

Date Received : January 2025
Date Revised : February 2025
Date Accepted : February 2025
Date Published : February 2025

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (PAI) CURRICULUM AT ARMANIYAH VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (SMK) BEKASI IN FACING MODERN WORK DEMANDS

Sarwo Edy¹

Universitas Pelita Bangsa, Cikarang, Indonesia (sarwoedy@pelitabangsa.ac.id)

Sumarta

IAI Padhaku Indramayu, Indonesia (martasumarta548@gmail.com)

Keywords:

PAI Curriculum,
Vocational
Education, Islamic
Values, Practical
Skills

ABSTRACTS

Background: In the context of vocational education increasingly influenced by the demands of the modern workforce, the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi faces challenges in aligning religious values with the practical skills required in the workplace. **Purpose:** This study aims to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by the PAI curriculum in preparing students for the demands of the modern workforce. **Method:** Using a descriptive qualitative approach and case study method, the research analyzes the gap between the existing curriculum content and the skills needed in the labor market. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. **Result:** The findings indicate that the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah focuses more on religious theory, neglecting the development of practical skills required by the workforce. Conventional teaching methods also pose a barrier to the development of students' competencies. **Conclusion:** However, the study identifies several opportunities, such as the integration of work ethics, the use of technology in teaching, and collaboration with the industry. To enhance the relevance of the PAI curriculum, it is recommended that the school develop a curriculum focused on skills and social values, while also leveraging technology and industry partnerships to provide students with direct work experience.

¹ Correspondence author

A. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum in Vocational High Schools (SMKs) plays an important role in shaping students' religious, social, and moral character, which in turn can support their readiness for the workforce. In this context, the PAI curriculum must be able to adapt Islamic values dynamically and practically to various aspects of life, including in the modern, rapidly evolving work environment. Vocational education aims to prepare graduates with specific skills, but religious-based character education is also expected to strengthen integrity, discipline, and responsibility as part of the competencies required in the workplace. However, many vocational schools in Indonesia, including SMK Armaniyah Bekasi, face challenges in adapting the PAI curriculum to meet contemporary workplace demands.

As part of vocational education, SMK Armaniyah Bekasi prepares students with the technical skills and professional knowledge needed in the workforce. However, the rapid changes in the job market, coupled with technological advancements, globalization, and the emergence of new professions, require adjustments in all aspects of education, including the PAI curriculum (Hasanah, 2022). In this situation, the challenges lie not only in delivering technically relevant material but also in ensuring that religious values can be applied in workplaces that are often multicultural and focused on fast, effective results.

One of the main challenges is how to integrate the PAI curriculum with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration—skills that are highly sought after in the modern workplace (Susanto, 2021). Additionally, there are challenges in teaching relevant ethical and moral values, especially in industry sectors that may face ethical dilemmas within diverse work environments. On the other hand, there are opportunities to develop a PAI curriculum that provides students with soft skills rooted in religious values, such as integrity, honesty, and resilience, which are considered essential across industries (Setiawan & Harahap, 2020).

This study aims to analyze the challenges and opportunities of the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi in preparing students to be more ready for the modern workforce. By focusing on the perspectives of teachers, students, and education practitioners, this research is expected to provide recommendations for developing a PAI curriculum that is relevant and responsive to the needs of today's job market.

This research seeks to address key questions concerning the role and effectiveness of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi in responding to the dynamics and challenges of the modern workforce. As part of the vocational education system, SMK Armaniyah not only focuses on developing students' technical skills but also on shaping character and moral values based on religion, which are believed to equip them for professional life. However, adapting the PAI curriculum to current workplace demands presents several major challenges, including modifying the content and teaching methods to align with 21st-century skills, which encompass critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. According to Susanto (2021), the digital and globalized era creates a job landscape that demands a more flexible and adaptive workforce, thus necessitating innovations in the curriculum to meet these needs (Susanto, 2021).

Aside from challenges, there are also opportunities that can be leveraged from the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah to better prepare students for the workforce, such as the development of soft skills rooted in religious values that are vital in a multicultural workplace, as well as professional integrity and ethics, which are highly valued across many industry sectors (Setiawan & Harahap, 2020). These opportunities can serve as a foundation for developing a more relevant and responsive PAI curriculum to the changes in the workforce. Optimizing the PAI curriculum can include integrating religious material with practical work skills, designing special modules that discuss professional ethics in Islam, and providing teacher training to better understand how to teach applicable and relevant religious values in the contemporary work environment.

