



Strategies of Islamic education teachers in developing students' basic life skills at SD IT Al Hijrah 2

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze students' basic life skills, identify the aspects of basic life skills developed at school, and describe the strategies used by Islamic education teachers to improve students' basic life skills at SD IT Al Hijrah 2, a private Islamic integrated elementary school in Deli Serdang, North Sumatra, Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative field research approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques. The findings revealed that students' basic life skills developed in four aspects: personal skills, thinking skills, social skills, and vocational skills. These skills were developed through classroom learning, habituation programs, school culture, and extracurricular activities. The strategies implemented by Islamic education teachers included lectures, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Discovery Learning, Inquiry Learning, Project-Based Learning (PJBL), Cooperative Learning, discussions, role play, direct practice, modeling, and habituation. These strategies effectively supported the holistic development of students' life skills. Beyond describing classroom practice, this study contributes to the field of Islamic education by showing how Islamic education instruction can be deliberately designed to build students' basic life skills, offering a contextual model for integrating character formation, Islamic values, and 21st-century life competencies at the elementary level.

Keywords: basic life skills, elementary school, Islamic education, teaching strategy

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INTRODUCTION

Ideally, education should produce learners who excel not only academically but who also possess basic life skills, such as the ability to communicate, collaborate, think critically, act with discipline and responsibility, and solve everyday problems. Teachers play an important role in developing these life skills through appropriate instructional strategies. Teachers of Islamic education in particular hold a strategic role in instilling the moral, spiritual, and social values that shape students' character and life skills. This role is reinforced by the demands of the modern era, which require students to possess adaptive and contextual life skills. As the primary actors in this process, Islamic education teachers are expected to design instructional strategies that are not merely theoretical but also applicable and connected to students' real, everyday lives (Mulyasa, 2022). This phenomenon therefore merits closer study in order to identify effective strategies for improving students' basic life skills through Islamic education instruction.

At the global level, UNESCO has long argued that education systems tend to over-emphasize the cognitive, academic dimension of learning (learning to know) relative to the other three

pillars it identifies as equally essential as learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together so that life skills are still not fully integrated into school curricula in many countries (Delors, 1996; Mislaini, 2017). In Indonesia, data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology indicate that strengthening character and 21st-century competencies, including communication, collaboration, and independence, remains a major challenge in the implementation of learning at the elementary level (Puslapdik, 2025).

Nevertheless, reality indicated that the development of life skills through the learning process is not yet fully optimal. In practice, school learning still tends to be oriented toward academic achievement and content mastery, so that the development of life skills often does not receive adequate attention an imbalance also noted by Marwiyah (2012) and Mislaini (2017) in their discussions of life-skills education in Indonesia. As a result, some students still experience difficulty developing basic skills such as communicating well, cooperating with peers, acting independently, and taking responsibility for the tasks assigned to them. Several cases observed in elementary-school settings likewise show that some students remain insufficiently disciplined, lack confidence, and struggle to solve simple everyday problems. This condition indicates that the development of basic life skills still requires greater attention and more effective instructional strategies from educators.

Previous research on Islamic education teachers' strategies has been carried out extensively, but most of it has focused on building religious character, increasing learning motivation, and instilling religious values. Pasaribu's study examined Islamic education teachers' strategies for increasing students' compliance with Islamic religious values (Pasaribu et al., 2024). Sa'diyah's study focused on the internalization of life-skill-based educational values in Islamic education learning at the junior secondary level (Sa'diyah, 2018). Meanwhile, Neliwati's study focused more on Islamic education teachers' efforts to increase students' learning interest (Neliwati et al., 2023). Another study by Pebrianti examined teachers' strategies for cultivating a reading culture among students (Pebrianti & Ritonga, 2023). Building on these studies, research that specifically examines Islamic education teachers' strategies for improving elementary students' basic life skills particularly within integrated Islamic school setting remains relatively limited. This study therefore takes a different focus by specifically examining Islamic education teachers' strategies for developing students' basic life skills at SD IT Al Hijrah 2.

Teaching strategies and the role of the Islamic education teacher

In an educational context, strategy can be understood as the teacher's effort to carry out a lesson plan, using various instructional components to help students reach established learning objectives (Al-Baihaqi et al., 2024). Riyanto (2010) similarly describes instructional strategy as the teacher's approach to making the interaction between students and instructional components more effective, efficient, and optimal in achieving learning objectives.

