**Scripta Humanika:**
**Jurnal Sosial Humaniora dan Pendidikan**
Vol. 2, No. 2 November 2026, Hal 29-42
ISSN: 3110-892X (Print) ISSN: 3110-8911 (Electronic)
Open Access: https://scriptaintelektual.com/scripta-humanika/index

# Scope and Characteristics of the Islamic Education Course

**Suriani[1*], Nurwakia[2], Risnawati[3], Samsinar Syarifuddin[4]**
[1-4] State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Bone, Indonesia
*email: suriani.keisya32@gmail.com[1]*

**Article Info :**
Received:
15-09-2026
Revised:
17-10-2026
Accepted:
01-11-2026

***Abstract***

*This study examined the scope and defining characteristics of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and their implications for instructional design. A descriptive-analytical library research approach employed qualitative documentary analysis of scholarly articles and educational books, prioritizing publications from 2021 to 2026. Relevant materials were identified, selected, thematically classified, interpreted, and synthesized without collecting primary empirical data. The synthesis identified five interconnected curricular domains: the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed, morality, jurisprudence and worship, and the history of Islamic civilization. These domains provide complementary foundations for religious understanding, ethical formation, historical reflection, and practical competence. Defining characteristics include value-oriented learning, the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions, character formation, spiritual and social responsibility, and responsiveness to learner differences. Instructional planning requires alignment among educational objectives, domain-specific content, appropriate methods, learning resources, student participation, and assessment procedures. Textual interpretation, ethical discussion, practical demonstration, and historical inquiry serve different competencies and should not be treated as interchangeable. Digital media may broaden access to religious materials, but their credibility, relevance, and use require critical evaluation and teacher guidance. The study offers a conceptual framework for coherent, contextual, and student-centered instruction, while its effects on actual classroom learning remain unverified and require further empirical investigation.*

***Keywords:*** *Contextual Learning, Curriculum Scope, Instructional Design, Islamic Religious Education, Religious Values.*

©2026 Authors.. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International License.
(https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

## INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) occupies a significant position in contemporary education because its objectives extend beyond the transmission of religious knowledge to the formation of ethical judgment, religious understanding, and responsible social conduct. Within higher education, these objectives require the organization of learning content that connects Islamic teachings with students' intellectual development, personal experiences, and responsibilities in increasingly diverse social environments. Islamic educational thought emphasizes the relationship between religious knowledge, moral formation, and the purposes of education, positioning religious learning as an activity concerned with both understanding and human development (Agbaria, 2024). Changes in Indonesian educational policy have also influenced the orientation of Islamic education curricula, particularly the relationship between national educational objectives, instructional content, and institutional implementation (Akrim et al., 2022). The Islamic Education course consequently cannot be restricted to memorizing religious concepts because its educational function includes understanding religious principles, interpreting their meanings, and relating them to practical situations. Research examining Islamic religious education in public universities identifies contemporary challenges that require curriculum development to remain responsive to social and educational changes without abandoning its religious foundations (Khoerudin et al., 2024). These developments establish the need to clarify the scope and distinctive characteristics of the Islamic Education course as an integrated educational component rather than treating its subject matter as an independent collection of religious topics.

Contemporary scholarship on Islamic Religious Education has increasingly examined the relationship between curriculum objectives, educational content, pedagogical approaches, and the formation of religious and social values. Curriculum design research emphasizes the importance of aligning educational purposes with learning materials, instructional processes, and contextual

conditions, indicating that the coherence of religious education depends on relationships among curriculum components (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). Studies addressing Islamic education reform in Indonesia similarly connect curriculum development with national character education, reflecting growing attention to the relationship between religious understanding and ethical formation (Alhamuddin & Arifin, 2025). At the university level, religious moderation has emerged as a significant curricular concern, requiring educational programs to address religious understanding alongside students' ability to engage constructively with social and religious differences (Hadikusuma et al., 2025). Research concerning the development and evaluation of religious moderation curricula further positions moderation as an element requiring deliberate curricular organization rather than incidental inclusion within instructional materials (Mukhibat et al., 2024). These perspectives demonstrate that Islamic Religious Education involves interconnected intellectual, ethical, and social objectives, although their respective analytical approaches emphasize different dimensions of curriculum development and implementation.

An important conceptual limitation emerges when the scope of Islamic Religious Education is examined separately from the characteristics that distinguish its educational orientation and instructional practices. Research addressing Islamic religious education in public universities identifies contemporary educational challenges but does not independently resolve how theological, ethical, historical, and practical learning domains should be organized within a coherent understanding of the course (Khoerudin et al., 2024). Studies of Islamic curriculum planning during technological disruption emphasize institutional adaptation and educational responsiveness, while the relationship between foundational subject matter and the distinctive pedagogical characteristics of Islamic education requires further conceptual clarification (Karim et al., 2024). Research developing Islamic Religious Education teaching materials based on local wisdom demonstrates the relevance of contextualized learning resources, although the relationship between local cultural adaptation and the essential scope of religious instruction remains a separate analytical consideration (Usman et al., 2024). Empirically informed reassessments of Islamic Religious Education in European educational settings also raise questions about the relationship between established educational purposes and the religious experiences of learners (Ulfat, 2023). The research gap identified from these scholarly contributions concerns the limited integration of foundational content domains, value-oriented educational objectives, and pedagogical characteristics into a unified conceptual account of the Islamic Education course. Without such integration, curriculum analysis risks reducing educational scope to a list of instructional topics while treating learning characteristics as separate methodological preferences with insufficient connection to the religious knowledge and values being taught.