Through this approach, the PAI curriculum is expected to play a greater role in shaping students' character and skills so that they are not only technically competent but also have a strong moral foundation, allowing them to contribute positively in today's competitive and multicultural work environment (Munir & Fikri, 2021).

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi. Data will be collected through interviews, observations, and analysis of documents related to the curriculum. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of how the PAI curriculum is implemented at the school, as well as how teachers and students respond to the challenges and opportunities.

This approach will also utilize a SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in adapting the PAI curriculum to make it relevant to the modern workforce (Nurdin & Rahmawati, 2022). Additionally, this method will provide insights into the curriculum aspects that need to be adjusted to ensure that Islamic values remain relevant and accepted in a work environment with various contemporary demands.

Research on the relevance of the PAI curriculum in vocational schools to the demands of the modern workforce has been conducted previously, especially in terms of how the PAI curriculum can enhance students' religious character and make religious values the moral foundation for careers (Munir & Fikri, 2021). Several studies have also highlighted the importance of Islamic values in shaping an ethical and resilient professional attitude in the workplace. However, research specifically examining the local context at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi, as well as how the PAI curriculum can be strategically implemented to address the continuously evolving contemporary demands in the workforce, remains limited.

The novelty of this research lies in its detailed focus on the challenges and opportunities faced by the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi, which is confronted with various transformations in the education and industry sectors in Indonesia. Furthermore, this study contributes to developing innovative approaches in adapting the PAI curriculum to be relevant to workforce developments, particularly in the digital and globalized era. It is hoped that the results of this study will not only be relevant to SMK Armaniyah Bekasi but also serve as a reference for other vocational schools with similar characteristics in designing a PAI curriculum that is more responsive to current workforce needs.

B. METHOD

The research methodology used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method, employing SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in adapting the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum to be relevant to the modern workforce (Nurdin & Rahmawati, 2022). This approach allows the researcher to deeply explore the challenges and opportunities within the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi in the context of the modern work environment. A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen to understand the perceptions, experiences, and viewpoints of various stakeholders, including teachers, students, and industry practitioners, regarding the effectiveness of the PAI curriculum in equipping students with skills and values relevant to the workforce (Creswell, 2014).

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, which are primary qualitative methods used to holistically understand the dynamics of the PAI curriculum in vocational schools (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In-depth interviews were conducted with PAI teachers, students, and industry representatives to gain insights into the challenges of implementing the curriculum and the opportunities for developing it to better meet contemporary job requirements. Classroom observations in PAI were also conducted to understand how the materials and teaching methods are adapted to the needs of modern workforce skills, while documentation analysis included reviewing the PAI curriculum and instructional materials at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi.

Data analysis utilized a thematic approach, which helps identify key themes related to the challenges and opportunities of the PAI curriculum. This thematic analysis method follows the model of Braun and Clarke (2006), in which the collected data are coded and grouped based on themes relevant to answering the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Data validity was enhanced through source and method triangulation, as well as peer discussions to ensure the reliability of findings. A detailed flowchart of the research process, showing the study on the challenges and opportunities of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi in response to modern workforce demands, is illustrated in the diagram below.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the challenges and opportunities in implementing the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi in the context of the modern workforce. To gain a deeper understanding, the researcher employed three primary data collection methods: in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with various stakeholders, such as PAI teachers, students, and industry representatives, to explore their understanding of the PAI curriculum, existing challenges, and opportunities for development to make the curriculum more relevant to the workforce. Meanwhile, observations were conducted in PAI classrooms to directly observe the implementation of instructional materials and teaching methods. Data collection through observations allowed the researcher to identify how well the skills being taught align with the needs of the workforce.

Documentation data was also collected to assess the existence and suitability of curriculum documents and teaching materials used at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi.

Aligning the Islamic Religious Education Curriculum with Workforce Needs: Challenges and Opportunities at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi

This study examines the implementation of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi through in-depth interviews, aiming to gather the views and experiences of teachers, students, and industry practitioners. This method enabled the researcher to gain deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities of aligning the PAI curriculum with the skills required by the modern workforce. The interviews also provided an opportunity to explore the difficulties educators face in aligning religious education content with professional competency demands in the workforce, where discrepancies between the two are often apparent (Sanjaya, 2019a).

