



## Implementation Independent Curriculum on Competencies Professionalism of RA Teachers in Bandar Lampung

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Article Info	Abstract
<b>Article History</b> Received: 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 Revised: 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 Published: 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2025  Independent Curriculum; Early Childhood Education; Teacher Mentoring; P5PPRA.	<i>The Independent Curriculum has been officially designated as the national curriculum for the 2024/2025 academic year, as outlined in KMA No. 347 of 2022. However, early childhood Islamic institutions (RA) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs remain underserved in professional training, creating a gap in curriculum readiness. This study aimed to enhance RA teachers' capacity to implement the Independent Curriculum through a structured mentoring program focusing on curriculum design and teaching module development. Using the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, the program engaged 25 RA/PAUD teachers in Bandar Lampung through six online sessions and one offline workshop. The training covered differentiated learning, operational curriculum (KOM) development, and the integration of P5PPRA (Project Strengthening Profile of Pancasila Students and Rahmatan Lil Alamin). Results indicate significant improvement in teachers' understanding of learner-centered pedagogy, assessment, and the alignment of vision-mission with instructional goals. Two institutions produced complete KOM documents, while others demonstrated partial progress. The program also fostered reflective teaching practices, collaborative planning, and integration of local culture and religious values into instructional design. In conclusion, sustained mentoring can bridge the gap in curriculum implementation at the early childhood level, promote teacher agency, and support systemic transformation aligned with the values of Islamic education. These findings underscore the importance of long-term, context-based professional development for successful curriculum reform.</i>

### INTRODUCTION

Independent Curriculum will become curriculum national in Year Learning 2024/2025, appropriate with KMA No. 347 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Implementing the Independent Curriculum in Madrasas. By even teachers have to implement. However, the Ministry of Religion especially Bandar Lampung should be endeavor give training in a way systematic For all power educators in each level education, start from RA to with MA. Different case with Ministry of Education and Culture already facilitate all level education with School Programs Movers for existing SMEs walk three year. Although Ministry of Religion Already stage IKMBK activities (Implementation Independent Curriculum Based Community) that recruits lecturers and staff expert For accompany widyaswara in Implement it The Independent Curriculum (IKM) is only at the Primary and Secondary Education levels (Siregar et al., 2024).

As a result, at the RA level as the foundation phase, there is a gap between the demands for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum and the training support provided (Putri et al., 2023), which has an impact on the lack of teacher readiness in understanding the concepts, designing, and implementing the Merdeka Curriculum as a whole (Jamilah et al., 2023; Muyassaroh et al., 2023; Reza & Aufa, 2024). This problem is a priority in the community

service program because if it is not addressed immediately, it will have an impact on the low achievement of early childhood learning, especially in aspects of character, early literacy, and readiness for transition to basic education (Harrington et al., 2020; Teale et al., 2020).

This thing supported by the opinion of the chairman of the IGRA Lampung Regional Leadership, Aseptin, who stated that RA has not noticed. The efforts made by IGRA with presenting speaker For discuss Merdeka curriculum through workshop one day. The majority of RA teachers receive training online training independently, the material presented in a way separate and not in a way intact from beginning until end.

This thing resulting in a shortage teacher professionalism in implement Merdeka curriculum for learning. According to GTK Director General Regulation No. 6565 of 2020 article 5 paragraph 2, teacher competency must be developed one of them is practice learning professional. Competence the covers teacher's ability to compose design and reflect effective learning (Martinez, 2022; Sudargini & Purwanto, 2020); do assessment, bait come back and deliver results learn. Some Steps to develop competence that, you can done with method apply learning differentiate (Wahyuningsari et al., 2022). Learning process differentiate refers to content, process, and product (Derici & Susanti, 2023), learning can done with provide supporting media in accordance with need Study participant educate (Aprima & Sari, 2022).

