# TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REINFORCEMENT AT INTEGRATED ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

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## Abstract

*The development of Integrated Islamic Primary Schools is in response to the society's increasing demand for quality graduates. Thus, the emphasis on the effectiveness of learning in Integrated Islamic Primary Schools (IIPS) necessitates institutional innovation and teacher professionalism. This research investigates the professionalism in IIPS and determines the factors that contribute to teachers' professional practices. The study is qualitative with a phenomenological approach. This study employed the "Tarbiyah learning framework" developed by Abdurahman Al-Nahlawi, and the data were collected through in-depth interviews and observations to investigate the dimensions of teacher professionalism, teaching methodologies, and factors affecting teacher professionalism. The findings reveal that there is a mismatch between professional development initiatives and the actual conditions faced by students. Teaching-learning process that is responsive to students needs and characteristics, collaborative learning programs and supervision sctivities are all viable strategies. Teacher professionalism can be identified by demonstrating strong commitment and work discipline. The IIPS also provides structured training programs and collaborative partnerships with the education office to improve relevant teaching competencies and methodologies. Further, the social implications of this research include the availability of high-quality educational options for the community at the primary school level. Furthermore, the varied management system of IIPS serves as a social control to ensure the quality of primary education continues to develop.*

**Keywords:** *Integrated Islamic Scool; Primary School, Teacher Professionalis; Tarbiyah Learning Frame Work*

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## Abstrak

*Perkembangan Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu selaras dengan meningkatnya tuntutan masyarakat dalam menciptakan lulusan yang berkualitas. Oleh karena itu, orientasi terhadap efektivitas pembelajaran di SDIT memerlukan inovasi tata kelola kelembagaan dan profesionalisme guru. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis profesionalisme di SDIT dan mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi praktik profesional guru. Penelitian berjenis kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologis. Penelitian ini menggunakan kerangka pembelajaran Tarbiyah yang dikemukakan oleh Abdurahman Al-Nahlawi. Data diperoleh melalui teknik wawancara mendalam dan observasi untuk menyelidiki dimensi profesionalisme guru, metodologi pengajaran, dan faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi profesionalisme Guru. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan menunjukkan ketidaksesuaian antara inisiatif pengembangan profesional dan kondisi aktual yang dihadapi oleh siswa. Strategi yang dapat dilakukan adalah pengajaran yang responsif terhadap kebutuhan dan karakteristik siswa; program pembelajaran kolaboratif dan kegiatan supervisi. Profesionalisme Guru dapat diidentifikasi melalui komitmen yang kuat dan disiplin kerja. SDIT juga melaksanakan program pengembangan profesional melalui pelatihan terstruktur dan kemitraan kolaboratif dengan dinas pendidikan untuk meningkatkan kompetensi dan metodologi pengajaran yang relevan Implikasi social dari penelitian ini adalah tersedianya opsi lembaga pendidikan berkualitas jenjang sekolah dasar bagi masyarakat. Selain itu, pengelolaan SDIT yang variatif menjadi control social bagi perbaikan mutu berkelanjutan jenjang pendidikan dasar.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Sekolah Islam Terpadu; Guru Profesional; Pengembangan guru*

## مستخلص

تطوير المدارس الابتدائية الإسلامية المتكاملة يأتي استجابةً للطلب المتزايد في المجتمع على خريجين ذوي جودة عالية. وبالتالي، فإن التركيز على فعالية التعلم في المدارس الابتدائية الإسلامية المتكاملة (IIPS)يتطلب الابتكار المؤسسي واحترافية المعلمين. تبحث هذه الدراسة في احترافية المعلمين في IIPSوتحدد العوامل التي تسهم في ممارساتهم المهنية. الدراسة نوعية وتستخدم منهجية ظواهرية. استخدمت هذه الدراسة "إطار تعلم التربية" الذي طوره عبد الرحمن النحلاوي، وتم جمع البيانات من خلال مقابلات معمقة وملاحظات لاستكشاف أبعاد احترافية المعلمين، وطرائق التدريس، والعوامل المؤثرة على احترافية المعلمين. تكشف النتائج عن وجود فجوة بين مبادرات التنمية المهنية والظروف الفعلية التي يواجهها الطلاب. تعتبر عملية التعليم والتعلم التي تستجيب لاحتياجات الطلاب وخصائصهم، وبرامج التعلم التعاوني، وأنشطة الإشراف استراتيجيات قابلة للتطبيق. يمكن تحديد احترافية المعلم من خلال إظهار الالتزام القوي والانضباط في العمل. كما توفر IIPS برامج تدريب منظمة وشراكات تعاونية مع مكتب التعليم لتحسين الكفاءات وطرائق التدريس ذات الصلة. علاوة على ذلك، فإن الآثار الاجتماعية لهذه الدراسة تشمل توفير خيارات تعليمية عالية الجودة للمجتمع على مستوى المدارس الابتدائية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن نظام الإدارة المتنوع في IIPS يعمل كوسيلة للرقابة الاجتماعية لضمان استمرار تطوير جودة التعليم الابتدائي