The separation between educational content and instructional characteristics has implications for curriculum planning, particularly when educators must translate broad religious objectives into specific learning materials, classroom activities, and assessment procedures. Instruction centered primarily on factual comprehension may not adequately represent the educational significance of religious values, ethical reasoning, and the application of Islamic teachings within students' personal and social lives. Islamic educational philosophy emphasizes the formative purposes of religious learning, supporting the need to examine how educational content contributes to moral development rather than functioning exclusively as information to be transmitted (Agbaria, 2024). Research on curriculum transformation within Indonesia's national education system reinforces the importance of connecting educational policy, curriculum objectives, and instructional implementation rather than assuming that formal curricular changes automatically produce coherent learning experiences (Akrim et al., 2022). The development of religious moderation-based curricula in public higher education also illustrates the importance of determining how religious values and social responsibilities should be incorporated into educational objectives and learning activities (Hadikusuma et al., 2025). A systematic examination of the course's scope and characteristics is consequently necessary to clarify relationships among cognitive understanding, ethical development, religious practice, and the instructional decisions through which these educational purposes are pursued.

The present article positions the Islamic Education course as an integrated educational structure comprising distinct but interconnected domains of religious knowledge, value formation, and pedagogical practice. Its substantive scope encompasses the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed (aqidah), morality (akhlak), Islamic jurisprudence and worship (fiqh), and Islamic cultural history, with each domain contributing different forms of understanding to the broader educational objectives of the

course. Curriculum alignment provides a conceptual basis for relating these domains to learning purposes, instructional organization, and the educational circumstances of students rather than presenting religious content as unrelated subjects (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). Research connecting Islamic curriculum development with national character education supports the inclusion of ethical formation as an explicit educational orientation that must be reflected in learning objectives and pedagogical decisions (Alhamuddin & Arifin, 2025). The development of locally grounded teaching materials also demonstrates the relevance of distinguishing foundational religious content from instructional adaptations responding to students' cultural and educational environments (Usman et al., 2024). Contemporary reassessments of Islamic Religious Education indicate the importance of considering learners' religious understanding and educational experiences when examining the relationship between curriculum expectations and instructional practice (Ulfat, 2023). The proposed conceptual contribution lies in integrating the substantive domains of Islamic knowledge with their formative objectives, contextual pedagogical characteristics, and assessment implications, rather than claiming novelty through the introduction of previously unrecognized religious subjects.

This article aims to identify and analyze the principal scope and defining characteristics of the Islamic Education course, with particular attention to the relationship between religious knowledge, ethical development, practical application, and historical understanding. The analysis examines how the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed, morality, jurisprudence and worship, and Islamic cultural history contribute to the organization of religious learning and the achievement of its educational purposes. It further considers the characteristics of Islamic Religious Education as a learning process that integrates cognitive understanding, affective development, religious practice, and responsiveness to students' educational and social circumstances. Particular attention is directed toward the alignment of educational objectives, instructional materials, learning methods, educational media, and assessment approaches with the content and values represented within the course. The theoretical contribution consists of a conceptual framework distinguishing the substantive scope of Islamic Religious Education from its pedagogical characteristics while explaining their interdependence within coherent curriculum development. The practical contribution is an analytical foundation for educators and curriculum developers to organize course content, select appropriate instructional strategies, and evaluate the consistency between religious educational objectives and the learning experiences provided to students.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed descriptive-analytical library research using a qualitative documentary approach to examine the scope and defining characteristics of the Islamic Religious Education course. The documentary materials comprised Indonesian-language educational books and scholarly articles in Indonesian and English addressing Islamic educational objectives, curriculum development, instructional design, religious values, and contemporary learning practices (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). Publications from 2021 to 2026 were prioritized, with source selection guided by their substantive relevance to the research objectives and their contribution to understanding the relationship between religious knowledge and educational practice. The examination focused on the principal domains of Islamic Religious Education, including the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed (aqidah), morality (akhlak), Islamic jurisprudence and worship (fiqh), and Islamic cultural history, as reflected in literature concerning Islamic education in higher education (Karmawan et al., 2021). Scholarly discussions of Islamic Religious Education in public universities provided additional material for examining the relationship between established curricular content, contemporary educational demands, and students' learning characteristics (Khoerudin et al., 2024). The units of analysis were educational concepts, curricular domains, pedagogical characteristics, and instructional recommendations contained in the selected documents, without involving individual research participants or direct observations of educational institutions.

Documentary analysis was conducted through the identification of relevant publications, selection of information corresponding to the research objectives, thematic grouping of educational concepts, and qualitative interpretation of the selected materials. The thematic organization distinguished the substantive scope of Islamic Religious Education from its instructional characteristics, including the integration of religious knowledge, ethical values, practical application, learning objectives, teaching strategies, educational media, and assessment approaches. Literature examining curriculum planning in response to technological and institutional developments was used to

contextualize the relationship between established religious education objectives and changing instructional requirements (Karim et al., 2024). Discussions of religious moderation within higher education curricula informed the interpretation of value-oriented learning objectives and their relationship to the educational characteristics of Islamic Religious Education (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Studies concerning the development of Islamic Religious Education teaching materials provided comparative documentary perspectives on the relationship between foundational religious content, local cultural considerations, and instructional resources (Usman et al., 2024). The findings were synthesized descriptively by relating concepts across the reviewed documents and distinguishing documented scholarly arguments from analytical interpretations, without employing field interviews, experimental procedures, statistical measurements, or claims of causal effectiveness.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Scope and Interconnection of Islamic Religious Education

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) encompasses interconnected domains of religious knowledge, belief, ethical conduct, worship, and historical understanding that collectively define its curricular scope and educational orientation. The organization of these domains reflects an educational purpose extending beyond the acquisition of religious information toward the development of understanding, attitudes, and practical capacities associated with Islamic teachings. Curriculum studies in Indonesia identify the relationship between religious content, educational objectives, and learning experiences as a central consideration in the development of Islamic Religious Education (Noor et al., 2023). The principal domains consist of the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed (aqidah), Islamic morality (akhlak), Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), and the history of Islamic civilization, each contributing a distinct dimension to religious learning. Historical and sociological analyses of Islamic education curriculum development indicate that the organization of religious subject matter must remain attentive to changing educational conditions while preserving the foundational structure of Islamic teachings (Asiah & Harjoni, 2024). Curriculum design research emphasizes the alignment of educational purposes, curricular components, and learning contexts as a requirement for developing coherent religious instruction across these interconnected domains (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023).