From the interviews conducted, PAI teachers revealed that the existing curriculum emphasizes religious and spiritual values, while practical skills relevant to the workforce, such as professional communication, work ethics, and interpersonal skills, receive less attention. This aligns with findings from other studies that highlight the tendency of religious education curricula in Indonesia to prioritize theological aspects, while skills relevant to the workforce are often neglected (Karyadi, 2018a). Teachers also stated that limited time and resources often hinder the adoption of more innovative skill-based teaching approaches, which should align with the evolving needs of the times (Mansur, 2020a).

Similar views were expressed by students and industry practitioners. Students felt that the religious knowledge they gained was insufficient to help them develop the skills needed in the workforce, particularly in terms of professional interaction and understanding work ethics in a dynamic work environment. Industry practitioners wanted the PAI curriculum to also emphasize work ethics, interpersonal skills, and effective time management to help students become more competitive in the professional world (Sari, 2017). Therefore, this study emphasizes the need for a revision of the PAI curriculum to balance the instillation of religious values with the development of relevant skills, equipping students not only spiritually but also with the professional skills required in the modern workforce.

Observation of the Implementation of the PAI Curriculum and Modern Workforce Skills

This study used the observation method to collect authentic data on the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teaching at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi. Observations were made to understand how the PAI teaching materials and methods were applied, particularly in the context of integrating modern workforce skills into the curriculum. The observations showed that most classroom teaching focused on gaining a deep understanding of religious concepts such as tafsir, hadith, and Islamic history. This significant focus on theoretical aspects potentially creates a gap with the demands of the modern workforce, which requires practical skills that are ready to be applied in the field (Sanjaya, 2019b).

In general, teaching in the PAI classroom emphasizes spiritual religious values rather than practical skills needed in the workforce. According to Karyadi (2018b), religious education curricula in Indonesia often lean towards transcendental aspects,

such as the discussion of moral and religious teachings, without providing a balanced portion for vocational skills. In vocational education environments like SMKs, it is essential to strike a balance between religious education and the development of work skills, such as effective communication and teamwork. These skills are crucial for supporting students' productivity and success in professional environments (Mansur, 2020).

The teaching applied in the PAI classroom is still dominated by traditional methods such as lectures and group discussions, without fully utilizing technology or interactive approaches. As Prabowo and Saputra (2020) stated, the use of technology in education can enhance skills relevant to the workforce (Prabowo & Saputra, 2020). Technology enables skill-based teaching methods, such as project-based learning and simulations. However, this observation revealed that conventional methods, which are more theoretical, still dominate, resulting in students lacking the skills needed in the modern workforce. Although teachers have made efforts to link religious teachings with relevant moral values, an update in the PAI curriculum is necessary to equip students with the relevant work skills they need for the future (Sari, 2017).

Curriculum Analysis of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi and Modern Workplace Skills

Documentation methods are used in this research to analyze documents related to the curriculum and teaching materials applied in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi. The main objective of this analysis is to assess how well the existing PAI curriculum accommodates practical skills relevant to the workplace, as well as how the religious values taught can be applied in a professional context. Through an analysis of the syllabus, teaching materials, and references used in teaching, it was found that the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi places more emphasis on the learning of religious values and spirituality, with little attention given to the practical skills needed in the workplace.

In many educational curricula, particularly in Indonesia, religious education is often more focused on teaching religious theories and instilling spiritual morality, with little integration of relevant work skills. As explained by Sanjaya (2019), religious education curricula tend to focus more on religious and moral values, without balancing the development of practical skills required in the workforce (Sanjaya, 2019b). This was evidenced by the document analysis, which showed that while there are some references linking religious teachings with work ethics, there is no material that explicitly teaches the practical skills needed in the modern workplace, such as communication skills, time management, or professional ethics.

The Gap Between the PAI Curriculum and Workplace Needs

As part of vocational education, PAI at SMK Armaniyah is expected not only to instill religious values but also to prepare students to face the increasingly complex challenges of the workforce. However, the analysis reveals a significant gap between the goals of the PAI curriculum and the skill needs of the workplace. In an environment that increasingly demands interpersonal and professional skills, the religious values taught at school must be integrated with the practical skills required in the workplace. As stated by Karyadi (2018), religious education in schools often focuses more on

instilling spiritual and moral character, and is therefore insufficient in equipping students with the skills that can be directly applied in the workplace (Karyadi, 2018b).

