

Strategy for Developing Hadith Literacy in the Islamic Education Curriculum

Nur Aini^{1*}

¹ Islamic Religious Education Study Program State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Nur Aini, E-mail: aini170891@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Hadith literacy is an important aspect in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning to form a complete understanding of Islamic teachings. However, mastery of hadith literacy among students is still relatively low. This study aims to explore strategies for developing hadith literacy within the Islamic Education curriculum. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive study through curriculum document analysis and interviews with PAI teachers. The research results show that integrating the students' life context, utilizing digital technology, and strengthening project-based learning methods are effective strategies to improve hadith literacy. The implication of this study is the need for curriculum development that is more responsive to the needs and challenges of the times.

1. Introduction

Islamic Education is a crucial foundation in shaping the character, moral, and spiritual dimensions of learners. In the context of formal education in Indonesia, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is one of the mandatory subjects aimed at instilling values of faith, morality, and comprehensive understanding of Islamic teachings. One main source of Islamic teachings taught in PAI is the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which serves as an explanation (bayan) and reinforcement (ta'kid) of the content of the Qur'an. Therefore, mastery of hadith literacy is a key to achieving holistic Islamic Education goals.

However, in reality, hadith literacy among students remains relatively low. Many students only memorize the hadith texts without understanding their context, meaning, or relevance to daily life. This indicates limitations in the learning strategies used, especially in making hadith a living and applicable subject in students' learning experiences. Often, the teaching methods are still conventional, focusing solely on memorization without room for critical understanding or contextualization.

Hadith literacy in the context of Islamic education must be understood broadly, namely as the ability of students to read, understand, interpret, and wisely implement the teachings contained in the hadith relevant to contemporary developments. This literacy also includes the ability to assess the authenticity of hadith, understand moral values, and draw life lessons from various situations faced by the Prophet and his companions. Consequently, developing hadith literacy strategies must be linked with pedagogical approaches that encourage active and reflective student involvement.

In the current digital era, the challenges and opportunities for developing hadith literacy are increasingly complex. On the one hand, students are exposed to various religious information from internet and social media that may not always be valid. On the other hand, technological advances can be utilized as effective and engaging learning media, including for studying hadith. Therefore, adaptive and innovative strategies are needed in curriculum development and designing hadith learning suited to the characteristics of the digital generation.

* Nur Aini is a Student Islamic Religious Education Study Program at Postgraduate School, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia. This paper was presented at the 4th International Conference on Islamic and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICIIS) 2025, as a presenter, organized by the Postgraduate School State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia.

Developing hadith literacy strategies in the Islamic Education curriculum must also consider contextual and experiential learning approaches. Methods such as project-based learning, thematic discussions, and integrating Islamic values into real-life experiences have been proven to enhance students' understanding and internalization of hadith content. Such strategies provide space for students not only to understand hadith texts but also to internalize their values in everyday attitudes and behaviors.

Besides methodological approaches, it is essential to revisit the position of hadith in the PAI curriculum. Currently, hadith learning tends to be merged within broader themes of morals and worship, resulting in superficial study. A curriculum responsive to social developments and student needs will make hadith teaching not only informative but also transformative. Revising and strengthening hadith content and teaching methods are an inseparable part of comprehensive Islamic education reform.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine and identify strategies applicable in developing hadith literacy in formal education settings. With a focus on integrating curriculum content, teaching methods, and utilization of technological media, the study is expected to contribute in formulating more effective and contextual approaches to improve hadith literacy among students. This study is also intended as a reference for teachers, curriculum developers, and policy makers in developing hadith learning models relevant to current challenges and needs.

Hadith literacy also plays a strategic role in shaping learners' critical thinking about Islamic teachings. In the context of globalization and the overwhelming flow of information, which often mixes authentic and inauthentic sources, the ability to discern and understand authentic hadith becomes very important. Without adequate literacy, learners are vulnerable to accepting and spreading fabricated (maudhu') hadith or those misunderstood, which can lead to deviation in understanding and even radicalism. Thus, strengthening hadith literacy is not only about teaching religious material but also part of efforts to build ideological resilience and national character.

On the other hand, Islamic Religious Education teachers face great challenges in designing hadith learning that is not only engaging but also deep. Many teachers express difficulty in translating core and basic competencies in the curriculum into learning that promotes critical understanding of hadith. Lack of training, limited learning resources, and minimal face-to-face time are technical obstacles affecting the effectiveness of hadith learning. Therefore, planned and directed strategies are needed to enhance teacher capacity and enrich teaching methods.