The Qur'an and Hadith constitute the foundational domain of Islamic Religious Education because they provide the principal sources through which Islamic beliefs, ethical principles, religious obligations, and social responsibilities are understood. Instruction within this domain encompasses the recognition, reading, comprehension, and interpretation of religious texts, with attention to the meanings and values communicated through their teachings. Islamic Religious Education materials for higher education position the Qur'an and Hadith as essential foundations for understanding other areas of Islamic knowledge rather than as subjects confined to textual memorization (Karmawan et al., 2021). Textual instruction requires students to distinguish between reproducing religious passages and understanding the implications of their content for personal conduct and social relationships. Scholarship on the pedagogy of tadabbur demonstrates the relevance of reflective engagement with Islamic texts, particularly when learners are encouraged to consider the relationship between religious meaning and their educational experiences (Abdul-Jabbar & Makki, 2024). Such an orientation establishes the Qur'an and Hadith as sources of religious understanding while recognizing that effective educational engagement requires interpretation, reflection, and connections with students' lived circumstances.

The educational treatment of the Qur'an and Hadith requires instructional activities that accommodate textual understanding, religious reflection, and the practical interpretation of Islamic teachings. Recitation and memorization retain specific educational functions, but their contribution to broader learning objectives depends on whether students can explain meanings, recognize ethical implications, and relate textual messages to relevant situations. Pedagogical scholarship concerning Islamic Religious Education supports combining explanation, discussion, reflective activities, and contextual examples when organizing learning experiences across different religious content areas (Samsinar et al., 2024). Reflective engagement with religious texts also allows students to examine the relationship between textual interpretation and contemporary questions without treating personal experience as a substitute for the authoritative sources of Islamic teachings. Research concerning Islamic religious education textbooks in pluralistic educational environments illustrates the importance of examining how instructional materials present religious knowledge and its relationship to broader

social circumstances (Idoko, 2023). The educational value of textual instruction consequently rests not only on students' familiarity with religious passages but also on their capacity to recognize relationships between the teachings studied and the intellectual or ethical questions addressed during learning.

Islamic creed (aqidah) represents the domain concerned with foundational religious beliefs and their implications for understanding human existence, responsibility, and relationships with Allah. Its principal content includes belief in Allah, angels, revealed books, messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree (qada and qadar), which collectively constitute the fundamental articles of Islamic faith. Educational literature on Islamic Religious Education identifies these beliefs as components of religious understanding that inform students' perspectives on worship, moral responsibility, and the meaning of human conduct (Karmawan et al., 2021). The instructional challenge associated with creed concerns the explanation of abstract theological concepts in ways that preserve their religious meaning while remaining accessible to students with different levels of prior understanding. Instructional design literature supports adapting explanations, illustrations, discussions, and learning activities to the characteristics of learners and the conceptual demands of the subject matter (Akrim, 2021). The conceptual relationships between creed and the other domains of Islamic Religious Education are presented in Table 1, which distinguishes their principal content, educational orientations, and contributions to integrated religious learning.

**Table 1. Scope and Interconnections of Islamic Religious Education Domains**

| Domain | Principal Scope of Learning | Educational Orientation | Relationship with Other Domains |
|---|---|---|---|
| Qur'an and Hadith | Religious texts, teachings, meanings, interpretation, and application of Islamic guidance | Textual understanding, reflection, and recognition of religious values | Provides foundational sources for creed, morality, jurisprudence, and historical understanding |
| Islamic Creed (Aqidah) | Belief in Allah, angels, revealed books, messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree | Understanding religious beliefs and their implications for personal responsibility | Establishes the theological foundation underlying worship and moral conduct |
| Islamic Morality (Akhlak) | Honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, discipline, respect, environmental concern, and avoidance of undesirable behavior | Ethical reasoning, character formation, and application of moral values | Translates religious teachings and beliefs into individual and social conduct |
| Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) | Purification, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimage, and relevant provisions governing social life | Understanding Islamic legal provisions and developing competence in religious practice | Connects religious sources and beliefs with worship and practical responsibilities |
| History of Islamic Civilization | Historical events, Muslim communities, significant figures, cultural development, and exemplary experiences | Historical understanding, reflection, and identification of educational lessons | Provides historical illustrations of religious beliefs, moral principles, and Islamic practices |

Table 1 presents five curricular domains with distinctive learning content and educational orientations while identifying their conceptual relationships within Islamic Religious Education. The Qur'an and Hadith provide foundational religious sources, whereas creed develops understanding of beliefs that inform interpretations of human responsibility and religious commitment. Morality concerns the ethical implications of religious teachings, jurisprudence addresses their relationship with prescribed practices, and Islamic history offers accounts through which religious and social experiences can be examined. Educational literature concerning Islamic Religious Education for higher education supports

treating these fields as related dimensions of religious knowledge rather than as completely independent instructional subjects (Karmawan et al., 2021). Their integration requires attention to the differences between textual interpretation, conceptual understanding, ethical reasoning, practical competence, and historical analysis because each involves distinct educational demands. Curriculum design research reinforces the significance of coordinating learning purposes and content organization, indicating that the educational coherence of Islamic Religious Education depends on explicit relationships among its curricular components (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023).

Islamic morality (akhlak) constitutes the domain through which religious values are examined in relation to personal character, interpersonal conduct, and responsibility within society. Its substantive content encompasses honesty, trustworthiness, discipline, respect for others, accountability, compassion, and environmental responsibility, alongside the recognition of behaviors inconsistent with Islamic ethical principles. Educational literature on Islamic Religious Education identifies moral development as an essential component of religious instruction because the understanding of ethical principles must be related to the conduct expected of learners (Karmawan et al., 2021). The instructional characteristics of morality differ from those of purely conceptual subjects because familiarity with ethical terminology does not independently establish the internalization or consistent application of moral values. Research concerning character-based Islamic Religious Education design emphasizes the relevance of educational activities that connect religious instruction with character development and students' behavioral experiences (Jannah, 2022). Studies addressing the relationship between Islamic curriculum and national character education further support integrating ethical formation into curricular planning rather than treating it as an incidental outcome of religious knowledge acquisition (Alhamuddin & Arifin, 2025).

Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) addresses the understanding and practical application of Islamic legal provisions governing worship and relevant aspects of social life. Its educational content includes purification (taharah), prayer (salat), fasting, almsgiving (zakat), pilgrimage (hajj), and other provisions introduced according to the educational level and instructional objectives. Islamic Religious Education literature identifies jurisprudence as a domain requiring students to understand the rules governing religious practices while developing awareness of their significance within Islamic life (Karmawan et al., 2021). The distinction between conceptual knowledge and practical competence becomes particularly relevant when instruction concerns procedures that students must understand and demonstrate, such as ablution or prayer. Instructional design literature supports the alignment of explanatory teaching, demonstration, guided practice, and assessment with the type of competence represented by the learning material (Mudlofir & Rusydiyah, 2021). Pedagogical discussions of Islamic Religious Education also emphasize the integration of knowledge, attitudes, and skills, establishing a basis for examining jurisprudential instruction through both conceptual understanding and practical learning activities (Samsinar et al., 2024).

The history of Islamic civilization provides a historical dimension through which students examine the development of Muslim communities, significant figures, formative events, cultural achievements, and changing social circumstances. Its educational function extends beyond chronological knowledge because historical material can support the interpretation of exemplary conduct, social responsibility, intellectual development, and the relationship between Islamic teachings and collective experiences. Literature on instructional media in Islamic Religious Education identifies historical narratives, visual materials, and other learning resources as relevant means of presenting religious educational content in accessible forms (Winarko et al., 2025). Historical instruction may also establish connections with the Qur'an and Hadith, creed, morality, and jurisprudence by examining how religious principles have been interpreted and practised within particular historical circumstances. Scholarship concerning global citizenship from an Islamic educational perspective provides a complementary basis for relating religious education to social responsibility and engagement with broader human communities (Saada, 2023). The scope of the Islamic Education course is consequently defined by the relationship between these domains and their shared contribution to religious understanding, moral formation, practical competence, and historically informed reflection.

**Defining Characteristics of Islamic Religious Education**

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) possesses distinctive educational characteristics arising from its orientation toward religious understanding, ethical development, and the practical application

of Islamic teachings. Unlike instructional approaches that concentrate primarily on the acquisition of subject knowledge, Islamic Religious Education integrates intellectual comprehension with the formation of attitudes and conduct informed by religious values. Islamic educational philosophy emphasizes the formative relationship between knowledge, religious commitment, and ethical responsibility, establishing a conceptual basis for understanding education as more than the transmission of information (Agbaria, 2024). The value-oriented character of Islamic Religious Education encompasses honesty, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, compassion, and respect for others, which are expected to inform students' decisions and interpersonal relationships. These values constitute educational orientations requiring deliberate incorporation into learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessment rather than remaining abstract principles presented during classroom instruction. Research addressing the reorientation of Islamic curricula in Indonesia emphasizes the relationship between religious education and national character education, particularly the need to align curricular objectives with ethical formation (Alhamuddin & Arifin, 2025).

The integration of knowledge, attitudes, and skills represents another fundamental characteristic of Islamic Religious Education because religious competence involves more than the ability to explain concepts or reproduce instructional material. Cognitive development concerns understanding Islamic principles and their meanings, while affective development involves the formation of attitudes, appreciation of religious values, and the capacity to make ethically informed judgments. Practical competence concerns the ability to apply relevant knowledge through religious activities and forms of conduct appropriate to the learning objectives. Instructional literature on Islamic Religious Education emphasizes the need to connect conceptual explanation with activities that accommodate intellectual understanding, value formation, and practical learning (Samsinar et al., 2024). In the study of ablution (wudu), for example, students may be expected to explain its religious provisions, recognize the significance of cleanliness, and demonstrate the required procedures through guided practice. Curriculum design research reinforces the importance of aligning educational purposes, learning content, instructional activities, and assessment so that these interconnected dimensions are represented within the intended learning experience (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023).

Character and personality formation constitutes a distinctive educational objective because Islamic Religious Education addresses the relationship between individual conduct and the ethical principles established within Islamic teachings. Character development involves the cultivation of dispositions associated with honesty, responsibility, trustworthiness, self-discipline, and respect for others, requiring instructional experiences that connect ethical understanding with recognizable forms of behavior. Research on character-based Islamic Religious Education identifies instructional design as an important consideration in integrating moral values into educational activities rather than restricting character development to theoretical explanation (Jannah, 2022). The incorporation of ethical values into classroom interactions may involve responsible participation in discussions, collaborative assignments, reflection on moral dilemmas, and the examination of conduct demonstrated in everyday situations. Research on Islamic Religious Education within the Merdeka Curriculum addresses the relationship between learning approaches and character formation, including the organization of activities that encourage students to engage meaningfully with religious values (Aribah et al., 2025). Studies examining Islamic Religious Education and character education further support integrating moral development with curricular implementation, although the effectiveness of particular instructional arrangements requires evaluation within their educational settings (Yani et al., 2025).

Practical and applied learning distinguishes Islamic Religious Education through its attention to activities in which students demonstrate understanding of religious teachings and their relationship to daily conduct. Religious practices such as prayer, purification, and other forms of worship require learning experiences that accommodate procedural explanation, observation, demonstration, and guided performance rather than relying exclusively on verbal instruction. Instructional design literature identifies the importance of matching teaching strategies with the characteristics of learning material and the competencies students are expected to develop (Mudlofir & Rusydiyah, 2021). The practical orientation of Islamic Religious Education also extends to ethical conduct, including responsible communication, respect for others, fulfillment of obligations, and the application of moral principles within personal and social relationships. Research examining Islamic Religious Education instructional design following the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the relevance of adjusting teaching arrangements to educational circumstances and instructional requirements (Prasetia & Rosida, 2022).