Thus, the framework of this program rests on efforts to strengthen the capacity of RA teachers as the spearhead of the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum in the foundation phase, through a systematic and applicable mentoring strategy that not only equips theoretically, but also encourages teachers to produce operational curriculum products and teaching modules in accordance with the CP of the PAUD level.

Based on description these, between demands teacher professionalism with support Ministry of Religion No walk side by side . Naturally change curriculum This carried out for participants educate succeed become independent and creative students \_ must built since phase foundation, namely PAUD/RA. Success the measurable through Achievements Learning (CP) includes; religious and ethical values character , teak self , and basics literacy and STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Art and Mathematics).

Whereas s eically practice or not aware, the teacher is not apply concepts, essence and limitations at the level phase Foundation (Henriksen et al., 2020). Learning calistung No means become taboo, as preparation facing a transition period preschool level to Elementary School (SD). However delivery packed in accordance with characteristics participant educate in phase foundation , through fun learning media (Turnip & Wijayaningsih, 2022) , media or sources that don't Can presented in form concrete can served through technology (Lindeman et al., 2021), meaningful and enjoyable play (Arika Novrani et al., 2021), and various type book reading For child or storytelling (Tzima et al., 2020), differentiated learning in accordance with talents and interests child through play meaning in extracurricular activities (Reis et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2022), and appropriate assessments For measure achievement achievements learning in accordance with phase Foundation (Kubiszyn & Borich, 2024). So, for carry out This all, necessary exists enhancement teacher competence for supporting SMEs (Sakib et al., 2022).

Recency in devotion This is accompaniment done in a way systematic and in-depth, teachers do not only understand IKM theory, preparation Curriculum Madrasah Operations (KOM), module intracurricular and co-curricular (P5PPRA), but also produces product in the form of a KOM in it there is analysis characteristics, vision mission, organizing learning, planning learning contained in Intracurricular teaching and assessment modules. Naturally planning learning must refers to 3 CPs at the Early Childhood level. Whereas study Previously teachers only get understanding theory related to SMEs (Dabić et al., 2020), preparation curriculum operational and P5 (Faizah et al., 2024), understanding related preparation plan learning and assessment (Chan, 2023). Based on Scopus data, not yet there is study related to IKM at the Early Childhood level .

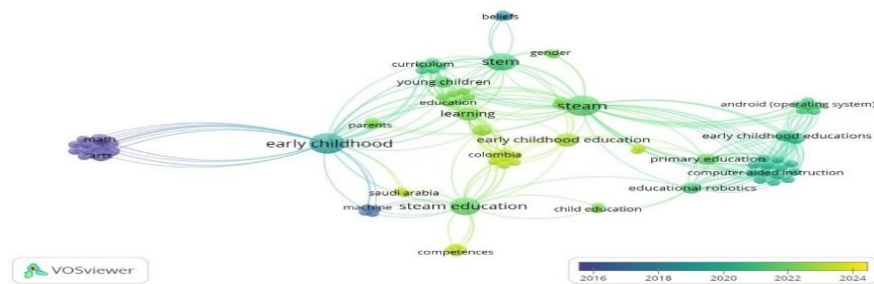


Figure 1. Early Childhood Research Data

There are approximately 23 studies that examine STEAM and Early Childhood. The STEAM referred to in the research data is a learning model. Meanwhile, in this service, STEAM is one of the abilities required in the foundation phase. With So, it is expected with exists accompaniment this, the teacher can implement IKM with OK, so impact positive on achievement learning participant educate.

Implementation curriculum independent especially in institutions Raudhatul Athfal (RA) in learning demands professional teachers as effort government for increase results Study participant students who follow developments over time. In its implementation, the curriculum independent use alloy learning intracurricular (70-80% of JP) and co-curricular (20-30% of JP) via project strengthening Profile Pancasila students. Intracurricular is the development of effective student organizations in schools, whether in primary or secondary education. Intracurricular activities must be able to guarantee student participation in the relevant school programs, educational programs and service programs public (Mulyadi & Mardiana, 2022; Munadi & Khuriyah, 2023).