**الكلمات الرئيسية:** المدارس الإسلامية المتكاملة، المعلمون المحترفون وتطوير المعلمين.

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## A. Introduction

In recent years, integrated Islamic schools (IIS) in Indonesia have garnered significant attention, with a 20% increase in student enrollment interest over the past five years, highlighting the importance of these schools in the country's education system.[1] The increasing popularity of IIS in Indonesia has created high demand, necessitating students and parents to participate in selective entrance exams for acceptance into these institutions.[2] The admission process involves selecting students through written exams and interviews with students and parents.

Thus, efforts to revitalize Islamic educational institutions on a global scale continue through various forms of education, including traditional pesantren,[3] modern pesantren, and integrated pesantren,[4] which are now evolving under the designation of *Jaringan Sekolah Islam Terpadu* (JSIT).[5] According to Zulkarnain, the chairman of JSIT Indonesia, there are approximately 2,420 JSIT schools in Indonesia, serving around 40 million students.[6] In Indonesia, JSIT is intrinsically connected to teachers' professional teaching roles.[7]

In recent years, professional development has not consistently aligned with the noble vision of the founders, parents and community.[8] The primary challenges faced by the *JSIT* teachers in their profesional growth are largely related to knowledge gaps, skills, and personality (uswah figures).[9] Furthermore, the lack of professional reinforcement of teachers,

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[1] Https://aceh.bps.go.id, "Jumlah Sekolah, Guru, Dan Murid Sekolah Dasar (SD) Di Bawah Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, Dan Teknologi Menurut Kabupaten/Kota Di Provinsi Aceh, 2023/2024," 2024.

[2] Noorhaidi Hasan, "Education, Young Islamists and Integrated Islamic Schools in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 19, no. 1 (April 2012), https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v19i1.370.

[3] Safiudin Safiudin et al., "Pesantren Law; Challenge and Opportunity for Indonesian Islamic Education," *AJIS: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (May 2023): 97, https://doi.org/10.29240/ajis.v8i1.5909.

[4] Suadi Zainal, Muhammad Anggung Manumanoso Prasetyo, and Che Mohd Aziz Yaacob, "Adopting Pesantren-Based Junior High School Programs: The Pesantren Change Its Educational System Without Conflict," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 22, no. 2 (August 2022): 260, https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v22i2.13525.

[5] Istikomah Istikomah, Eni Fariyatul Fahyuni, and Imam Fauji, "Integration of Schools and Madrassa into Pesantren in Indonesia," in *1st International Conference on Intellectuals' Global Responsibility (ICIGR 2017)* (Atlantis Press, 2018).

[6] Aji Sofanudin, "Typology of Islamic Religious Education Curriculum in Integrated Islamic Schools Curriculum Typology of Islamic Religious Education in Integrated Islamic Schools," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 17, no. 1 (2019): 42–56.

[7] Dkk Wildatun, "National Curriculum and Integrated Islamic School Network Curriculum: Integration Practice in Islamic Education," *Jurnal At-Tarbiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 1 (November 2019), https://doi.org/10.37758/jat.v6i1.662.

[8] Corinne Zimmermann, Brooke DiGiovanni Evans, and Cynthia Robinson, "Living with the Founder: Constraints and Creativity," *Journal of Museum Education* 45, no. 2 (April 2020): 109–14, https://doi.org/10.1080/10598650.2020.1755946.