Practical skills needed in the modern workforce, such as teamwork, effective communication skills, and efficient time management, have not received enough attention in the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah. These skills are critical in helping students adapt to the professional demands of the workforce. In this regard, religious education should not only serve to form students' moral character but also develop skills that will help them compete in an increasingly competitive job market (Mansur, 2020b).

The Importance of Integrating Work Skills into the PAI Curriculum

Integrating workplace skills into the PAI curriculum is crucial to preparing students to be not only spiritually ready but also professionally equipped to face the challenges of the workforce. For example, effective communication skills are essential in various job fields, particularly in interacting with colleagues, superiors, and clients. Additionally, professional ethics related to integrity, time management, and teamwork are also highly relevant in the workplace. Therefore, the PAI curriculum needs to be developed to include elements that support the development of these practical skills. As Prabowo and Saputra (2020) stated, vocational education must align the teaching materials with the skill requirements sought by the industry (Prabowo & Saputra, 2020).

One approach that can be applied in the PAI curriculum is to incorporate case studies or role-plays related to workplace situations. This will allow students to develop practical skills while still internalizing religious values relevant to their work. For instance, in teaching work ethics, students can be given simulations on how to communicate professionally with colleagues or clients, as well as how to manage time and complete tasks effectively. In this way, students not only understand religious principles but also acquire skills that will help them function well in a professional environment.

Thematic Approach in Data Analysis

This research employs a thematic approach to analyze the challenges and opportunities present in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi. This thematic approach allows the researcher to identify and group key themes in the data collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In this analysis, the researcher follows steps adopted from Braun and Clarke's model (2006), which consists of familiarizing with the data, initial coding, grouping codes into themes, and interpreting the identified themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The main themes identified are related to the challenges and opportunities in the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to identify patterns or themes in existing data. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that the first stage in thematic analysis is familiarization with the data, which involves deeply reading and understanding the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The next stage is initial coding, where the researcher marks parts of the data relevant to specific topics. The following stage is grouping these codes into themes, and finally, the researcher interprets the identified themes to provide a deeper understanding of the data.

In this study, data obtained through interviews with teachers, students, and industry practitioners, classroom observations, and curriculum document analysis were

coded based on relevant topics such as workplace skills, teaching methods, religious curriculum, and implementation challenges. The themes that emerged from this analysis provide a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities in implementing the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi.

Challenges in the Islamic Religious Education Curriculum

Based on thematic analysis, several key challenges related to the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi include the lack of relevance to the needs of the workforce, limited resources, and insufficiently innovative teaching methods.

1. Lack of Relevance to the Workforce

One of the main challenges identified is the lack of integration of workplace skills within the PAI curriculum. Both PAI teachers and students feel that the curriculum focuses more on teaching religious values, without adequately addressing the development of practical skills required in the workforce. This is consistent with Sutrisno's (2017) findings, which show that the PAI curriculum in vocational schools often fails to connect with the practical skills relevant to the professions that graduates will enter (Sutrisno, 2017a).

2. Limited Resources

Resource limitations are also a significant challenge in implementing the PAI curriculum. PAI teachers expressed difficulties in accessing relevant and up-to-date teaching materials, as well as time constraints for developing more interactive and skill-based teaching methods. These limitations also impact the introduction of practical skills that can help prepare students for the workforce.

3. Lack of Innovative Teaching Methods

Observations show that PAI teaching at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi tends to focus on religious theory and lacks teaching methods based on skills or practice. The teaching approach is more lecture-based and involves verbal explanations, which is not effective enough in developing students' skills to face the challenges of the workforce.

Opportunities in the PAI Curriculum

In addition to challenges, this study also identifies several opportunities that can be leveraged to develop the PAI curriculum to be more relevant to the workforce. Some of these opportunities include strengthening work ethics material, utilizing technology in teaching, and fostering closer collaboration with the industry.

1. Integrating Work Ethics into the Curriculum

A major opportunity identified is the strengthening of work ethics, leadership, and social skills in the PAI curriculum. Interviews with industry practitioners revealed that they strongly support teaching that integrates work ethics, communication, and social skills that are required in the professional world. This aligns with Haryanto's (2021) research, which shows that work ethics are crucial for career sustainability in the professional world (Haryanto, 2021).