The principal defining characteristics identified through the documentary synthesis, together with their educational implications, are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Defining Characteristics of Islamic Religious Education**

| Defining Characteristics | Conceptual Orientation | Implications for the Learning Process |
|---|---|---|
| Orientation toward Islamic values | Religious teachings provide foundations for ethical understanding, attitudes, and conduct | Integrating honesty, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, and other Islamic values into objectives and learning activities |
| Integration of knowledge, attitudes, and skills | Religious competence encompasses cognitive, affective, and practical dimensions | Combining conceptual explanation, reflection, practical activities, and appropriate assessment |
| Character and personality formation | Religious learning contributes to moral dispositions and responsible behavior | Using role modelling, ethical discussions, reflection, and activities involving the application of values |
| Practical and applied learning | Religious teachings include obligations and principles requiring practical understanding | Employing demonstrations, guided practice, simulations, and activities related to everyday conduct |
| Attention to learner characteristics | Students differ in prior knowledge, developmental readiness, learning needs, and educational experiences | Adapting content complexity, instructional language, learning activities, and educational resources |
| Connections with everyday life | Religious knowledge is associated with personal decisions and contemporary social responsibilities | Relating learning material to family relationships, digital communication, social interaction, and ethical problems |
| Spiritual and social dimensions | Islamic education addresses relationships with Allah, other people, and the natural environment | Connecting religious reflection with cooperation, respect, social responsibility, and environmental concern |
| Contextual and adaptive learning | Educational approaches respond to changing social and technological conditions without abandoning religious foundations | Selecting relevant instructional methods, reliable digital materials, and appropriate learning media |

Table 2 identifies eight interconnected characteristics that distinguish Islamic Religious Education through its learning objectives, educational processes, and expectations concerning the application of religious knowledge. The characteristics are analytically distinguishable, although their implementation involves relationships among students' religious understanding, personal development, educational experiences, and social responsibilities. Attention to learner characteristics is particularly significant because students enter educational settings with different levels of religious knowledge, learning readiness, intellectual abilities, and experiences of religious practice. Instructional design literature emphasizes that these differences should inform the selection of content, explanations, learning activities, and educational resources rather than assuming uniform learning requirements (Akrim, 2021). Students requiring foundational explanations may benefit from concrete illustrations and guided activities, whereas those with more developed conceptual understanding may engage with comparative interpretation, ethical dilemmas, and critical discussion. Empirically informed scholarship concerning Islamic Religious Education in European settings highlights the importance of considering learners' religious experiences when examining the relationship between educational expectations and instructional practice (Ulfat, 2023).

The spiritual and social dimensions of Islamic Religious Education reflect the relationship between religious commitments and the responsibilities associated with participation in society. Spiritual learning concerns understanding religious obligations, developing awareness of the relationship between human beings and Allah, and examining the significance of worship and religious commitment in personal life. Social learning addresses relationships with other people, including cooperation, tolerance, justice, respect for differences, and responsibility toward the surrounding environment. Research concerning religious moderation curricula in Indonesian higher education emphasizes the relevance of developing religious understanding alongside attitudes that support constructive relationships within religiously and socially diverse communities (Mukhibat et al., 2024). The incorporation of religious moderation into Islamic Religious Education curricula also illustrates the importance of aligning doctrinal learning with educational objectives concerning tolerance and responsible social interaction (Hadikusuma et al., 2025). Scholarship addressing global citizenship from an Islamic educational perspective provides a broader conceptual basis for examining the relationship between religious values, social responsibility, and engagement with communities beyond students' immediate environments (Saada, 2023).

Connections between religious teachings and everyday life represent an additional characteristic through which Islamic Religious Education acquires relevance to contemporary educational and social circumstances. Students encounter ethical questions involving digital communication, social media participation, interpersonal relationships, information sharing, and responsibility for actions undertaken within increasingly interconnected environments. Research examining digital literacy in Islamic Religious Education identifies the need to consider technological competence and responsible engagement with digital information as elements of contemporary religious learning (Junaidi, 2024). Instructional activities may examine the ethical implications of communication, the evaluation of online information, and the application of Islamic principles to situations involving personal and collective responsibilities. Studies addressing instructional design and information technology in Islamic Religious Education indicate that technological resources can support learning when their use corresponds with educational objectives and the characteristics of instructional content (Daniati & Wahab, 2022). Research on innovative digital media emphasizes the relevance of selecting educational resources that support engagement with religious learning materials rather than treating technological novelty as an independent educational objective (Susanti et al., 2024).

The conceptual synthesis establishes that the defining characteristics of Islamic Religious Education concern the relationship between religious values, intellectual development, ethical dispositions, practical competence, and responsiveness to students' educational circumstances. Its distinctive orientation requires the integration of religious understanding with learning experiences that connect knowledge, attitudes, skills, and the responsibilities associated with personal and social conduct. Curriculum research concerning contemporary Islamic Religious Education supports the need for alignment between educational objectives, instructional practices, and the development of students' ethical and religious capacities (Alhamuddin & Arifin, 2025). The incorporation of technology and contextual learning does not alter the foundational purposes of religious instruction but introduces additional considerations concerning educational resources, information credibility, and the suitability of instructional approaches. Studies examining Islamic Religious Education in the digital era emphasize the importance of adjusting curricular and pedagogical arrangements to changing educational demands while retaining the substantive orientation of Islamic education (Manshur & Isroani, 2023). These characteristics provide a conceptual basis for evaluating the relationship between the nature of Islamic Religious Education and the organization of its learning objectives, content, teaching methods, media, and assessment, although their educational effectiveness remains beyond the empirical scope of the documentary analysis.