[9] Agus Ruswandi et al., "Uswah Hasanah as a Methodology of Islamic Education," *TARBAWY: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education* 9, no. 2 (2022): 2599–2481, https://doi.org/10.17509/t.v9i2.46384.

aligned with the vision and mission of JSIT, serves as a major obstacle in the teaching and learning process.[10]

The theory of reinforcement used by researchers is based on the "*Tarbiyah Islamiyah*" theory pioneered by Abdurrahman Al-Nahlawi in his book entitled *Usul Al-Tarbiyah Al-Islamiyah wa Asalibuhu: fi Al-Bayt, wa Al-Madrasah wa Al-Mujtama'. Tarbiyah Islamiyah*, articulated by Abdurrahman Al-Nahlawi in Usul Al-Tarbiyah Al-Islamiyah wa Asalibuhu, emphasizes a comprehensive educational framework rooted in Islamic principles derived from the Quran and Hadith. This approach focuses on maintaining students' fitrah (natural disposition) while promoting their moral development and self-identity through a gradual learning process.[11]

Akiba and Liang found that the various formal programs provided for teacher professional development were ineffective, causing students' learning achievements to lack authenticity and contextualization.[12] Strengthening and developing teachers' professional learning is more effectively achieved through the growth of teachers' awareness to facilitate student learning.[13] Integrated Islamic schools have proven to be more developed and increasingly sought after by parents as academic destinations for their children. Teacher-centered professional activities have demonstrated greater effectiveness than formal professional development activities, such as training and educational seminars conducted outside school.[14] Informal activities for teachers create opportunities for integrated pedagogical professional development between theory and practice, which can positively impact student achievement.[15]

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[10] Tatang Muttaqin et al., "The Achievement Gap in Indonesia? Organizational and Ideological Differences between Private Islamic Schools," *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 31, no. 2 (April 2020): 212–42, https://doi.org/10.1080/09243453.2019.1644352.

[11] Didin Syafrudin, "Metode Active Learning Dalam Pendidikan Islam (Analisis Perbandingan Pemikiran Abdurrahman An-Nahlawi Dan Muhammad Athiyah Al-'Abrasyi)." (Jakarta: Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2018).

[12] Motoko Akiba and Guodong Liang, "Effects of Teacher Professional Learning Activities on Student Achievement Growth," *The Journal of Educational Research* 109, no. 1 (January 2016): 99–110, https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.2014.924470; C W Day et al., "Teacher Professionalism: Chinese Teachers' Perspectives," *Journal of Professional Capital and Community* 8, no. 2 (2023): 65–89, https://doi.org/10.1108/JPCC-01-2022-0004.

[13] Maria Assunção Flores, "The Multidimensionality of Teacher Professional Learning: Context, Content and Change," *European Journal of Teacher Education* 44, no. 4 (August 2021): 429–31, https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2021.1973164.

[14] Muhammad Anggung Manumanoso Prasetyo, Bashori Bashori, and Novi Nur Lailisna, "Beyond Conventional Boundaries: A Literature Study on Madrasah Management and the Construction of Online Learning Innovations," *Al-Ta Lim Journal* 30, no. 2 (2023), https://doi.org/10.15548/jt.v30i2.774.

[15] Vivienne Baumfield, "Making a Difference in the Religious Education Classroom: Integrating Theory and Practice in Teachers' Professional Learning," *British Journal of Religious Education* 38, no. 2 (May 2016): 141–51, https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2016.1139889.

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The development of Islamic educational institutions, especially integrated Islamic schools, is noteworthy as they combine general and Islamic education. These schools implement Al-Nahlawi's *Tarbiyah Islamiyah* approach, which emphasizes the teacher-based professional learning to nurture students' potential in alignment with their talents and interests.[16] The effectiveness of learning requires not only innovative institutional models like the IIPS but also a high level of teacher professionalism.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the application of Al-Nahlawi's *Tarbiyah Islamiyah* educational model, by assessing the professionalism of Islamic education teachers in the IIPS, and identifying the factors influencing teachers' professional practices.

This research was conducted using qualitative methods and employed a phenomenological approach to study teachers' strengthening and professional development through individuals, groups, and educational services. The study aimed to collect data from 21 teachers and eight principals across 8 Integrated Islamic Schools located in Aceh. Participants were initially asked to identify the research location and confirm their willingness to participate. The research instruments included observations and interviews guided by established protocols. Observations were conducted through non-participatory methods lasting 20-30 minutes. The analysis was performed in three stages: simultaneous reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing based on the research questions and participants' input. Techniques for ensuring data credibility and validity included confirming data accuracy and transferability, maintaining researcher independence, and clarifying ambiguous data as needed.

**Table 1. Table of Participants**

| School Criteria | PARTICIPANTS | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **A** | **B** | **C** | **D** | **E** | **F** | **G** | **H** |
| | SDIT Assalam | SDIT Muhammadiyah | SDIT Ulumuddin | SDIT Bunayya | SDIT Ukhtani | MITA Almuslimun | SDIT Azkiya | SDIT Madani |
| Headmaster | SM | RD | TMi | YM | CR | SY | WD | AS |
| Participants | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Average Length of Teaching | 6 Years | 7 Years | 7 Years | 6 Years | 9 Years | 8 Years | 5 Years | 5 Years |
| Education Certified | Education Certified | Education Certified | Education Certified | Education Certified | Not Yet | Education Certified | Not yet | Not Yet |
| Curriculum | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 | JSIT / K13 |

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[16] Zulfikar Ali Buto and Hafifuddin Hafifuddin, "The Inovation of Dayah Curriculum in Meeting The National Education Standards in Aceh," *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 45, no. 2 (January 2022): 305, https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v45i2.822.