This understanding of strategy as a deliberate, well-considered effort, resonates with a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), narrated by Muslim (n.d.),

“Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam will have its reward, and the reward of those who act upon it after him, without any of their reward being diminished; and whoever introduces a bad practice in Islam will bear its sin, and the sin of those who act upon it after him, without any of their sin being diminished.” (Muslim, no. 1017)

According to Sayyid Jamaluddin, this hadith praises whoever pioneers or exemplifies a righteous practice so that it is followed by others, since such a person receives ongoing reward for as long as the practice continues to be followed; Al-Turibisyti further notes that the reward belongs specifically to the originator of the good practice (Al-Qari, 2002). Applied to the present study, the hadith underscores that a teacher who pioneers an effective, well-designed

instructional strategy sets an example whose benefits continue through the students shaped by it which is why instructional strategy is treated as a central factor in the success of teaching and learning, encompassing how a teacher manages content, method, media, and classroom interaction. An Islamic education teacher's strategy, therefore, can be understood as a systematically organized set of plans and actions used in the learning process, drawing on various instructional components to achieve educational goals particularly the formation of character and the development of learners' abilities in accordance with Islamic values. Such a strategy is not limited to delivering subject matter; it also encompasses the cultivation of students' attitudes, skills, and behavior so that they become individuals of good character with sound life skills.

Instructional strategies relevant to this study

Several instructional strategies are directly relevant to this study, since they were subsequently found in use by Islamic education teachers at SD IT Al Hijrah 2. Expository strategy emphasizes verbal delivery of material from teacher to students so that they master the lesson content, while inquiry strategy emphasizes critical, analytical thinking so that students find answers to a problem for themselves an approach that is especially well-suited to elementary-age learners, who, according to Piaget, are generally in the concrete-operational stage: a stage marked by the ability to reason logically about concrete, observable objects and events, though abstract concepts remain difficult, so that direct experience, concrete examples, practice, demonstration, group work, and problem-solving tied to everyday life carry particular pedagogical importance (Piaget, 1976).

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) similarly places a real-world problem at the center of instruction and prompts students to think critically to find a solution, in line with Piaget's emphasis on direct experience in constructing knowledge (Piaget, 1976). Discovery Learning engages students in mental processes observing, processing, classifying, hypothesizing, explaining, and concluding through discussion and independent reading, so that they construct understanding for themselves. Active-learning approaches, for their part, optimize students' physical, mental, emotional, and intellectual potential in pursuit of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning goals (Zuhairini, 2004). Silberman (2007) operationalizes this through activities that combine hearing, seeing, discussing, and doing, so that students not only understand what they learn but master it.

Relationship between instructional strategy and basic life skills development

The development of basic life skills through learning is oriented not only toward mastery of subject matter but also toward the development of students' thinking, attitudes, and skills. This is consistent with Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives, which groups learning outcomes into three domains cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The cognitive domain concerns thinking ability and mastery of knowledge; the affective domain concerns the formation of attitudes and values; and the psychomotor domain concerns skill in performing an action (Bloom, 1956). Within the cognitive domain, Bloom further classifies thinking ability into six levels knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation a hierarchy showing that learning objectives extend beyond simply helping students remember information, toward enabling them to apply, analyze, and evaluate information in order to solve the problems they encounter (Bloom, 1956).

In Islamic education learning at the elementary level, the cognitive domain is visible when students understand the religious material taught by the teacher; the affective domain is visible in the development of religious attitudes, discipline, responsibility, honesty, and social concern; and the psychomotor domain is realized through skill in performing acts of worship, communicating well, cooperating with peers, and carrying out various religious activities at

school. These three domains are interrelated and form the basis for developing students' basic life skills.

Basic life skills

The term basic life skills is defined as the capacities a person needs to be willing and able to face life's problems in a reasonable way, without feeling overwhelmed, and then to proactively and creatively seek and find solutions so as to ultimately overcome them. Life-skills education is broader than mere job skills, let alone manual skills alone (Ifriqia et al., 2016). Life-skills education provides learners with a basic grounding and proper training in the values of everyday life so that they are able and skilled in living their lives sustaining their survival and future development because life skills are the abilities, capacities, and skills a person needs to live a contented and successful life and to solve life's problems without undue pressure (Marwiyah, 2012). Basic life skills have become something society, including learners, must possess and master in order to play an active role in, and continue to develop within, the world of work.