The urgency of this research is further reinforced by national curriculum demands aimed at strengthening character and 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy. If developed with the right approach, hadith literacy can become a platform for cross-disciplinary learning skills. Learners do not only study religion but are also trained to think analytically, express opinions, collaborate in teams, and use technology as a tool to explore Islamic knowledge. In other words, hadith literacy contributes to realizing the profile of Pancasila students who are religious, independent, and critically reasoning.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Hadith Literacy

Hadith literacy not only encompasses the ability to read and memorize hadith but also to understand the context, content, chain of narration (sanad), and its application in life. Hadith literacy involves understanding meaning contextually and critically, as well as the ability to derive wisdom from the content of the hadith.

Hadith literacy is the ability to understand, interpret, and apply hadith in real life accurately and contextually. This literacy not only includes the ability to read hadith texts in Arabic but also skills in comprehending the meaning of hadith, recognizing the chain of narration (sanad) and the text (matan), as well as assessing the authenticity and relevance of the hadith content. In Islamic studies, hadith literacy is part of the science of musthalah al-hadith, which is concerned with the methods of verification and validation of hadith.

Mastery of hadith literacy enables an individual to filter religious information derived from hadith and avoid misuse of hadith to justify incorrect actions. This literacy is closely related to the development of critical thinking patterns and Islamic

knowledge. Unfortunately, in the context of primary and secondary education, hadith learning is still limited to text memorization without training in content analysis or the social context in which the hadith was revealed.

Hadith literacy must also be developed progressively according to the age and understanding level of learners. For example, at the junior and senior high school levels, hadith literacy can focus on understanding hadith contents relevant to character values, such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. Meanwhile, in higher education, literacy can be directed towards analyzing sanad and matan criticism. Effective hadith literacy strategies must consider these differences and adjust to the needs of learners.

In the context of modern education, developing hadith literacy must also take into account pedagogical approaches that encourage active learner engagement. This includes developing critical reading skills, discussions, value analysis, and practical applications of hadith in daily life. Therefore, understanding hadith literacy cannot be separated from a holistic approach that includes linguistic, historical, and moral-spiritual aspects of the hadith itself.

2.2 Islamic Education Curriculum

The Islamic Religious Education curriculum in Indonesia refers to the development of spiritual, social, and intellectual values. In the context of hadith learning, the curriculum emphasizes understanding and practicing the content of hadith in accordance with the development of students (Kemdikbud, 2022).

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum in Indonesia is designed to shape individuals who are faithful, pious, and morally upright, as well as capable of practicing Islamic values in their lives. In this curriculum, hadith material is an important part of the teaching components, particularly in the aspects of moral and worship development. However, the presentation of hadith in the curriculum is often still textual and not contextual, resulting in a gap between the teaching content and the needs of students in real life.

The development of the national curriculum, including the Independent Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), encourages a more flexible, personalized, and competency-based learning approach. In this context, hadith material should be designed not only as memorization content but as teaching material that can shape students' character and critical thinking. The curriculum must encourage exploration of meaning, understanding of universal Islamic values in hadith, and practical implementation in students' lives at school and in the community.

One of the challenges in implementing the PAI curriculum is the limited availability of in-depth and contextual teaching materials. Many textbooks only present the hadith texts without adequate explanation about *asbab al-wurud* (the reasons for the hadith's revelation), contemporary relevance, or reflection on social realities. This hinders the internalization process of hadith values in students. Therefore, curriculum enrichment is needed through module development, additional teaching materials, and an interdisciplinary approach.

An effective curriculum also requires teacher training to develop meaningful hadith learning. Teachers are expected not only to master the material but also to design learning strategies suitable for curriculum approaches such as differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and collaborative learning. A curriculum that supports hadith literacy must be a living curriculum—responsive to reality, embracing technology, and shaping moderate, critical, and humanistic Islamic character.

2.3 Contextual Learning Strategies

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model and project-based learning approaches have proven effective in increasing students' religious literacy because they encourage active participation, critical thinking, and engagement with real-life situations (Sagala, 2016). Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is an approach that emphasizes the connection between lesson material and students' real-life experiences. In the context of hadith teaching, this approach can make hadith texts more relevant and meaningful for learners. By linking the content of hadith with students' life experiences, learning becomes more engaging, practical, and easier to understand. This strategy is highly relevant for improving hadith literacy because it encourages students to think critically and reflectively about the moral messages contained in the hadith.

The contextual approach encourages teachers to create an active, student-centered learning environment. In hadith learning, this can be implemented through case studies, problem-solving, role playing, or group discussions about events relevant to

hadith content. This strategy not only enhances students' understanding of hadith texts but also helps them internalize the values within their daily actions.