Co-curricular is activities at school carried out by students to strengthen, deepen or enrich the subjects they have studied in activity intracurricular. In madrasas, co-curricular add PPRA components, so became P5PPRA (Project Strengthening Profile Pancasila Students and Profiles Student Grace lil Alamin) which is means give chance participant educate to “experience knowledge” as a process of reinforcement character at a time chance For Study from environment surroundings. Strengthening project profile student expected can become optimal means in push participant educate become student throughout competent life, character and behavior in accordance with Pancasila values, and Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin. Activity this can held simultaneously with celebration days big, celebratory tradition culture local, and moments certain (Dychkovskyy & Ivanov, 2020; Perry et al., 2020).

The curriculum independence RPP replaced with term teaching modules, however the difference is, the teaching modules are arranged from channel objective developed learning from achievements learning. Meanwhile the RPP is developed from syllabus. Kumer delivers freedom to educator for arrange learning in accordance with needs and characteristics participant educate. Typical characteristics curriculum independent based project and character, focus on the material essentials, and flexibility for teachers and participants educate. So that Study No fixated on the load required material studied everything, learning become more meaningful, deep, and fun.

## METHOD

Devotion This use ABCD ( *Asset Based Community Development*) approach. Approach This based on underlying assets/potential objective devotion (Perry et al., 2020). Object devotion are 25 RA/PAUD teachers in Bandar Lampung. Implementation done online and offline. Online sessions were conducted for 6x deep period time not enough more than 1 month, where each session done as much as 6 JP (4.5 hours). Material delivered related to SMEs up to to preparation of KOM. Source person online sessions viz Wiwin Muhyi Susanti, S.Pd as team center curriculum and authors script book for

preschool teachers. Then source person second is Dewa Cindy Hapsari, S.Pd as facilitator school mover and BAN PAUD and PNF assessors. The offline session was delivered by Aseptina, S.Pd chairman of PW IGRA Lampung Province, discussion offline sessions are surgery existing KOM projects and teaching modules carried out by each madrasah. Devotion step done with method:



Figure 2. Methodology Devotion

## RESULT DAN DISCUSSION

### Result

#### Implementation of Online Services

Meeting first in this online session held on August 26 2023 via zoom meeting, presenters open teacher paradigm about independent curriculum. Then explain differentiated learning Because every participant educate own diverse characteristics. Learning differentiate is learning with use technique instructional or learning that uses various method teaching For fulfil need individual every students.



Figure 3. Explanation Differentiation

At the meeting Currently, only 2 schools have it motivation tall for implement Merdeka curriculum, namely Al Ulya 3 and Al Amanah. This thing seen when session ask answer. Some participants Still do activity learning that is not differentiate. Designed activities No stimulate needs participant educate. Meeting second the online session will be held on August 27 2023 via zoom meeting. At the meeting This explain about Curriculum Madrasah Operations (KOM), namely components 1-3. Component 1 about characteristics unit education, component 2 vision mission unit education, and component 3 about organizing learning. The output of the second meeting is that participants understand how to develop characteristics and vision and mission that are appropriate to the educational unit. These two components are very important to design as guidelines, goals and focus for learning communities in educational units. In fact, the vision and mission of the educational unit that has been designed has not been evaluated for a long time, meaning it does not keep up with the times, does not adapt to the characteristics and needs of the school. In fact, technically, a maximum of 5 years' vision and mission must be evaluated. Then, in its preparation it did not involve all elements of the school community. In fact, only the chairman of the Foundation designed it. The majority of teachers in schools also do not memorize or even understand the school's vision and mission.