**Implications for Islamic Religious Education Instructional Design**

Instructional design in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) must reflect the different forms of understanding and performance represented by its five curricular domains. The Qur'an and Hadith require textual interpretation, creed involves conceptual explanation, morality addresses ethical reasoning, jurisprudence incorporates practical competence, and Islamic history requires contextual examination of past events. Treating these areas as interchangeable units of content would obscure the distinct learning processes needed to achieve their educational purposes. Instructional design literature

identifies objectives, learner characteristics, content, teaching methods, and assessment as interconnected decisions rather than independently selected classroom components (Akrim, 2021). Research on curriculum transformation in Indonesian education situates instructional decisions within changing educational policies and institutional expectations (Akrim et al., 2022). Course planning consequently requires coordinating domain-specific competencies with the shared aims of religious understanding, ethical formation, and practical application, particularly as Islamic educational institutions respond to contemporary curricular demands (Karim et al., 2024).

Learning objectives provide the principal reference for determining appropriate instructional activities and evaluating whether intended educational competencies have been addressed. An objective concerning the Qur'an and Hadith may require students to interpret selected passages, whereas jurisprudential instruction may require them to explain and demonstrate particular worship procedures. Objectives related to morality should specify students' capacity to analyze ethical situations without presuming that one classroom activity establishes stable personal character. Research on Islamic Religious Education design emphasizes alignment among educational purposes, curricular components, and learning circumstances (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). Literature examining the ADDIE model identifies the relationship between instructional planning, learning activities, and evaluation as a consideration for designing Islamic Religious Education (Zuhro et al., 2022). Differentiating conceptual understanding, ethical judgment, and observable performance makes the intended competencies more transparent and helps avoid treating written examination results as comprehensive evidence of religious development.

The selection and organization of instructional content require consideration of conceptual progression, students' prior knowledge, and relationships among the principal domains of Islamic Religious Education. Instruction may introduce relevant teachings from the Qur'an and Hadith before examining how those teachings inform theological concepts, moral responsibilities, or religious practices. Content sequencing should remain responsive to students' educational readiness rather than impose an identical progression across different institutional levels. Research on Islamic Religious Education in public universities identifies contemporary demands for curricular relevance and responsiveness to university students (Khoerudin et al., 2024). Studies developing teaching materials based on local wisdom illustrate how course content can address cultural circumstances while remaining connected with Islamic learning objectives (Usman et al., 2024). The proposed organization of instructional content represents a conceptual approach to curricular coherence rather than evidence that one particular sequence produces superior educational outcomes.

Teaching methods should be selected according to the characteristics of subject matter and the competencies specified in learning objectives rather than assuming that a single instructional technique is appropriate for every religious topic. Guided reading and discussion can support textual interpretation and theological reasoning, while case analysis and reflection can address ethical questions. Demonstrations and supervised practice are relevant to worship procedures, whereas historical narratives, timelines, and examination of sources may support the interpretation of Islamic civilization. Research examining Islamic Religious Education design after the COVID-19 pandemic underscores the need to adapt teaching arrangements to instructional requirements and educational conditions (Prasetia & Rosida, 2022). Studies of instructional design in the digital era address the relationship between learning activities, educational resources, and changing technological circumstances (Farida et al., 2025). These relationships among curricular content, instructional methods, and assessment are summarized in Table 3 as a conceptual synthesis rather than an experimentally validated instructional model.

**Table 3. Alignment of Islamic Religious Education Content, Instructional Methods, and Assessment**

| Islamic Religious Education Domain | Learning Objectives | Appropriate Instructional Methods | Assessment Approaches |
|---|---|---|---|
| Qur'an and Hadith | Understand religious texts, interpret their meanings, and explain | Recitation, textual examination, guided interpretation, discussion, and reflection | Oral recitation, written interpretation, textual analysis, and reflective assignments |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | their relevance to Islamic values and daily life | | |
| Islamic Creed (Aqidah) | Explain foundational Islamic beliefs and examine their implications for religious understanding and personal responsibility | Conceptual explanation, guided dialogue, illustrations, reflective discussion, and contextual examples | Oral examinations, written explanations, conceptual assignments, and reflective responses |
| Islamic Morality (Akhlak) | Recognize Islamic ethical principles, analyze moral situations, and demonstrate appropriate conduct during learning activities | Case discussions, role modelling, role play, ethical reflection, and collaborative activities | Case analysis, reflective assignments, classroom observation, and assessment of participation |
| Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) | Understand Islamic legal provisions and demonstrate relevant religious practices | Demonstrations, guided practice, simulations, procedural explanation, and practical exercises | Written or oral examinations, practical demonstrations, performance assessment, and procedural checklists |
| History of Islamic Civilization | Explain significant historical developments, interpret historical experiences, and identify relevant educational lessons | Historical narratives, timelines, visual resources, document examination, discussion, and project-based activities | Historical analysis, presentations, timelines, written assignments, and learning projects |

Table 3 differentiates assessment approaches according to the learning evidence required by each religious education domain. Written assignments and oral explanations can examine textual interpretation and conceptual understanding, but they cannot independently establish competence in worship procedures or enduring moral dispositions. Practical demonstrations provide observable evidence of specified procedural skills, whereas historical projects can assess interpretation of events and the identification of relevant lessons. Observation during collaborative activities may describe students' participation and ethical conduct within a defined educational setting without proving that those behaviors persist outside the classroom. Research on curriculum and learning evaluation in the digital era emphasizes relating assessment processes to the objectives and characteristics of Islamic Religious Education (Kasmila et al., 2025). The analytical alignment illustrated in Table 3 requires further examination in actual classrooms before its educational effectiveness can be established, particularly regarding the relationship between instructional planning and assessment outcomes (Zuhro et al., 2022).

Instructional media and learning resources can make Islamic Religious Education content more accessible, but their selection should depend on subject requirements and learning objectives. Historical maps, timelines, and visual representations may support the examination of Islamic civilization, while demonstration videos can supplement guided instruction on worship practices. Scholarship on learning media in Islamic Religious Education identifies the importance of matching educational resources with learning needs and content characteristics (Winarko et al., 2025). Research concerning innovative digital media likewise explores ways to diversify the presentation of religious material and facilitate learner engagement with instructional content (Susanti et al., 2024). Digital resources still require scrutiny for religious content accuracy, accessibility, and compatibility with the instructional level of students. Research on information technology in Islamic Religious Education supports treating digital tools as resources serving instructional purposes rather than as independent indicators of educational quality (Daniati & Wahab, 2022).

