also prepared for basic academics. Overall, this study indicates that the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten is progressing well, though several challenges remain to improve the quality of education.

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to explore and analyze learning strategies used in implementing the Islamic education curriculum at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten, Teluk Pulau Dalam, North Labuhanbatu. Based on the study's results from observation, interviews, and document analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Islamic education curriculum at this kindergarten has been carried out well. However, several challenges remain to achieve optimal implementation. The learning strategies implemented at Nurul Ikhwan Kindergarten, Teluk Pulau Dalam, focus more on character development and teaching the Quran, using lectures, question-and-answer methods, and game-based learning. However, constraints in facilities and time constraints hinder the development of more varied methods. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing this curriculum, but they face challenges in obtaining adequate professional training to keep pace with the changing times. Nevertheless, the impact of this curriculum implementation on children's character development is very positive, as they demonstrate better attitudes in everyday life, especially in social and moral aspects.

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