This study utilized semi-structured interview guidelines developed by the researcher, comprising 15 questions tailored for Islamic education teachers and an additional 15 for school principals. The focus of these questions revolved around three core research queries: Teachers' perceptions of professional learning, Practical learning methodologies employed by teachers, Teachers' perspectives on their professional learning needs, and available programs to enhance their competencies. The primary objective of these inquiries was to encourage reflection among teachers and principals regarding their professional learning processes and identify factors that impact effective educational practices. The researcher ensured comprehensive data comparison to derive valid conclusions by administering the same questions to all participants.

Data was collected through non-participatory observations from September 2022 to June 2023, followed by semi-structured interviews from September 25, 2022, to June 1, 2023. To mitigate the potential bias, an interview was established to accommodate the initial analysis and reflections. The interview sessions, lasting 20-40 minutes, were conducted face-to-face ensuring clarity and comprehensibility. Before the interviews, participants provided informed consent to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. Further, the audio recordings were obtained to ensure accurate documentation. The validity was attained through repeated checks and triangulation among the observation data, interviews, and focus groups. Transcripts were meticulously reviewed, and thematic codes were developed through an open coding to organize the findings systematically. Moreiver, the findings are categorized into three key themes based on the research questions: professionalism of Islamic education teachers, teaching practices utilized by these educators, and factors influencing professional learning centered on teachers within integrated Islamic educational environments.

## B. Result

### 1. IIPS teacher professionalism and character development

The development of students' knowledge, spirituality, and character relies heavily on teachers' performance, significantly influencing academic progress and forming a quality generation. Enhancing teachers' professional learning is crucial and can be achieved by increasing their awareness to facilitate students' learning process without direct involvement from school authorities. IIPS are gaining popularity among parents as preferred educational destinations. Teacher-centered professional activities are more effective than formal

development initiatives, creating opportunities for practical pedagogical growth, which positively impacts student achievement. Essential qualities for teachers include developing creative lesson plans, understanding the curriculum, applying classroom management techniques, and integrating Islamic values into students' lives. Equally significant, strengthening teachers' competencies enhances instructional quality and contributes to students' character and spiritual development.

**Table 2. Open Coding and Categorization (enhancing IIPS teacher professionalism and character development)**

| Key Words | Interview | Coding |
|---|---|---|
| Teacher Responsibility; Religious Education. | *"To become a teacher at this school, educators must have a broad responsibility in educating students in religious, academic, social, and emotional aspects. Teachers must interact well with all students, remind each other, and maintain educator roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, teachers must have good knowledge of Islamic religion and values, and at least memorize 2 Juz of the Quran."* | SM |
| Analyzing Skills; Questioning Skills. | *"The scientific approach is applied to encourage students' analyzing and questioning skills in the learning process both in and outside the classroom."* | TMi |
| Model Development; Cultural Integration. | *"According to the principal, teacher development methods in Islamic schools involve developing models that adopt and elaborate on Islamic character values combined with Indonesian culture using differentiated learning. By combining the government curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka) and religion as the basis of subjects, we integrate what students learn with their experiences."* | RD |
| Government Curriculum; Experience Integration. | *"The learning methods and models implemented in integrated Islamic schools utilize an integral independent curriculum that merges religious and general subjects, fostering competitive skills alongside academic, non-academic, religious, and social abilities."* | YM |
| Stakeholder Participation; Learning Organization. | *"Learning is organized through the integration of involvement and active participation from all stakeholders, including faculty members, the school committee, parents, and the community."* | CR |
| Competence Delivery; Learning Environment. | *"As a teacher, I want to appear competent in front of my students. I want to prove that the competence as a professional teacher that I have is well conveyed, but I realize that some meetings have not been relevant to the conditions of my learners"* | AS |
| Importance of Information; Student Character. | *"Poor information has consequences that can be harmful and destroy learners' character"* | CR |
| Regular Recitations; Community Engagement. | *"We also attend regular recitations at the Mosque, Meunasah, and Balee held in our respective villages"* | WD |

Table 1 describes enhancing teacher professionalism and character development in IIPS. Teachers' responsibilities significantly influence the professional development of teachers at integrated Islamic schools in Indonesia in educating and mentoring students. This responsibility encompasses a strong mastery of religious education and practical analytical

and questioning skills. By enhancing these skills, teachers can create a more interactive learning environment that encourages critical thinking among students. Furthermore, developing teaching models that integrate local culture is crucial, as it helps students understand their educational context within a broader cultural framework. Therefore, the professional development of teachers is not only related to improving teaching skills but also to the integration of relevant cultural values.