2. Using Technology in Teaching

Another opportunity is the use of technology in PAI teaching. With the advancement of technology, digital media can be utilized to teach communication skills, time management, and other competencies relevant to the workforce. Some PAI teachers at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi have begun using technology in their teaching, but

its use is still limited. Therefore, further development in technology usage can open up opportunities to improve the quality of more applicable learning.

3. Collaboration with the Industry

Collaboration between schools and the industry is an important opportunity to develop a more practical PAI curriculum. By involving industry practitioners in the educational process, students can gain direct insights into industry needs. For example, inviting practitioners to conduct training or workshops on work ethics and social skills needed in the workforce. This is also in line with Wijayanti's (2020) opinion, which states that collaboration with industry is essential to prepare students with relevant skills for the workforce (Wijayanti, 2020).

Expected Outcomes in the Study of the Islamic Religious Education Curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi

This study aims to analyze the challenges and opportunities in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi, while also providing recommendations for curriculum development that is more aligned with the demands of the workforce. In the era of globalization, the relevance of the curriculum to the labor market is crucial in helping students develop the relevant and adaptive skills they need. Currently, the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah focuses mainly on religious theory, such as tafsir, hadith, fiqh, and aqeedah, which is less integrated with the practical skills required in the workforce. A comprehensive evaluation of this curriculum is necessary to identify aspects that need improvement so that the PAI curriculum can better support students in preparing for the evolving workforce.

One of the main challenges identified is the lack of alignment between the PAI curriculum and the demands of the workforce. Much of the material taught still emphasizes religious theory without facilitating the development of practical skills that can be applied in the workforce. This overly theoretical curriculum can hinder students' readiness to compete in the labor market, which demands various technical and social skills. In addition, the teaching methods used at SMK Armaniyah tend to be conventional, with lecture-based approaches and minimal active interaction. This limits students' opportunities to develop the interaction and collaboration skills that are important in the professional world.

This study also identifies opportunities to improve the relevance of the PAI curriculum to the workforce, one of which is through the integration of work ethics and social skills. The modern workforce demands not only technical skills but also communication, teamwork, leadership, and self-management abilities. Therefore, developing materials that include work ethics, interpersonal skills, and leadership can help students prepare for the challenges of the workforce. By including these materials in the curriculum, students are expected to be able to adapt more easily and meet the demands of the increasingly complex and ever-changing workforce (Anggraeni & Suryani, 2021a).

The use of technology in PAI teaching is also an important opportunity. Digital technology allows for more engaging and interactive PAI lessons through online platforms and digital media, providing flexible access to learning materials. Students can collaborate online and access broader information on the topics being studied, thereby significantly enhancing their understanding. This technology not only makes

learning more effective but also helps students develop digital skills that are crucial in today's technology-driven workforce (Anggraeni & Suryani, 2021a).

The main recommendation from this study is to update the PAI curriculum to focus more on practical skills that are relevant to the workforce, such as communication, leadership, and work ethics. Innovative teaching methods such as project-based learning, case studies, and role-playing should also be implemented to encourage students to apply religious knowledge in real-world situations in the workforce. Collaboration between schools and industries through internship and skill training programs can enrich students' experiences, ensuring that the curriculum presented is in line with the demands of the dynamic workforce. The integration of technology in teaching and collaboration with the industry is a crucial step to making the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah more relevant and responsive to the changes in professional needs.

Indicators of Achievement in Developing a PAI Curriculum Relevant to the Workforce

The development of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum in vocational high schools (SMK), such as SMK Armaniyah Bekasi, faces various challenges and opportunities in aligning education with the needs of the workforce. This research identifies several achievement indicators in the development of the PAI curriculum that are relevant to the workforce, based on the challenges, opportunities, and recommendations presented.

One of the main challenges in the implementation of the PAI curriculum is the lack of relevance between the existing curriculum and the demands of the workforce. Many PAI curricula at SMK Armaniyah tend to focus on the theoretical teachings of religion without integrating the practical skills that students need to enter the professional world. Haryanto (2017) revealed that many PAI curricula are still oriented solely toward religious knowledge, so students do not receive adequate preparation to develop relevant work skills, such as professional ethics and social skills, which are crucial in the workplace (Haryanto, 2021). This indicates that the PAI curriculum needs to be adjusted to facilitate the development of more applicable competencies.