The indicators contained within these life skills are conceptually grouped into: (1) self-awareness, often also called personal skill; (2) rational thinking skills or academic skill; (3) social skill; and (4) vocational skill, often also called occupational skill, meaning skill tied to a particular field of work and thus specific or technical in nature (Ifriqia et al., 2016). The first three of these are known as General Life Skills (GLS), while the last is known as Specific Life Skills (SLS). UNESCO's recommendations on life-skills programs rest on four pillars of learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together (Mislaini, 2017).

Self-awareness is essentially the appreciation of oneself as a creature of God, a member of society, and a citizen recognizing and being grateful for one's strengths and weaknesses, and using that awareness as capital for becoming an individual who is of benefit to oneself and one's surroundings. Rational-thinking skill includes the ability to search for and find information (information-seeking skill), to process information and make decisions (information-processing and decision-making skill), and to solve problems creatively (creative problem-solving skill); together with self-awareness, these two skills constitute personal skill. Social skill, or interpersonal skill, includes communication skill with empathy, an understanding attitude, and the art of two-way communication need to be emphasized, because communication here does not simply mean delivering a message, but delivering it, and having it received, in a way that leaves a good impression and builds harmonious relationships.

The skill of cooperation is essential because, as social beings, people continually work together with others in daily life; cooperation is not merely 'working together' but is accompanied by mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual help (Marwiyah, 2012). Furthermore, Allah SWT states in the Quran Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), verse 2 (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019),

'And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. Fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.'

Ibnu Katsir explains that this verse commands believers to help one another in every form of goodness and piety every deed that brings benefit and obedience to Allah while forbidding cooperation in sin, transgression, and hostility that harms oneself or others; al-birr (righteousness) covers every good deed Allah has commanded, while at-taqwa is the disposition of guarding oneself against His prohibitions (Ibnu Katsir, 2004).

Vocational skill, finally, is organized into four areas: (a) individual competence, including communication skill and comprehensive thinking; (b) confidence skill, including self-management, ethics, and personal maturity; (c) economic-adjustment skill, including problem-

solving, learning, work ability, and career development; and (d) group and organizational skill, including interpersonal, organizational, negotiation, creativity, and leadership skills.

In this study, the four aspects used to analyze students' basic life skills personal skills, thinking skills, social skills, and vocational skills follow this categorization of Ifriqia et al. (2016), Marwiyah (2012), and Mislaini (2017), and align with UNESCO's four pillars of learning discussed above. The following sections present the research method, followed by the findings, which are organized around these four aspects and around the strategies Islamic education teachers used to develop them.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a field research using a qualitative approach. Through this approach, the researcher sought to understand, describe, explain, and probe more deeply into Islamic education teachers' strategies for improving students' basic life skills through the learning process and supporting school activities. As qualitative field research, the study is empirical-descriptive in nature, meaning the researcher had to map the phenomenon based on facts and experiences occurring in the field, focusing on the practices or strategies used by Islamic education teachers to shape students' basic life skills.

The study took place at SD IT Al Hijrah 2, an Islamic integrated private elementary school located on Jalan Perhubungan, Laut Dendang, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, postal code 20371. This setting was chosen because, as an Islamic integrated school, SD IT Al Hijrah 2 deliberately embeds daily habituation of Islamic values, character formation, and a range of skill-building programs within its curriculum, providing a relevant context for examining how Islamic education teachers' strategies contribute to students' basic life skills. The school occupies a strategic location, situated within a developing residential area, close to places of worship and a main road, so that access to the school is fairly easy. The site is approximately 20 km from the regency capital, Lubuk Pakam, and 10–13 km (about a 30-minute drive) from the provincial capital. According to school data, SD IT Al Hijrah 2 holds an 'A' accreditation; in the 2025/2026 academic year it had 577 students and 43 teachers plus 3 education staff, all holding at least a bachelor's degree and several holding a master's degree factors that also support the school's development.



Figure 1. Interview with the school principal (a) and the Islamic education teacher (b).

The data sources for this study consisted of primary and secondary sources. The researcher conducted direct interviews with informants comprising the school principal (See Figure 1), four Islamic Religious Education teachers, and several students, together with direct interaction and observation of classroom learning activities, from which the primary data were obtained. Secondary data sources in this study consisted of relevant documents, books, and journal articles.

The research was conducted over approximately three months, beginning with preliminary observation through to data collection. Data were collected using three techniques: participatory observation, interviews, and document analysis. Observation covered the physical setting, classroom learning activities, and school activities in general. Structured interviews were conducted with informants using a prepared research instrument guide and were then transcribed to capture a range of perspectives. Documentation was used to strengthen and support the research data. As the interviews were conducted in Indonesian, all interview excerpts presented in this article have been translated into English by the researcher for publication.