In the context of the government's evolving curriculum policies, teachers need to incorporate their experiences into the learning process. The program is achieved through stakeholders' active participation in curriculum development and educational processes. Schools can create a stronger learning organization by engaging parents, the community, and other educational institutions. Such participation enriches students' learning experiences and fosters a sense of ownership among all involved parties. Teachers who can adapt to existing curricula and integrate stakeholder feedback will be more effective in delivering student competencies.

Positive learning environment and community support are vital to students' character development. Routine activities such as religious recitations and community engagement can significantly shape students' character, instilling strong moral and spiritual values. The importance of information regarding students' character development should also be a primary focus for teachers, enabling them to design teaching strategies that prioritize academic achievement and character growth.

IIPS teachers needed to consistently engage in ongoing education to update their knowledge of curriculum, teaching methods, and the latest developments in Islamic education. However, the programs aimed at strengthening and developing teachers' professional competence in Indonesia were limited to formal activities, such as workshops, training seminars, and formal Islamic Religious Education Subject Teacher Meetings (ESTM) or English Teacher Working Group (ETWG). This focus indicated a potential shortcoming in the professional development landscape, as while these formal activities were beneficial, they may not have sufficiently addressed the diverse needs of teachers or provided opportunities for practical, hands-on experience. While valuable, the existing frameworks for teacher collaboration and knowledge sharing may not have fostered the innovative and flexible approaches needed in contemporary education. Consequently, there was a need for more varied and informal learning opportunities, including peer mentoring, community-based learning, and online resources, to effectively enhance teachers' competencies and meet the evolving demands of the educational landscape.

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The reinforcement and professional development–of IIPS Teachers are facilitated through multiple ways, including teacher interactions, educational within the IIPS Network community. First, the professional development through interactions between teachers occurs in the form of ETWG meetings held twice a month. In this activity, teachers exchange ideas about their teaching practices, weaknesses and difficulties, including their overwhelming obstacles in teaching the classroom and outside the classroom, dealing with students and understanding their respective teaching materials. Teachers' professional development is also done through classroom supervision by the principal. Supervision are conducted on a random basis and the follow up on the results of the visits is done by coaching, strengthening and developing teachers directly individually and through weekly school meetings. Teachers who were interviewed in this study have been given pseudonyms (P1 to P21) to protect their identities.

> *"We receive new ideas on our learning, we gain practical experience in improving learning on material that is difficult to convey to students, and we receive solutions to weaknesses and difficulties in learning. These are some of the benefits that we receive from the teachers' working group and teachers' meeting, as well as supervision from the principal and peers."*

However, classroom supervision by principals and peers is hampered by time constraints, meetings with the head of the office and schedules that conflict with other school activities. Therefore, teachers' working group activities or subject teacher meetings are held in the afternoon (14:30-16:30 PM) after teaching and learning activities. Teachers discuss strategies, methods, learning approaches that are relevant to students, lesson plans, learning assessment plans, exploring the independent curriculum and other matters concerning teacher professional development.

Secondly, teachers' reinforcement and professional development occur through the JSIT forum program, which supports parents, students, and teachers once a semester. Additionally, the Quran parenting program, part of the Tarbiyah initiative, is conducted annually, alongside monthly *liqa' or ta'lim* sessions. Teacher feedback indicates strong enthusiasm for the Tarbiyah-developed programs, characterized by a family-oriented approach and a sense of ukhwah among educators. Participation in these activities is compulsory, facilitating the enhancement of teachers' knowledge and creativity in both education and religion, and this includes the memorization of Quranic verses to their respective murabbi.

Third, the central education office, through regional education offices, oversees teachers' strengthening and professional development, implementing various annual

programs. These include financial support, coaching, and in-house training (IHT) through weekly, monthly, and biannual workshops. Despite the program's frequency, many teachers express concerns as training often occurs after classes or during breaks, impacting family time. Activities such as weekends and weddings are frequently due to the packed schedule aligned with the school's academic calendar.