Another challenge is the lack of close collaboration between schools and the industry. As highlighted by Sutrisno (2017), many educational curricula fail to connect theory with practice due to minimal interaction with the professional sector (Sutrisno, 2017b). Closer collaboration with the industry should be implemented to develop a curriculum that is more applicable and aligned with the real needs of the labor market. By doing so, the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah will be better able to guide students in developing skills that align with the workforce.

However, despite these challenges, there are several opportunities that can be utilized to improve the relevance of the PAI curriculum to the workforce. One of these is the integration of work ethics and social skills into the curriculum. Given the importance of interpersonal skills in the workplace, teaching work ethics, including effective communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities, will provide valuable preparation for students. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2020) suggests that education should not only provide theoretical knowledge but also social skills that can enhance students' competitiveness in the workforce (Ministry of

Education and Culture, 2020). By integrating these skills into the PAI curriculum, SMK Armaniyah will help students prepare for greater professional challenges.

Technology also presents a significant opportunity to enrich the PAI learning process. Hamid (2018) stated that the use of information technology can enhance the effectiveness of teaching, make the material more engaging, and allow students to be more active in learning (Hamid, 2018). The application of technology in the PAI curriculum will not only increase student engagement but also prepare them to adapt to the digital changes occurring in the workforce. By utilizing digital learning media, PAI teaching can be delivered in a more interactive and relevant manner, aligned with current developments.

Collaboration between schools and industry is also an important opportunity to align the curriculum with the needs of the workforce. Research by Anggraeni and Suryani (2021) revealed that collaboration with the industry is essential to ensure that the educational curriculum meets the expectations of the professional world (Anggraeni & Suryani, 2021b). Internship programs, job skill training, and seminars with industry practitioners could be strategic steps to align the curriculum with labor market needs. Students involved in internship programs will be better prepared to face the challenges of the workforce because they gain firsthand experience and can practice the skills learned at school.

Based on these findings, several practical recommendations can be implemented to improve the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi. First, the PAI curriculum should focus more on the development of practical skills, such as communication, leadership, and managerial skills, which are required in the workforce. The development of a more applicable curriculum will provide students with useful preparation when entering the workforce. Designing a curriculum based on skills and work ethics, alongside religious knowledge, is essential to ensure educational relevance with professional demands.

Next, the use of practice-based and participatory learning methods can enhance students' skills. Problem-based or case-study learning will better prepare students to face challenges in the workforce, as they can learn to apply the theory in real-life situations. Mulyasa (2016) emphasizes that learning methods based on real experiences can help students more easily master the skills needed in the field.

In addition, establishing collaborations with the industry for internship and skill-training programs is a highly important recommendation. Internship programs can provide students with direct experience of how to work in a professional environment. These collaborations can also help SMK Armaniyah design a curriculum that is more connected to industry needs, ensuring that students have applicable skills.

Finally, integrating technology into PAI teaching is an essential step that cannot be overlooked. By utilizing technology, teaching can become more engaging and effective. Digital platforms and technology-based learning media will make it easier for students to access materials and deepen their understanding of the topics they study. Technology will also help students develop skills needed in the increasingly digital world of work. By addressing these challenges, opportunities, and recommendations, it is hoped that the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi can be improved and made more relevant to the workforce, allowing students to develop the skills needed to succeed in the labor market.

D. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research indicates that the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi faces significant challenges in meeting the demands of the modern workforce. The primary challenge identified is the lack of relevance between the taught material and the practical skills needed by students in the workforce. The current PAI curriculum is more focused on religious theory, such as tafsir, hadith, fiqh, and aqidah, which, although important for spiritual understanding, is insufficient to prepare students to compete in the workforce, which increasingly demands technical, communication, and social skills.

Additionally, traditional teaching methods, such as lectures and verbal explanations, present a barrier to developing skills that can be directly applied in the workforce. This research highlights the importance of innovation in teaching methods, including skill-based and participatory teaching, to better prepare students for professional challenges in the evolving workforce.