We used source triangulation and technique triangulation to ensure the validity of the research data. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing and cross-checking data obtained from various informants the school principal, Islamic education teachers, and students allowing the researcher to obtain more accurate and comprehensive data on Islamic education teachers' strategies for improving students' basic life skills. Technique triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation; interview results were verified against observation results and supported by relevant documents. Data analysis then proceeded through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This method was thus expected to yield valid, in-depth findings concerning Islamic education teachers' strategies for improving students' basic life skills (Miles & Huberman, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 1 summarizes how the findings map onto the study's three research questions, the four aspects of basic life skills, and the strategies Islamic education teachers used to develop them; each is then discussed in turn.

Table 1. Research map

Research Question	Basic Life Skill Aspect	Strategies/Activities	Key Evidence
How do students' basic life skills manifest?	Personal, Thinking, Social, Vocational skills	Habituation, classroom learning, school culture	Interviews with UN, UL, US; classroom and school observation
Which aspects of basic life skills are developed at school?	Personal skills (independence, responsibility, discipline, self-awareness, confidence)	BPI program, mutaba'ah, talent showcase, daily worship habituation	Principal and UN interviews; morning equipment checks
	Thinking skills (critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, creativity)	Group discussion, olympiad, math/science club, robotics	UN and UL interviews; classroom discussion observation
	Social skills (communication, cooperation, empathy, leadership)	Sapa Sahabat program, mentoring, group activities, Al-Hijrah Berbagi	UN interviews; peer-sharing observation
	Vocational skills (practical, entrepreneurial, productive skills)	Market Day, handicraft, robotics, worship practice	UN and UL interviews; Market Day observation
What strategies do Islamic education teachers use to develop these skills?	All four aspects (integrated)	Lecture, PBL, Discovery Learning, Inquiry Learning, PJBL, Cooperative Learning, discussion, role play, direct practice, modeling, extracurriculars	UN and US interviews; lesson observation across intracurricular and extracurricular settings

Students' basic life skills

Personal skills

Interview results show that the personal-skill capacities of students at SD IT Al Hijrah 2 have developed in the areas of independence, responsibility, discipline, self-awareness, and confidence.

- US : *So far, in terms of independence, the children are categorized as independent, and that is also seen from the fact that every task given can be completed.*
- UN : *We have started accustoming the children to be aware of their obligations, such as prayer and fasting; the same goes for independence completing assignments also requires students to be independent.*

These findings were reinforced by observation results showing that most students came to class preparing their textbooks and study materials independently, without teacher assistance. Students also performed the dhuha prayer, arrived on time, and complied with school rules such as wearing a complete uniform and keeping the classroom clean. Observation also revealed students' care for their environment and peers, such as helping a friend in difficulty or tidying up misplaced belongings.

In basic-life-skill theory, personal skill includes the ability to recognize oneself (self-awareness), manage oneself (self-management), and take responsibility for one's decisions (Marwiyah, 2012; Mislaini, 2017). The findings show that the school's habituation practices have helped students internalize these values in daily behavior. Viewed through Piaget's theory of cognitive development, this condition is consistent with the concrete-operational stage, in which children begin to understand rules, obligations, and the consequences of their actions through real experience (Piaget, 1976).

This finding is consistent with Sa'diyah (2018), who identifies personal skill as a core component of life-skill-based education. However, this study finds that personal-skill development is not carried out solely through Islamic education instruction, but also through school culture, the BPI program, mutaba'ah, worship habituation, and various sustained character-building activities (Setiawan & Khakim, 2026). Students' personal skills thus develop through the integration of instruction, habituation, and a school environment that supports character formation the aspect this study finds most directly attributable to the school's daily habituation programs.

Thinking skills

The research results show that students already possess fairly good thinking ability, particularly in problem-solving, critical thinking, decision-making, and creativity.

- UN : *We involve students a lot in solving their own problems," and "They can solve problems and find solutions through their own group.*
- UL : *If they get new information, they don't stop there they look for more themselves.*

Observation results likewise show that students sought answers to teachers' questions through classroom discussion. Some students actively asked questions, offered opinions, and negotiated task divisions when working in groups. These findings indicate that students are beginning to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, although still requiring teacher guidance, so that students do not merely receive information passively but attempt to deepen the knowledge they acquire.