IIPS teachers are encouraged to integrate Islamic values into all learning activities, ensuring a holistic application that fulfils student needs through intracurricular and extracurricular programs. Teachers hold the crucial role of nurturing students' characters in alignment with Islamic values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and compassion. They are expected to serve as role models, embodying the principles they teach while fostering effective communication with parents to keep them informed about their children's progress. This involvement is integral to creating a supportive educational environment that enhances the learning experience for students.

Professional development is essential for these educators to refine their teaching methods, integrate Islamic teachings with academic curricula, and respond effectively to the evolving needs of their students. This commitment to continuous growth ensures that teachers have knowledge and positive values, thereby shaping well-rounded individuals who are academically adept and rooted in their moral principles.

## 2. *Teachers' Learning Methods*

The teacher's learning method uses the exemplary method, the wah al-hasanah method, and the reward and punishment method for students. The exemplary method, the uswah al-hasanah method, and the reward and punishment method for students are integrated through the full day system, successfully forming an integrated personality, including mind, heart and soul. The implementation of the characterised learning model can be seen in the syllabus, lesson plans, teaching modules, project modules to strengthen the Pancasila learner profile and indicators of character values.

The school implements the *tarbiyah programme* through parenting and *liqa'* to increase teaching enthusiasm and religious enthusiasm. Its function is upgreading the pedagogic competence and personality of an educator to be able to get to know their students better inside or outside of learning. The importance of recognizing each student's potential, which should be optimized through a gradual and continuous educational process, starting from small matters so that students can identify their identity and life purpose. Furthermore, he asserts that education is a collective responsibility shared among teachers, families, and society,

which must collaborate to create a positive learning environment. The Islamic education encompasses not just academic aspects but also social and spiritual dimensions, thus enabling the formation of high-quality individuals with character in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and Hadith.

### 3. *Key Factor Analysis*

The IIPS curriculum encompasses mandatory subjects based on the national education framework, Islamic education subjects, and various self-development courses. Teachers face difficulties in preparing lessons and determining appropriate learning strategies and methods, indicating a need for creative and innovative teaching skills.

Teacher collaboration programs and initiatives from schools and local education offices provide professional learning opportunities that support teachers in making learning engaging and relevant. Nonetheless, many teachers express concerns that the learning strategies employed are not sufficiently appealing to students.

Students, particularly millennials, possess personal mobile devices, and teachers recognize the necessity of effectively utilizing this technology. However, many teachers exhibit low levels of digital literacy, with approximately 72% being technologically illiterate, which poses a significant concern as students often perceive their teachers as outdated. Schools need to implement programs that enhance technological media knowledge and digital culture. To strengthen teacher-centered professional learning practices to address the challenges posed by the IIPS curriculum and establish systematic training programs to improve teachers' digital skills. Schools and education offices should provide ongoing support and collaborative opportunities to enable teachers to develop more effective and creative teaching methods in response to student needs.

IIPS Teacher reinforcement and professional development programs must be designed to address educators' knowledge needs regarding student learning effectively. While most teachers demonstrate and embody noble character traits, situational and contextual factors may occasionally hinder their effectiveness. Thus, it is essential for educators to critically assess the potential risks and negative impacts associated with the information they receive from colleagues.

This study underscores the shared responsibility of educators, family, and community in fostering student growth, emphasizing holistic education within home, school, and society. His work serves as a crucial reference for enhancing Islamic educational practices, illustrating that the essence of tarbiyah is a collaborative endeavor to nurture the fullness of a student's

potential. Another significant factor influencing teachers' reinforcement and professional development at integrated Islamic schools in Indonesia is the tradition of local wisdom. Recitation involving parents, adolescents, and children has become a prominent cultural tradition within the community, particularly in Aceh. These recitation sessions, which focus on foundational concepts such as *Tauhid, Akhlak*, and *Muamalah*, are typically conducted at night following the Maghrib prayer and continue until the *Isha* prayer. This framework provides valuable reinforcement and professional development opportunities for teachers available during these sessions. Various institutions, including the Dayah Education Office, the Islamic Sharia Office, the *Tastafi* Forum for Traditional Dayah alums, and local government, often facilitate such activities.

## C. Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a strong interest among Integrated Islamic Primary School (IIPS) teachers in continuous professional development and reinforcement programs. This enthusiasm aligns with various initiatives implemented within the IIPS Network framework, governmental programs, and external educational institutions. Such diverse programs serve as valuable opportunities for teachers and resonate with the fundamental principles of supporting and enhancing professional competencies within the education sector.