Student-centered learning provides opportunities for students to question, interpret, discuss, practise, and reflect on religious knowledge rather than receive information exclusively through exposition. Contextual activities can connect Islamic teachings with academic integrity, social media

communication, personal responsibility, and respectful interaction. Research on digital literacy within Islamic Religious Education identifies responsible engagement with online information as an educational consideration relevant to contemporary learning (Junaidi, 2024). Studies on religious moderation curricula in higher education support integrating respectful dialogue and social responsibility into educational activities (Mukhibat et al., 2024). Educators remain responsible for selecting credible instructional materials, facilitating discussions, accommodating differences in prior understanding, and maintaining alignment with course objectives. Scholarship concerning the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in digital settings reinforces their function as instructional guides amid changing technologies and communication practices (Rohani & Kurniawati, 2024).

Instructional design for the Islamic Education course can be understood as a coordinated process involving content selection, objective formulation, teaching methods, educational media, student engagement, and assessment. Educators should examine whether planned activities correspond to intended competencies and revise instructional arrangements when the available learning evidence indicates misalignment. Research concerning online Islamic Religious Education planning illustrates the relevance of adjusting educational arrangements to changing teaching and learning conditions (Astuty & Suharto, 2021). Comparative examinations of Islamic Religious Education across schools and public universities indicate that curricula and instructional needs differ according to institutional settings and learners' educational circumstances (Qoyimah & Ratnasari, 2025). The documentary synthesis supports a conceptual framework for organizing instruction but cannot establish that any specific teaching technique improves learning outcomes without evidence obtained from its implementation. Future research could examine curricular alignment, instructional processes, and students' observable learning through comparative or intervention-based designs while treating the present findings as analytical guidance rather than experimentally verified conclusions.

## CONCLUSION

The literature synthesis identified five interconnected domains of Islamic Religious Education: the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic creed (aqidah), Islamic morality (akhlak), Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), and the history of Islamic civilization. Each domain contributes distinct forms of religious knowledge and understanding, while their integration supports the development of students' ethical attitudes, practical competencies, and capacity to apply Islamic values in everyday life. The defining characteristics of Islamic Religious Education encompass the integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning, with particular attention to religious values, character formation, and spiritual and social responsibilities. These characteristics require instructional approaches that extend beyond conceptual explanation to include reflection, practical activities, ethical reasoning, and the cultivation of conduct consistent with Islamic teachings. Instructional objectives, learning materials, teaching methods, educational media, and assessment procedures must be aligned with the particular requirements of each religious domain and the developmental characteristics of students. A coherent instructional design should preserve the relationship between foundational Islamic teachings and contemporary educational needs while accommodating differences in students' knowledge, abilities, and learning experiences.

Contemporary Islamic Religious Education faces challenges involving uneven digital literacy, the extensive circulation of online religious information, differences in technological access, and the increasing integration of artificial intelligence into educational activities. Curriculum adaptation must address these developments without compromising the religious foundations and educational objectives of Islamic instruction (Manshur & Isroani, 2023). Strengthening digital literacy is necessary to support students' ability to evaluate religious information, recognize credible sources, and apply ethical principles when engaging with digital technologies (Junaidi, 2024). Curriculum evaluation should also consider the alignment of technological resources, instructional activities, and assessment procedures with the intended development of religious understanding and practical competence (Kasmila et al., 2025). Educators should combine appropriate digital resources with direct interaction, guided religious practice, personal example, and contextual learning activities to maintain the cognitive, ethical, and practical dimensions of Islamic Religious Education (Qoyimah & Ratnasari, 2025). The resulting conceptual framework provides a foundation for more coherent and responsive instructional planning, although its effectiveness in improving students' knowledge, attitudes, and religious practices requires

further empirical examination through classroom observation, implementation studies, and systematic evaluation of learning outcomes.

## REFERENCES

Abdul-Jabbar, W. K., & Makki, Y. (2024). Integrating intercultural philosophy into the high school curriculum: Toward a deliberative pedagogy of tadabbur in diasporic Muslim education. *Religions, 15*(2), Article 189. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15020189

Agbaria, A. (2024). Education for religion: An Islamic perspective. *Religions, 15*(3), Article 309. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15030309

Akrim, A., Setiawan, H. R., Selamat, S., & Ginting, N. (2022). Transformation of Islamic education curriculum development policy in the national education system. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences, 17*(7), 2538–2552. https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v17i7.7685

Akrim. (2021). *Desain Pembelajaran*. Rajawali Pers.

Alhamuddin, & Arifin, A. G. (2025). Reorienting Islamic curriculum and pedagogy in Indonesia: Aligning with national character education policy. *AL-TARBIYAH: Jurnal Pendidikan (The Educational Journal), 35*(1), 10–21. https://doi.org/10.24235/ath.v35i1.20276

Aribah, L., Aulia, M. G., Baharudin, M. H. B., Rifkiya, A., & Khoiriyah, D. R. (2025). Deep learning approach in the Merdeka Curriculum to shape students' character through Islamic religious education. *Kalijaga Journal of Islamic Religious Education, 1*(1), 16–35. https://doi.org/10.14421/jire.12070

Asiah, N., & Harjoni. (2024). Pengembangan kurikulum pendidikan agama Islam di era digital (Analisis historis dan perkembangan sosiologis di Indonesia). *Jurnal Review Pendidikan dan Pengajaran, 7*(4), 14944–14951. https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v7i4.36122

Astuty, W., & Suharto, A. W. B. (2021). Desain perencanaan pelaksanaan pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam daring dengan kurikulum darurat. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam, 9*(1), 81–96. https://doi.org/10.36667/jppi.v9i1.624