According to the concept of thinking skill, thinking ability includes the skill of identifying problems, analyzing information, making decisions, and producing appropriate solutions

(Marwiyah, 2012). The findings show that students have begun developing this ability through discussion, group work, and problem-based learning. From Piaget's perspective, this ability shows that students are capable of logical reasoning about the concrete situations they encounter (Piaget, 1976). Analyzed through Bloom's taxonomy, students' ability has reached the levels of analyze, evaluate, and even create, since they not only understand information but also process and develop it into a solution or a piece of work (Bloom, 1956). This finding supports Sa'diyah (2018), who positions thinking skill as an important part of life-skills education. This study, however, finds that thinking-skill development is further reinforced through school programs such as robotics, olympiads, and academic clubs, giving students broader scope to develop higher-order thinking. In this study, then, thinking skill is understood not merely as an aid to academic achievement but as a problem-solving capacity students need in everyday life.

Social skills

Based on interview results, students' social skill is visible through their ability to communicate, cooperate, empathize, and show concern for their peers.

- UN : Communication is already fairly good.
When one student does something wrong, they remind one another.
If a friend doesn't bring food, they share with one another.*
- UL : Most students are able to cooperate in groups and participate actively in various activities with their peers.*

In basic-life-skill theory, social skill includes the ability to communicate effectively, cooperate, build positive relationships, and show empathy toward others (Mislaini, 2017). The findings show that students are not only able to interact well but also display strong social concern. This is consistent with Piaget's theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in children's cognitive development (Piaget, 1976); through interaction with peers, students learn to understand others' perspectives, build cooperation, and resolve conflict constructively.

This finding also supports Sa'diyah (2018), who identifies communication skill and collaboration skill as important parts of life-skills education. This study, however, finds that students' social skill is developed not only through classroom learning but also through school programs such as Sapa Sahabat, mentoring, sharing activities, and a culture of mutual respect built into everyday school life identifying social skill as the aspect most reinforced by the school's peer-interaction programs.

Vocational skills

The research results show that students already possess basic vocational skills developed through various practical and entrepreneurial activities.

- UN : In Market Day, the children are asked to sell their own goods they do the selling, they do the producing, and the profit is theirs too.*
- UL : Students learn how to buy and sell, and how to interact with the community." In addition to Market Day, students also take part in worship-practice activities, craft-making, and learning projects that require practical skill.*

In the concept of basic life skill, vocational skill is the ability to carry out work or practical activities that are useful in everyday life (Marwiyah, 2012; Mislaini, 2017). Based on observation, students were able to complete tasks given by the teacher according to instructions and within the time allotted. Their involvement in various practical activities at school also reflects the development of work skill and practical skill as part of basic vocational competence.

The findings show that the school has given students the opportunity to gain real experience in skills and entrepreneurship from an early age. Analyzed through Bloom's taxonomy, these activities sit at the apply and create levels, since students do not merely understand a concept but are able to apply it in the form of concrete action and product (Bloom, 1956). This finding is consistent with Sa'diyah (2018), who affirms that life-skills education must be realized through contextual, applied learning experiences. This study, however, finds that vocational-skill development is carried out more broadly through the integration of Market Day, handicrafts, worship practice, and various extracurricular activities, so that students gain direct experience supporting the formation of creativity, independence, and an entrepreneurial spirit.

Empowering students' basic life skills

Development of personal skills

The research results show that SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 consciously and systematically develops students' personal skill through various learning programs, habituation practices, and school culture. The personal skills developed include independence, responsibility, discipline, self-awareness, and confidence (Marwiyah, 2012; Mislaini, 2017). The principal explained that building responsibility begins with simple habits such as putting shoes in their proper place, taking care of personal belongings, and carrying out school tasks independently. UN further stated that the school accustoms students to performing prayer, voluntary fasting, personal hygiene, and taking responsibility for the study materials they bring each day.

UN : We have started accustoming the children to be aware of their obligations, such as prayer and fasting.

As for responsibility and discipline things like having complete equipment that is always checked every morning before the children begin their lessons.

Confidence, meanwhile, is developed through a talent-showcase program that gives students the opportunity to perform and demonstrate their abilities in front of their peers. These findings show that the development of personal skill at the school is oriented not only toward religious character formation but also toward building the ability to manage oneself as a life provision. In basic-life-skill theory, personal skill includes the ability to recognize oneself, control one's behavior, take responsibility, and build self-confidence. This development is consistent with Piaget's theory that children at the concrete-operational stage need real experience and repeated habituation to understand values and social rules (Piaget, 1976); the school's habituation practices thus serve as a concrete vehicle for students to practice these values in everyday life. This finding also supports Pasaribu et al. (2024), who state that Islamic education teachers play an important role in shaping learners' character through exemplary conduct and the habituation of Islamic values. This study, however, finds that personal-skill development is not carried out by Islamic education teachers alone, but is part of a school-wide culture involving the whole school community through the BPI program, mutaba'ah, the talent showcase, and various other character-building activities. Personal skill is thus developed comprehensively through the integration of instruction, habituation, and a conducive school environment.