Despite the presence of challenges and obstacles in the implementation of these programs, they represent a significant investment in the future of Islamic education. Schools can ensure that their educational practices remain relevant and practical by developing curricula responsive to contemporary needs and student requirements. Participation in professional development programs profoundly impacts teachers' learning profiles, practices, and mindsets. The affirmation expressed by teachers who engage in these professional development initiatives underscores their value; such programs provide critical guidance that enhances lesson planning and overall teaching effectiveness. Consequently, investing in these programs benefits individual educators and contributes to the broader goal of improving educational outcomes in Islamic schools. Thus, reinforcing the need for ongoing professional development is essential for fostering a culture of excellence in teaching and learning within the Islamic education framework.

The institutional best practice programs implemented by education unit leaders require them to navigate institutional, epistemic and political complexities in order to conceptualise

the relationship between leadership skills and teacher professional development programs.[17] The local cultural approach is a key strategy in strengthening and developing teacher professionalism. Findings show that the existence of resources with an emphasis on racial and identity aspects occurs among different community groups, with an emphasis on cultural contextualisation. Teacher professional development therefore requires more reflective engagement from participants and efforts to build communities that support the recovery process.[18] Similarly, the strengthening and professional development of teachers can be enhanced through the assistance of the learning centre project. The learning centre project in IIPS acts as a mentor teacher to develop teachers' professional development through face-to-face web-based workshops and forums.[19]

The reinforcement and professional development of teachers can be seen through the involvement and support of fellow teachers who collaborate with each other. Participation in providing input through forums or individually provides insight into designing, implementing and evaluating learning.[20] Tuna strengthens professional teachers not only supported by student success, but also by management services and colleagues who always pay attention to the needs of teachers.[21] Teachers' learning groups initiated by teachers in education units bring about teachers' maturity in solving problems, rediscover their confidence, change the way they view learning, and have excellent collaboration structures.[22] The important leadership role of the principal needs to be re-orientated so that it can play a collabrative role that supports, energises and provides a facilitative academic atmosphere.[23] The author''s assumption is consistent with the tarbiyah theory asserted by Nahlawawi, that professional teacher

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[17] Hege Hermansen, "In Pursuit of Coherence: Aligning Program Development in Teacher Education with Institutional Practices," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 64, no. 6 (September 2020): 936–52, https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2019.1639815.

[18] Amanda R. Morales, "Within and beyond a Grow-Your-Own-Teacher Program: Documenting the Contextualized Preparation and Professional Development Experiences of Critically Conscious Latina Teachers," *Teaching Education* 29, no. 4 (October 2018): 357–69, https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2018.1510483.

[19] T Murwaningsih and M Fauziah, "The Influence of Professional Attitude, Welfare, Self-Sustaining Development, and Job Satisfaction on Teacher Performance," *Journal of Education and Learning* 17, no. 2 (2023): 271–84, https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v17i2.20785.

[20] Mieke Lunenberg et al., "Collaborative Teacher Educator Professional Development in Europe: Different Voices, One Goal," *Professional Development in Education* 43, no. 4 (August 2017): 556–72, https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2016.1206032.

[21] Mehmet H. Tuna, "The Professionalisation of Islamic Religious Education Teachers," *British Journal of Religious Education* 44, no. 2 (April 2022): 188–99, https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2021.1999905.

[22] Lorensius Lorensius, Nikolaus Anggal, and Stepanus Lugan, "Academic Supervision in the Improvement of Teachers' Professional Competencies: Effective Practices on the Emergence," *EduLine: Journal of Education and Learning Innovation* 2, no. 2 (June 2022): 99–107, https://doi.org/10.35877/454RI.eduline805; Robert Laurie et al., "Contributions of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to Quality Education: A Synthesis of Research," *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development* 10, no. 2 (2019): 226–42, https://doi.org/10.1177/0973408216661442.

[23] Alma Harris and Michelle Jones, "Leading Professional Learning: Putting Teachers at the Centre," *School Leadership & Management* 37, no. 4 (August 2017): 331–33, https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2017.1343705.

competencies are required to be able to bring students' fitrah in accordance with their interests and talents towards ultimate perfection.[24]

This study indicated that curriculum development was a critical factor influencing teachers' reinforcement and professional development. Curriculum implementation was relevant to teachers' biographies and profiles, as well as their sense of professionalism, which ultimately shaped the future of their students. However, this raised important questions about the adequacy of current training programs and the extent to which they genuinely align with the evolving needs of both teachers and students. Effective curriculum implementation required teachers to receive professional training tailored to their characteristics and the demands of the new curriculum; however, the reality was more complex. Many teachers were unprepared or unsupported in adapting to these new curricular expectations. This discrepancy suggested a potential gap between policy intentions and practical realities in the classroom.