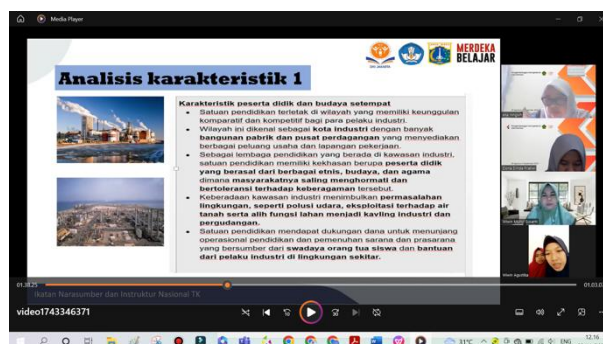


Figure 4. Explanation KOM Components 1-3

Next, the teacher's understanding is related preparation organizing learning Not yet evenly, like RA At Tamam and Perwanida 2. Unit method education arrange learning load curriculum in One range time is with do organizer regulatory learning burden Study in structure curriculum, content eye lessons and study areas, settings time learning, as well as the learning process. Meeting third held on September 2 2023. Meeting This next with discussing KOM about component 4 viz Planning Learning. Output from session This is a starting teacher understand planning learning for compile teaching module. During the planning process learning, teacher always depend on module teaching provided center. Planning related learning with purpose, content, material or material learning as well as method its implementation to the purpose of this program considered very important for reach program objectives.

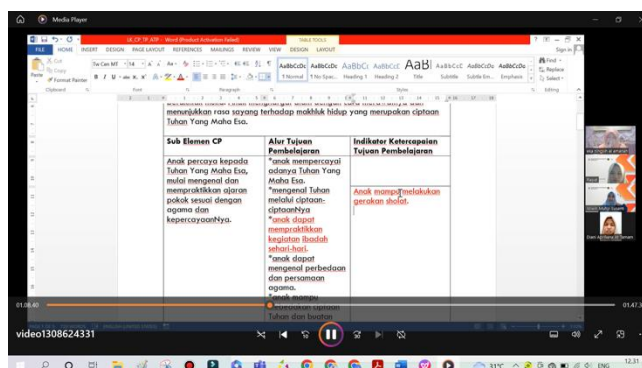


Figure 5. Planning Learning

In the 2013 Curriculum, planning learning called Plan Implementation Learning (RPP), while in the standing curriculum Alone changed become module teaching. On the curriculum independence, KI was replaced with results learning. From change the there is difference between CP and KI. The difference is, in the independent CP program, allocation time for reach goals that have been set designed in a way gradually. CP will creating a Learning Objective Flow (ATP). Teacher still depend on example module existing teaching as guidelines learning. Meeting fourth held on September 3, 2023. At the meeting This discuss related teaching module that will used as guide teaching teachers in their respective madrasas. The RA teaching module consists of: of 3 components that is activity intracurricular, cocurricular or P5PPRA and extracurriculars.

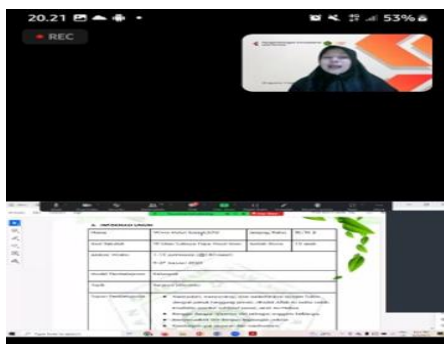




Figure 6. Teaching Module

At this fourth meeting, some teachers still considered the teaching modules in the independent curriculum to be the same as the RPPH in the 2013 curriculum, but there were several teachers who said that the content of the teaching modules was easier to prepare and there were also some teachers who still had difficulty in compiling teaching modules because one teaching module could be used for several days, unlike RPPH which can only be used for one day.

Meeting fifth will be held on September 4, 2023 with material assessment and reflection related to KOM. RA assessment is an assessment in the form of a real description of what happens to children, including; anecdotal notes, notes on work results, developmental achievement checklists, series of photos.