Development of thinking skills

Based on interview results, thinking skill is one aspect of basic life skill that receives considerable attention in the educational process at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2. The school develops critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and decision-making through active learning, group discussion, projects, and various academic programs. UN explained that students are accustomed to finding solutions to the problems they face through discussion and group work.

UN : When they learn, it's not just knowledge given by the teacher to the students they can solve problems and find solutions through their own group.

UL, meanwhile, explained that students are encouraged to seek information independently rather than relying solely on the teacher's explanations. The school also provides programs such as olympiads, math club, science club, and robotics as vehicles for developing students' thinking ability.

From the perspective of basic life skill, thinking skill includes the ability to identify problems, analyze information, make decisions, and produce appropriate solutions (Marwiyah, 2012). The findings show that the school has provided a learning environment that encourages students to become active, independent learners. This is consistent with Piaget's theory, which holds that children's cognitive development occurs through active interaction with their environment, so that learners need opportunities to discover and construct their own knowledge (Piaget, 1976). Analyzed through Bloom's taxonomy, discussion, project work, olympiads, and robotics have driven students to reach higher-order thinking skills at the analyze, evaluate, and create levels (Bloom, 1956). This finding supports Pebrianti & Ritonga (2023), who show that the use of varied instructional strategies can increase student engagement in the learning process. This study finds, however, that thinking-skill development is aimed not only at improving academic achievement but also at building the problem-solving ability students need in everyday life.

Development of social skills

The research results show that SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 actively develops students' social skill through various activities that promote communication, cooperation, social concern, and leadership. UN explained that students are accustomed to using polite language, respecting their peers, and helping one another when a friend is in difficulty.

*UN : When one student does something wrong, they remind one another.
If a friend doesn't bring food, they share with one another.*

In addition, the school runs a Sapa Sahabat program that gives students the opportunity to interact, greet one another, and build positive social relationships before lessons begin. Various group activities, mentoring, competitions, and the Al-Hijrah Berbagi program likewise serve as vehicles for training students' communication and cooperation skills.

These findings show that social skill is developed through sustained interactive experience throughout school life. In the concept of basic life skill, social skill includes the ability to communicate, cooperate, empathize, and build harmonious relationships with others (Mislaini, 2017). This finding reinforces Piaget's theory that children's social and cognitive development occurs through interaction with their social environment (Piaget, 1976); through the school's various programs, students learn to understand others' feelings, respect differences, and build positive cooperation. This finding is also consistent with Sa'diyah (2018), who positions communication skill and collaboration skill as important parts of life-skills education. This study, however, finds that social-skill development takes place more broadly, since it occurs not only within the learning process but also as part of a school culture built through the morning-greeting program, mentoring, sharing activities, and various other collaborative activities.

Development of vocational skills

The research results show that SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 develops vocational skill through various activities oriented toward practical skill, creativity, and entrepreneurship. One of the most prominent programs is Market Day, in which students are directly involved in production, marketing, and sales.

UN : The children are asked to sell their own goods, they do the selling, they do the producing, and the profit is theirs too.

Beyond market day, the school also develops vocational skill through handicraft activities, robotics, craft-making, learning projects, and worship practices that require particular technical skills. The principal explained that these activities are designed to give students direct experience so that they can develop creativity and work skills from an early age.

In basic-life-skill theory, vocational skill concerns the ability to apply knowledge and practical skill to produce work or carry out a particular task (Mislaini, 2017). The findings show that the school equips students not only with academic knowledge but also with opportunities to develop applied, productive skills. Viewed through Bloom's taxonomy, activities such as Market Day, robotics, and craft projects sit at the apply and create levels, since students are required to apply their knowledge to produce a real product or piece of work (Bloom, 1956). This finding supports Sa'diyah (2018), who affirms that life-skills education must be realized through learning experiences that are contextual and relevant to learners' lives. This study, however, finds that vocational-skill development at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 is carried out in a more structured way, through the integration of entrepreneurship activities, skills practice, and extracurriculars, giving students direct experience in developing the creativity, productivity, and independence they will need in the future.