The emphasis on teacher professionalism must focus on equipping educators with skills and fostering an environment that encourages reflective practice and ongoing dialogue among educators. Without a holistic approach, implementing a new curriculum risks becoming a superficial exercise rather than a meaningful transformation that genuinely enhances educational outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial to critically evaluate not only the curriculum itself but also the support systems and professional development opportunities provided, ensuring that the teachers are well-equipped to meet the challenges of contemporary education. A key element of curriculum change was the readiness of teachers to shift their mindsets and work habits, as these adjustments were vital for effectively implementing the curriculum in educational institutions. Consequently, teachers in integrated Islamic schools needed to modify the integrated Islamic school network curriculum and the national curriculum, specifically the independent curriculum.
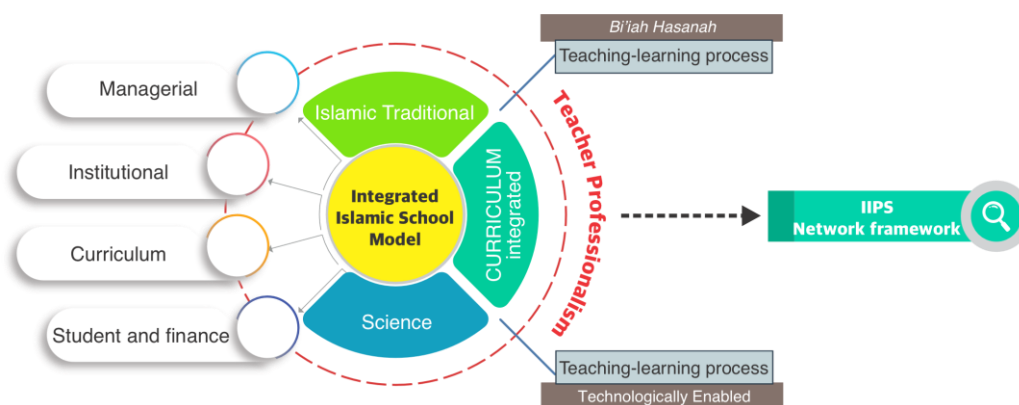


**Figure 1:** Integrated Framework for Effective Learning and Teacher Professionalism Development

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[24] Al-Nahlawi, *Usul Al-Tarbiyah Al-Islamiyah Wa Asalibuhu Fii Al-Bayt Wa Al-Madrasah Wa Al-Mujtama'* (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1979).

# TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REINFORCEMENT AT INTEGRATED ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

Figure 1 shows the effectiveness of learning in Integrated Islamic Primary Schools (IIPS) is determined by several factors. Firstly, IIPS offers a comprehensive educational experience by integrating Islamic traditions with modern educational methods. This model supports students in acquiring academic knowledge while internalizing Islamic values. Such an approach contributes to forming moral and ethical values in students, positively impacting their social interactions and problem-solving skills. Additionally, the curriculum is designed to include science and technology, enabling students to acquire knowledge that meets the demands of modern society.

Secondly, the effective learning environment in IIPS heavily relies on teacher professionalism and managerial support. Teachers apply modern pedagogical methods and a deep understanding of Islamic education to provide the best learning experiences for students. From a managerial perspective, systematic operations and financial support play critical roles, contributing to the enhancement of educational quality. The combination of these components allows IIPS to provide students with opportunities to develop both knowledge and character, ultimately laying the foundation for them to grow into future Islamic community leaders.

## D. Conclusion

Identifying the scope of teacher professionalism practices can be observed through teacher competencies, the relevance of teaching methods, collaborative support, and technology optimization. Teachers in these schools are required to have social, pedagogical, professional, and personality competencies. The research findings also indicate that professional development is not always relevant to the actual conditions of students. Therefore, teaching strategies that align with the needs and characteristics of students are necessary. Collaborative programs and supervisory activities are considered helpful in enhancing teacher professionalism. Through teacher forums, discussion and experience-sharing activities among teachers can enrich teaching practices. Despite several challenges, teachers in IIPS show enthusiasm for continuously improving their professional competencies to meet student's educational needs better. Active involvement in capacity-building programs and adaptation to existing developments are key to creating an effective learning environment. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that professional development programs for teachers in integrated Islamic schools in Indonesia be strengthened through more structured training that is based on actual needs in the field, as well as closer collaboration

between schools and the education department to improve relevant competencies and teaching methods for students.

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