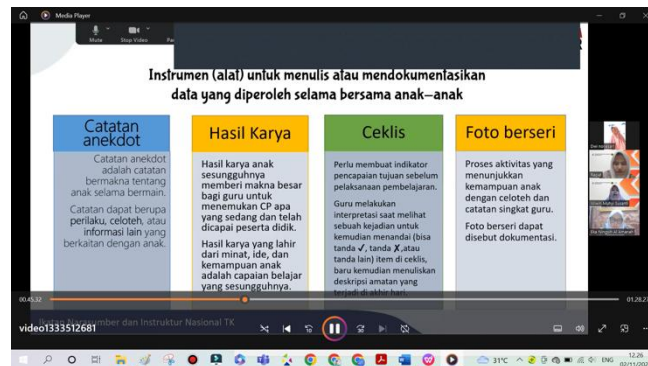


Figure 7. Assessment RA Level in the Independent Curriculum

At the meeting this, understanding beginning related assessment some teachers still do think that assessment must be done every day for all students, however in fact one day no must evaluate all student but can be done with assess 3 students in one day then day next 3 students again with objective the same learning. This thing carried out for development academic students and abilities think critical student can be explored and teachers can provide more stimulus. After given explanation, teacher more understand that no must evaluate all student in one day and assessment no required per week, where one theme one assessments are also allowed customized with needs and abilities of teachers in madrasah that.

Sixth online meeting will be held on September 10, 2023 with discussion how preparation of P5PPRA. Strengthening profile student Pancasila held in context celebration tradition local, day big national, and international. Activity this intended for strengthen embodiment six character profile student Pancasila in phase foundation.

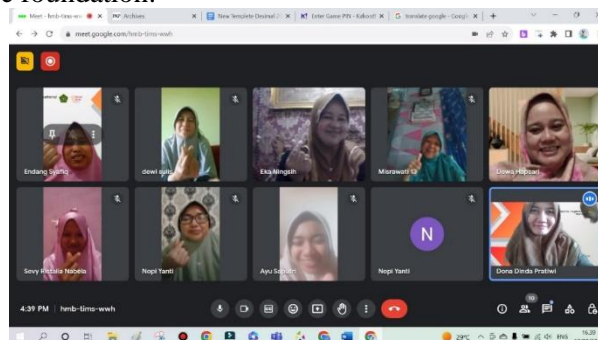


Figure 8. P5PPRA Final Session

In meetings currently, some madrasahs have implemented P5PPRA has long been related with the contents in P5PPRA include qonaah and others. However matter the poured to in form teaching modules and not linked with days greatness because if in the P5PPRA project is linked with day greatness, for example the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, Heroes' Day, Youth Pledge and others. After the teacher explained more understand how preparation related P5PPRA teaching module.

### Implementation of Offline Service

Activity Devotion held on Saturday, September 23, 2023 at 08.00-15.00 WIB at in room hearing Mathematics Education Department, UIN Raden Intan Lampung. Participant activity totaling 35 people from various RAs in the Bandar Lampung area. Activity devotion done with method stare face and surgery existing KOM projects made.



**Figure 9.** Mentoring Preparation of KOM and Teaching Modules

Participants adapt between theme or organizing activities learning with planning existing learning designed. Mostly participant Already can designing organizing learning with OK, capable adapt allocation minimum learning time for 1 week and 1 semester. Basically, teachers have apply appropriate learning with his age, however Not yet fully differentiate.

In addition to differences in curriculum output quality, the mentoring sessions revealed significant shifts in teachers' pedagogical perspectives and professional confidence. Initially, many teachers lacked clarity on how the Independent Curriculum differed from the previous national framework. Their understanding was largely limited to technical aspects such as new terminology (e.g., teaching modules replacing RPP), without a clear grasp of its pedagogical implications, especially in terms of learner-centered and differentiated approaches. However, throughout the sessions, most participants demonstrated progressive improvement in both theoretical comprehension and practical application.