However, this research also finds several opportunities that can be utilized to improve the relevance of the PAI curriculum to the modern workforce. Integrating material on work ethics, social skills, and leadership could be an important first step. The modern workforce requires not only technical skills but also interpersonal and soft skills necessary for communication and teamwork. Therefore, incorporating these elements into the PAI curriculum will give students an advantage when entering the workforce.

The use of technology in education also presents a significant opportunity to enhance teaching effectiveness. Technology enables students to access material more flexibly and collaborate with peers through digital platforms, which are increasingly relevant in the digital-driven workforce. Moreover, closer collaboration with industry, such as involving practitioners in teaching or providing internship opportunities, can give students direct insight into the skills needed in professional work.

Overall, to meet the demands of the modern workforce, the PAI curriculum at SMK Armaniyah Bekasi needs to undergo an update that strikes a balance between religious theory and practical skills. With the development of a more adaptive curriculum, innovative teaching methods, and the use of technology and industry collaboration, PAI can become more relevant and help students be better prepared to compete in the increasingly competitive workforce.

REFERENCES

- Anggraeni, D., & Suryani, L. (2021a). Kolaborasi antara pendidikan dan industri dalam pengembangan kurikulum pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Industri*, 8 (2), 115–130.
- Anggraeni, D., & Suryani, S. (2021b). *Kolaborasi Dunia Pendidikan dan Industri dalam Menyusun Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi*. Jakarta: PT Pendidikan Sejahtera.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), 77–101.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hamid, A. (2018). *Pemanfaatan teknologi dalam pendidikan*. Jakarta: PT Media Pustaka.
- Haryanto, T. (2021). Etika kerja dalam dunia profesional. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Etika*, 13 (2), 112–118.
- Hasanah, N. (2022). Pengembangan Kurikulum PAI yang Berorientasi pada Keterampilan Abad 21. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10 (1), 15–30.
- Karyadi, I. (2018a). *Kurikulum pendidikan agama dan keterampilan kerja: Menyongsong dunia profesional*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Edukasi.
- Karyadi, I. (2018b). *Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama di Indonesia dan Tantangan di Dunia Kerja*. Jakarta: Pustaka Pendidikan.
- Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (2020). *Integrasi etika kerja dalam pendidikan*. Direktorat Pendidikan Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan.
- Mansur, A. (2020a). *Kurikulum Agama dalam Perspektif Kebutuhan Dunia Kerja*. Surabaya: Pustaka Nasional.
- Mansur, A. (2020b). *Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah: Tantangan dan Harapan*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation (4th ed.)*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mulyasa, E. (2016). Kurikulum dan pembelajaran berbasis keterampilan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebijakan*, 19 (2), 45–60.
- Munir, M., & Fikri, A. (2021). Relevansi Pendidikan Agama Islam dengan Dunia Kerja di Era Modern: Sebuah Tinjauan Empiris. *Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan*, 9 (2), 205–220.
- Nurdin, H., & Rahmawati, A. (2022). Analisis SWOT dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah Kejuruan. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 14 (3), 140–155.
- Prabowo, B., & Saputra, A. (2020). *Pemanfaatan Teknologi dalam Pendidikan untuk Pengembangan Keterampilan*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Edukasi.
- Sanjaya, W. (2019a). *Pendidikan Agama dan Keterampilan Dunia Kerja*. Bandung: Alfabeta.

- Sanjaya, W. (2019b). *Pendidikan agama Islam: Teori dan praktik dalam konteks pendidikan vokasional*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Sari, A. (2017). Implementasi Etika Kerja dalam Pendidikan Agama. *Yogyakarta: Pustaka Edukasi*.
- Setiawan, T., & Harahap, N. (2020). Peran Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Mengembangkan Keterampilan Lembut untuk Dunia Kerja. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8 (4), 44-55.
- Susanto, N. (2021). *Pendidikan Agama Islam di Era Digital: Peluang dan Tantangan di SMK*. Jakarta: Pustaka Islam Terapan.
- Sutrisno, A. (2017a). Implementasi kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam di SMK. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 5 (3), 234-245.
- Sutrisno, A. (2017b). *Integrasi Keterampilan Dunia Kerja dalam Kurikulum PAI di SMK: Tantangan dan Solusi*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Edukasi.
- Wijayanti, A. (2020). Kolaborasi Antara Sekolah dan Industri dalam Pendidikan Vokasi. *Jurnal Pendidikan Vokasi*, 7 (1), 56-65.