Islamic education teachers' strategies

Learning strategies

The research results show that Islamic education teachers at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 use a variety of instructional strategies, adapted to the characteristics of the content, students' needs, and the learning objectives. The strategies used include lecture, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Discovery Learning, Inquiry Learning, Project-Based Learning (PJBL), Cooperative Learning, group discussion, role play, and direct practice.

Observation results show that teachers use more than one instructional strategy within a single session, combining lecture, question-and-answer, group discussion, active learning, PBL, and inquiry according to students' characteristics and the learning objectives. In the core activity, students are given the opportunity to actively discuss, answer questions, and work together in groups, making the learning process more participatory.

UN : Lecture is still used, then PBL, deep learning, inquiry, and role play are also used. It's quite varied here, because it's also supported by the facilities we have, such as a projector and a smartboard that we use.

US : PBL, discovery all of it is packaged according to whatever the learning outcome is meant to be.

No single strategy is thus used dominantly; rather, strategy is adapted to the objective to be achieved in each unit of content. This finding shows that Islamic education teachers apply a flexible, student-centered instructional approach, so that students do not merely receive information but are actively engaged in the learning process.

Viewed through the theory of Islamic education instructional strategy, the use of these varied strategies shows that the teacher acts not only as a deliverer of content but also as a facilitator who helps learners construct their own knowledge (Nata, 2009; Rosidin et al., 2024). PBL, Inquiry Learning, and Discovery Learning foster the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skill, while Cooperative Learning and role play help develop students' social skill; PJBL and direct practice, meanwhile, contribute to the development of vocational skill through contextual learning experience. This finding is consistent with Pebrianti & Ritonga (2023), who

show that the use of varied instructional strategies can increase student engagement in the learning process. This study, however, offers a broader finding: the variation in strategies used by teachers is directed not only at improving learning outcomes but specifically at developing students' personal, thinking, social, and vocational skills as part of their basic life skills.

From the perspective of Bloom's taxonomy, these strategies enable students to progress from the remember and understand levels toward apply, analyze, evaluate, and ultimately create, through active and meaningful learning experiences (Bloom, 1956). The use of varied instructional strategies is thus one important factor supporting the development of students' basic life skills at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2.

Implementation of intracurricular strategy

Based on interview results, the implementation of intracurricular instructional strategy at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 is carried out systematically through introductory, core, and closing stages. In the introductory stage, the teacher prepares students' physical and psychological readiness for learning.

UN : Before teaching, we invite the children to pray, then we have them drink water so they can focus; after they've had water, we do an ice-breaker first, playing a game so they can relax and be ready to receive the lesson.

The teacher then conducts an apperception and provides a stimulus related to the material to be studied. In the core activity, students are engaged in discussion, problem-solving, worship practice, group work, projects, and various activities that call for active participation. US explained that, when teaching the material on prayer, the teacher does not simply instruct students to perform it, but first helps students understand its benefits and purpose so that an inner awareness to perform the act of worship emerges. In the closing stage, the teacher conducts reflection, evaluation, and reinforcement of the material studied.

This implementation shows that Islamic education teachers focus not only on delivering religious content but also on building learning experiences that develop various aspects of students' basic life skills. In Piaget's theory, elementary-age learners are at the concrete-operational stage, so learning that involves direct experience, practice, and social interaction is more readily understood than learning that is abstract in nature (Piaget, 1976).

The findings show that instruction at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 is consistent with these developmental characteristics, since students are given the opportunity to experience, practice, and reflect on the material they study. This finding also supports Neliwati et al. (2023), who affirm that learning effectiveness is strongly influenced by the use of engaging methods, varied media, and active learner involvement. This study finds, however, that the implementation of instructional strategy is oriented not only toward improving learning outcomes but also toward building personal, thinking, social, and vocational skills through integrated learning activities. Analyzed through Bloom's taxonomy, this learning process allows students to progress from understand toward apply, analyze, evaluate, and ultimately create through the various activities carried out during the learning process.

Extracurricular activities

The research results show that the development of students' basic life skills at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 is reinforced not only through intracurricular activities but also through a range of extracurricular activities. The principal explained that the school provides activities.

P : Karate, robotics, math club, English club, science club, handicraft, and swimming, as vehicles for developing students' potential.