For example, during the third and fourth mentoring sessions, which focused on planning and developing teaching modules, several teachers—particularly from RA Al Ulya 3 and Al Amanah—began to formulate weekly and semester-based learning plans that reflected the three Learning Outcomes (CP) for early childhood. These plans incorporated local culture, school values, and children's interests, marking a departure from rigid, one-size-fits-all lesson structures. Teachers also acknowledged that teaching modules in the Independent Curriculum offered greater flexibility and relevance compared to the daily lesson plan model (RPPH) they had used previously. Furthermore, during the offline workshop session, direct observation and document analysis showed tangible improvement in the alignment between schools' vision and mission with their instructional goals. Some teachers revised outdated institutional visions—previously written solely by school foundations—to reflect broader educational aspirations, including independence, creativity, and faith-based character formation in students. This process also fostered stronger collaboration among teaching staff, as KOM planning now involved collective reflection and dialogue rather than top-down design.

Another area of development was in assessment practices. In early sessions, several teachers believed that all students must be assessed daily, causing both cognitive overload and procedural confusion. However, as they engaged in group discussion and case study analysis, they began to understand the principle of flexible, developmentally appropriate assessment. By the final sessions, most participants could distinguish between formative and summative

assessment strategies, and began to implement rotating observation models using anecdotal notes, developmental checklists, and portfolios. This marked an important shift from compliance-driven assessment to assessment for learning. Importantly, the program also catalyzed a rethinking of co-curricular activities, particularly through the P5PPRA framework. Teachers began to design project-based learning linked to local traditions, religious holidays, and national events. For instance, several madrasahs planned integrated activities for Prophet Muhammad's birthday, Heroes' Day, or Islamic New Year, embedding values such as empathy, mutual respect, and civic responsibility. These projects reflected not only the cultural-religious identity of the madrasah but also the philosophical foundation of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes experiential and value-based learning.

In summary, while the quality and completeness of KOM products varied, the mentoring program succeeded in initiating pedagogical transformation across institutions. Teachers improved not only in producing documents but also in their ability to reflect critically on their practice, adapt instructional strategies, and foster a more student-centered, values-based approach to learning. This progress, although still uneven, provides strong evidence of the program's impact on enhancing curriculum literacy and teacher agency at the early childhood education level. The mentoring also served as a platform for cultivating a reflective teaching culture. During the final sessions, teachers were encouraged to share their experiences, challenges, and personal insights regarding curriculum implementation. This process not only increased their sense of ownership over the curriculum but also promoted professional dialogue among peers. Participants began to see themselves not merely as recipients of top-down policies but as active contributors to educational transformation. Many teachers expressed a renewed sense of purpose, recognizing that the curriculum should not only meet national standards but also be responsive to the lived realities and needs of their students.

A notable development occurred in the way teachers approached the integration of character education. With the inclusion of P5PPRA as a core component of the Independent Curriculum, teachers explored ways to infuse values such as integrity, cooperation, and social responsibility into daily activities. For instance, several RA institutions initiated thematic projects centered on local cultural traditions, enabling children to learn about tolerance and diversity through storytelling, group activities, and traditional games. These practices fostered both cognitive and socio-emotional development, aligning with the holistic learning goals outlined in the national curriculum framework. Another key outcome was the improved alignment between administrative and instructional practices. Prior to the mentoring program, several schools maintained a fragmented approach where curriculum documents were often developed independently of teaching realities. However, the facilitated workshops encouraged institutional coherence by involving all stakeholders—principals, teachers, and curriculum developers—in a unified process of curriculum review and planning. This collaborative approach helped reduce inconsistencies, ensured greater accountability, and strengthened the link between school identity and classroom practice.

Technology integration, while not the primary focus of the program, also emerged as a supporting element in the curriculum development process. Teachers began using digital tools not only to draft and revise KOM documents but also to create engaging multimedia learning content tailored to early childhood learners. For example, some teachers experimented with simple educational videos and QR-coded activities to enhance literacy and numeracy engagement at home. This indicates a growing willingness among teachers to leverage technology for instructional innovation, despite existing limitations in digital infrastructure.