Several studies show that contextual learning approaches effectively increase understanding and internalization of Islamic values. For example, research by Ramdhani (2019) found that students learning hadith through contextual methods were better able to connect hadith content with social issues such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility. This strategy helps students become not only hadith memorizers but also practitioners of Islamic values in their social lives.

Implementing contextual learning in hadith teaching requires teachers' creativity and innovation. Teachers should design activities that involve exploration, analysis, and practical application of hadith content. The use of technology such as videos, social media, or educational apps can also enrich this contextual strategy. Thus, the contextual learning strategy serves as a bridge between hadith texts and students' real worlds, making hadith literacy a lived experience rather than mere memorization.

3. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of strategies for developing hadith literacy within the Islamic Education curriculum. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore phenomena contextually and thoroughly, especially concerning hadith teaching practices in schools and the dynamics involved. Limited observation was conducted in several classes during hadith lessons. The researcher noted the teaching methods used by teachers, students' responses to hadith material, and discussion or assignment activities related to hadith comprehension. This observation aimed to strengthen findings from interviews and documentation and provide a concrete picture of the implementation of hadith literacy development strategies in the field.

4. Results and Discussion

The first dominant strategy found is linking the content of hadith with students' everyday life. Teachers actively connect the meanings of hadith with situations close to students, such as associating hadith about honesty with behavior during exams, hadith about helping each other with group work practices, and hadith about guarding speech with bullying phenomena on social media. This strategy proves effective in helping students understand the relevance of hadith teachings to the real world and increases their interest in further exploring hadith content.

The second strategy developed is the use of digital media and technology as supporting tools for hadith learning. Teachers utilize various platforms such as digital hadith applications (e.g., Kutub Sittah, Hadith Encyclopedia), explanatory videos from scholars on YouTube, and interactive visual presentations. In some cases, social media is used to enrich the material, like sharing thematic hadith via class WhatsApp groups or creating daily challenges to write the meaning and application of hadith. This strategy is highly effective in engaging students familiar with technology and expanding hadith literacy beyond the classroom.

The third significant strategy is applying project-based learning methods in hadith teaching. Students are assigned projects focused on understanding and disseminating hadith content, such as creating hadith interpretation videos, thematic bulletin boards, digital posters, or mini dakwah podcasts. These projects not only require deep comprehension of the hadith but also foster creativity, teamwork, and communication skills. This method aligns with the principles of the Independent Curriculum, emphasizing experiential learning and strengthening 21st-century competencies.

Additionally, the study shows that critical discussions and collaborative learning also play important roles in enhancing hadith literacy. In several classes, teachers provide space for open discussions on students' understanding of particular hadith, even juxtaposing them with current social phenomena. Teachers guide students to ask critical questions about the context of hadith revelation (asbab al-wurud), differences in meanings among seemingly contradictory hadith, and interpretations relevant to contemporary issues. This strategy encourages deeper thinking and prevents literal acceptance of hadith texts.

However, teachers face challenges in implementing these strategies. Some report insufficient time in PAI classes for in-depth hadith exploration, limited digital literacy to optimally use technological media, and conventional textbooks that do not support contextual hadith learning well. Therefore, support from schools and government, in the form of teacher training, provision of relevant learning resources, and development of more practical hadith learning modules, is necessary.

The research reinforces the view that hadith literacy cannot be developed solely through textual and memorization approaches but requires active, creative, and contextual teaching strategies. Hadith literacy developed with this approach not only improves students' understanding of hadith texts but also cultivates stronger Islamic attitudes and character. These findings align with previous studies showing that contextual and project-based learning strategies can enhance religious literacy and students' active participation in learning (Sagala, 2016; Ramdhani, 2019).

In conclusion, this discussion demonstrates that developing hadith literacy in the Islamic Education curriculum requires a comprehensive pedagogical transformation. Teachers, as curriculum implementers, must be empowered to integrate hadith values into students' real lives using innovative and relevant strategies. The Islamic Education curriculum should continue to be updated to respond better to the evolving times, technology, and the needs of contemporary Muslim youth.

5. Conclusion

The strategy for developing hadith literacy in the Islamic Education curriculum must be directed towards approaches that are contextual, interactive, and aligned with contemporary developments. The integration of digital media, strengthening the real-life context, and the use of project-based learning and discussion methods have proven effective in enhancing students' understanding and appreciation of hadith. Therefore, the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum needs continuous refinement to provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences for students. This approach not only improves students' cognitive understanding of hadith but also fosters character development and spiritual growth, making the learning process more engaging and applicable in their daily lives

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