Teachers also mentioned Scouts, mentoring, mujawwad, tahfiz, Market Day, and various competitions that engage students in learning experiences outside the classroom. This diversity shows that the school provides ample space for students to develop their abilities according to their own interests and talents. Through Scouts, students learn discipline, responsibility, and leadership; through robotics, math club, and science club, they are trained in critical and creative thinking; while Market Day and handicraft provide entrepreneurial experience and practical skills useful in everyday life (See Figure 2).



Figure 2. Extracurricular activities: futsal (a), scouting (b), market day (c), and mentoring (d).

From the perspective of basic life skill, extracurricular activities function as a means of reinforcing personal, thinking, social, and vocational skills that cannot always be developed optimally through classroom learning alone (Marwiyah, 2012; Mislaini, 2017). The findings show that each extracurricular activity makes a distinct contribution to the development of students' life skills: Scouts, karate, and swimming contribute to personal skill discipline, independence, and courage; robotics, math club, and science club support thinking skill through problem-solving and creativity; mentoring and various collaborative activities strengthen social skill in the form of communication, cooperation, and leadership; while Market Day and handicraft serve as vehicles for developing vocational skill through production, marketing, and creative work.

This finding is consistent with Pasaribu et al. (2024), who affirm that the school environment plays an important role in shaping learners' character and behavior. This study finds, however, that extracurricular activity does not merely complement classroom instruction but forms an integral part of the school's strategy for developing students' basic life skills as a whole. Extracurricular activities at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 can thus be understood as an educational vehicle that brings together knowledge, experience, and skill within a single learning process oriented toward learners' real lives.

Taken together, the dialectic between field data, theory, and prior research indicates that Islamic education teachers' strategies at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 are varied, contextual, and integrative. These strategies are carried out through lecture, exemplary conduct, habituation, discussion, inquiry, problem-based learning, role play, direct practice, and extracurricular activity, together supporting the development of all four aspects of students' basic life skills. This development proceeds holistically through the integration of Islamic education instruction, Islamic school culture, habituation activities, and sustained contextual learning experience. This integration

develops not only students' personal, thinking, social, and vocational skills but also their cognitive ability, moving from understand toward apply, analyze, evaluate, and create, in keeping with the characteristics of the concrete-operational stage of development. Islamic education instruction at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 thus functions not merely as a vehicle for transmitting religious knowledge, but as a transformative instrument that integrates Islamic values, life-skills development, and character formation within a single, unified educational process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings concerning Islamic education teachers' strategies for developing students' basic life skills at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2, it can be concluded that students' basic life skills have, in general, developed well across four main aspects: personal skill, thinking skill, social skill, and vocational skill. In the personal-skill aspect, students show independence, responsibility, discipline, self-awareness, and confidence in carrying out tasks and fulfilling their obligations as learners. In the thinking-skill aspect, students are able to solve simple problems, think critically, seek information independently, and show creativity across various learning activities. In the social-skill aspect, students are able to communicate well, cooperate, show empathy, and care for their peers and surroundings. In the vocational-skill aspect, students have developed basic practical skills, evident in their involvement in Market Day, worship practice, creative production, and various project-based activities that support creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit.

The aspects of basic life skill developed at SD IT Al-Hijrah 2 comprise personal skills, such as independence, responsibility, discipline, self-awareness, and confidence; thinking skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and decision-making; social skills, such as communication, cooperation, social concern, empathy, and leadership; and vocational skill, including practical skill, creativity, and entrepreneurship. These four aspects are developed in an integrated way through instruction, habituation, school culture, the Bina Pribadi Islam (BPI) program, religious activities, social activities, and the school's various self-development and extracurricular programs.

Islamic education teachers develop students' basic life skills through the use of a range of student-centered instructional strategies, including lecture, Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Discovery Learning, Inquiry Learning, Project-Based Learning (PJBL), Cooperative Learning, discussion, role play, and direct practice. Instruction is carried out systematically through introductory, core, and closing activities that actively engage students in the learning process. Basic-life-skill development is further reinforced through various extracurricular activities such as scouting, karate, swimming, robotics, math club, science club, English club, handicraft, mentoring, tahfiz, and market day. Through the integration of intracurricular instruction, character habituation, and extracurricular activity, Islamic education teachers play an important role in shaping and developing students' personal, thinking, social, and vocational skills as provisions for their everyday lives and their future.

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Author contribution

All authors contribute in the research and/or writing the paper, and approved the final manuscript.

<i>Nur Uswatun</i>	Conceptualizing the research idea, leading the investigation, setting up the
<i>Hasanah</i>	methodology, collecting data, analyzing data, and writing the original draft.

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We do not use any generative AI tools to write any part of this paper.

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