Finally, the impact of the mentoring extended beyond individual teacher growth to the broader institutional ethos. Several madrasahs began to reposition themselves as progressive early childhood education providers. This shift was marked by increased participation in professional learning communities, enhanced documentation of best practices, and stronger



collaboration with the local IGRA (Ikatan Guru Raudhatul Athfal) network. Some institutions even expressed interest in replicating the mentoring model independently with other RA clusters in the region. These outcomes suggest that the program not only met its immediate objectives but also laid the groundwork for sustainable capacity-building and systemic improvement in early childhood education under the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

## Discussion

The findings from the mentoring program underscore the critical role of structured professional development in enhancing early childhood educators' curriculum literacy and implementation capacity. The varied levels of success among the five RA institutions illustrate how the same policy initiative—the Independent Curriculum—can yield different outcomes depending on institutional readiness, leadership engagement, and teacher collaboration. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing that curriculum reform is most effective when supported by continuous mentoring, contextual adaptation, and professional communities of practice (Pan et al., 2019).

A key insight from this study is the importance of shifting teachers' mindsets from procedural compliance to reflective pedagogy. Early in the program, many educators interpreted the Independent Curriculum primarily as a change in documentation and terminology (Stadermann et al., 2019). However, the mentoring process allowed them to engage more deeply with its philosophical foundations, particularly the emphasis on differentiated learning, formative assessment, and holistic child development. These findings affirm prior research that professional learning experiences grounded in authentic teaching contexts are more likely to promote meaningful instructional change (Miller, 2018; Shoval et al., 2018).

The integration of the P5PPRA framework represents another significant development. Rather than treating character education and religious values as add-ons, participating teachers began embedding these dimensions into the fabric of teaching modules. This shift reflects an important paradigm in Islamic early childhood education: education for character (*tarbiyah*) that is not only cognitive but also spiritual, emotional, and social (Ahnan 'Azzam & Leany, 2024; Taufik, 2020). Embedding values such as empathy, moderation, and civic responsibility through locally relevant projects supports the vision of nurturing *rahmatan lil alamin* students and is in line with recommendations for culturally responsive pedagogy in early years education (Tzima et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, challenges remain. The disparity in KOM quality and depth indicates that while surface-level adoption of curriculum structures may be widespread, deeper pedagogical transformation requires more sustained and differentiated support. Teachers in underperforming institutions often expressed hesitation in departing from the more familiar RPPH format, and demonstrated limited confidence in designing learner-centered instructional sequences. This reinforces the need for long-term, recursive professional development models rather than one-off training sessions. Importantly, this study highlights the potential for institutional transformation when curriculum reform is approached as a collaborative, reflective, and iterative process. The use of local wisdom, teacher-led dialogue, and contextual project-based learning fostered not only curriculum ownership but also the emergence of professional agency among educators. This suggests that for the Independent Curriculum to take root effectively, schools must be supported not only through policy directives but through mentoring ecosystems that cultivate inquiry, adaptation, and innovation.

## CONCLUSION

This study explored the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in five early childhood Islamic institutions (RA) through a structured mentoring program focused on

curriculum design and teaching module development. The results showed that mentoring significantly enhanced teachers' understanding of differentiated instruction, assessment, and project-based learning. Two institutions successfully produced comprehensive KOM documents, while others showed partial progress. The program fostered reflective practices and helped integrate religious and cultural values into learning. It also promoted institutional alignment between curriculum goals and instructional practices. The integration of the P5PPRA framework illustrated the potential for holistic, values-based education rooted in Islamic traditions. These outcomes highlight the need for sustained, context-specific professional development and ongoing support systems. The study provides insights for scaling effective curriculum reform in early childhood Islamic education through collaborative, culturally relevant approaches.

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