Daniati, N., & Wahab, A. (2022). Desain pembelajaran dan pemanfaatan teknologi informasi pada mata pelajaran pendidikan agama Islam. *Geo Khatulistiwa, 2*(3), 41–52. https://doi.org/10.31571/.v2i3.171

Farida, A., Fatiha, I., & Gusmaneli. (2025). Desain pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam di era digital. *Bhinneka: Jurnal Bintang Pendidikan dan Bahasa, 3*(1), 12–28. https://doi.org/10.59024/bhinneka.v3i1.1108

Hadikusuma, R., Hafiduddin, H., & Irwan, P. (2025). Curriculum development model on Islamic religious education based on religious moderation in public higher education. *Epigram, 22*(1), 20–36. https://doi.org/10.32722/epi.v22i1.7612

Idoko, P. E. (2023). Islamic religious education textbooks in a pluralist Nigeria. *Religions, 14*(1), Article 42. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14010042

Jannah, R. (2022). Pengembangan desain pembelajaran PAI berbasis karakter di MTs Zaidul Ali. *Ta'limDiniyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam, 3*(1), 96–105. https://doi.org/10.53515/tdjpai.v3i1.42

Junaidi. (2024). Literasi digital dalam pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam: Tantangan, dimensi kompetensi, dan model A-E-E-R. *SENTRI: Jurnal Riset Ilmiah, 3*(9). https://doi.org/10.55681/sentri.v3i9.7181

Karim, H. A., Pahrudin, A., Masykur, R., Hadi, M., & Adzkiyaunuha, M. (2024). Islamic religious education curriculum planning in facing the era of disruption in Islamic religious higher education. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 13*(4). https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v13i04.6712

Karmawan, Munawati, S., Azhari, A., Setyawati, A., Nurislamiah, S., & Haromaini, A. (2021). *Pendidikan Agama Islam untuk Perguruan Tinggi*. Penerbit Insania.

Kasmila, A., Hadiati, E., Rizqi, D. I., Septuri, & Fauzan, A. (2025). Evaluasi kurikulum dan pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam di era digital: Perspektif pendidikan Islam. *Paedagogie, 20*(2), 301–310. https://doi.org/10.31603/paedagogie.v20i2.15210

Khoerudin, K., Fadilah, R. M. Y., & Setiawan, E. (2024). Islamic religious education in public universities: Responding to contemporary challenges. *Atthulab: Islamic Religion Teaching and Learning Journal, 9*(2), 188–199. https://doi.org/10.15575/ath.v9i2.33030

Manshur, A., & Isroani, F. (2023). Tantangan kurikulum pendidikan agama Islam di era digital. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 12*(4). https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v12i04.8114

Mudlofir, A., & Rusydiyah, E. F. (2021). *Desain Pembelajaran Inovatif: Dari Teori ke Praktik*. Rajawali Pers.

Mukhibat, M., Effendi, M., Setyawan, W. H., & Sutoyo, M. (2024). Development and evaluation of religious moderation education curriculum at higher education in Indonesia. *Cogent Education, 11*(1), Article 2302308. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2302308

Noor, I. H., Izzati, A., & Azani, M. Z. (2023). Implementasi kurikulum merdeka pada mata pelajaran pendidikan agama Islam. *Iseedu: Journal of Islamic Educational Thoughts and Practices, 7*(1). https://doi.org/10.23917/iseedu.v7i1.22539

Prasetia, S. A., & Rosida, N. (2022). Desain pembelajaran PAI di MAN Kota Surabaya pasca pandemi Covid-19. *Al-Tarbawi Al-Haditsah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 7*(1), 60–71. https://doi.org/10.24235/tarbawi.v7i1.10071

Qoyimah, D., & Ratnasari, D. (2025). Pendidikan agama Islam di sekolah dan perguruan tinggi umum: Kajian kurikulum, metode, dan problematika pembelajaran di era digital. *Indonesian Journal of Action Research, 4*(2), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.14421/ijar.2025.42-01

Rohani, R., & Kurniawati, E. (2024). Peran guru pendidikan agama Islam di era digital (Studi kasus di SDN 1 Tanjung Raja Giham). *Jurnal Tahsinia, 5*(5), 696–710. https://doi.org/10.57171/jt.v5i5.563

Saada, N. (2023). Educating for global citizenship in religious education: Islamic perspective. *International Journal of Educational Development, 103*, Article 102894. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2023.102894

Samsinar, S., et al. (2024). *Desain Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam*. Akademia Pustaka.

Suhayib, & Ansyari, M. F. (2023). Design of Islamic religious education: Purposes, alignment of curriculum components and contexts. *British Journal of Religious Education, 45*(4), 382–393. https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2023.2220940

Susanti, S. S., et al. (2024). Innovative digital media in Islamic religious education learning. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam, 21*(1), 40–59. https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.7553

Ulfat, F. (2023). Rethinking Islamic religious education in Europe based on empirical research. *Religions, 14*(5), Article 590. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14050590

Usman, Bahraeni, Nurhilaliyah, & Rahman, A. F. (2024). The development of teaching materials for Islamic religious education courses based on local wisdom at public state universities. *Lentera Pendidikan: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, 27*(2), 335–347. https://doi.org/10.24252/lp.2024v27n2i5

Winarko, W., Mulyono, E., Patimah, Afifatun, S., & Sajdah, S. (2025). Media pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam. *Ilmuna: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam, 7*(2), 400–412. https://doi.org/10.54437/ilmuna.v7i2.2155

Yani, Y. I., Nasution, W. N., & Halimah, S. (2025). Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic religious education and character education: A multisite study at SMA Negeri 1 and 2 Sibolga. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, 14*(1), 35–49. https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2025.141.35-49

Zuhro, I. N., Sutomo, M., & Mashudi. (2022). Desain pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam dengan model ADDIE. *TA'LIM: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Islam, 5*(2), 180–193. https://doi.org/10.52166/talim.v5i2.3085