



## Strategies for Enhancing Sharia Financial Literacy in Early Childhood Education

Poppy Indah Lestari\*, Rahmayati

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara , Indonesia

Email : [indahpoppy8@gmail.com](mailto:indahpoppy8@gmail.com)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61987/jemr.v5i3.2181>

### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords:

Islamic Financial  
Literacy; Sharia  
Financial  
Management; Early  
Childhood Education

#### \*Corresponding Author

This study aims to analyze strategies for improving Islamic financial literacy in early childhood education institutions. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through non-participatory observation, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders (principal, treasurer, and teachers), and document analysis. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, involving data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that effective strategies include integrating Islamic financial values into children's learning activities, implementing Sharia-compliant institutional financial management, involving teachers and parents, and promoting saving and sharing practices. These strategies enhance understanding of Islamic financial literacy and improve transparency and accountability in financial management. The study concludes that Islamic financial literacy can be developed from an early age through habituation, role modeling, and Sharia-based institutional practices, although further capacity building for human resources and continuous program strengthening are needed.

#### Article History:

Received: January 2025; Revised: February 2025; Accepted: March 2026

#### Please cite this article in APA style as:

Lestari, P. I., & Rahmayati, R. (2026). Strategies for Enhancing Sharia Financial Literacy in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Educational Management Research*, 5(3), 2871-2879.

## INTRODUCTION

Financial literacy from an early age is important in the modern era (Akbaş & Seedsman, 2024; Koskelainen et al., 2023). Children need to understand the value of money, saving, and making sound financial decisions. In Muslim communities, Sharia principles need to be integrated into financial literacy. Introducing these values can foster religious awareness and financial competence. Regarding Sharia financial literacy, religiosity on students' interest in saving at Sharia banks. The study indicates that an understanding of Sharia finance influences the decision to choose Sharia financial institutions through literacy in primary education. This aligns with the words of Allah SWT in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 275, which emphasizes the importance of Islamic financial principles free from usury, a key concept in Islamic financial literacy. "Allah has permitted trade and forbidden usury." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 275).

Educational institutions are turning to Islamic finance to improve the governance, efficiency, and transparency of their funds (Pahlawan, 2025; Supriatna, 2025). Thus, the implementation of Islamic finance is not merely a financial choice but a moral and strategic foundation for ensuring the operational sustainability and credibility of Islamic educational institutions (Kholiq & Wahyunik, 2025). Through the implementation of Islamic finance, institutions can enhance funding efficiency, minimize financial risks, and optimally allocate resources to support operational sustainability and improvements in educational (Istikomah & Minarti, 2025; Raimi et al., 2024). This is further supported by several studies reinforcing the research conducted. Therefore, for Islamic kindergartens, particularly in regions such as Malaysia, Islamic finance strategies serve as a strategic step not only in response to operational challenges but also as an effort to strengthen the institution's legitimacy, trust, and sustainability (Al-Mursal et al., 2025; Andespa et al., 2024)

The implementation of Islamic finance in Islamic education promotes fairness, transparency, and responsible financial management. The governance of Islamic educational institutions must apply Sharia principles in fund management, transparency, and program development that directly impact the quality of learning (Daulay, 2022; Norman et al., 2025). Sharia-compliant financial management is essential for the sustainability and stability of Islamic educational institutions. Financial management in Islamic educational institutions, particularly preschools, still faces challenges due to suboptimal financial systems. Major obstacles include scarcity of resources and a lack of transparency. Institutions need to adopt efficient financial management aligned with Islamic values. Sharia-based financial education from an early age serves as the foundational basis for fostering economic behavior compliant with Sharia, as children learn through habit formation and emulation (Fitria, 2025; Siregar, 2021). Efforts to implement a Sharia-based financial system are becoming increasingly relevant because they offer a framework for transparent, accountable, and sustainable fund management that emphasizes the aspects of justice, trustworthiness, and social responsibility in the management of educational institutions (Amelia & Karim, 2025; Darifah & Erihadiana, 2023)

The growth of Islamic preschool institutions in Malaysia, such as Tadika Aulad Ceria in Kedah, has led to an increase in student enrollment and services. However, these institutions face financial management challenges, such as budget planning and unstable cash flow. Competition among institutions is becoming increasingly fierce, necessitating better financial strategies. Research such as the Analysis of Financial Management in Early Childhood Education at Tadika Anakku Sholeh Malaysia states that financial management at the early childhood education level plays a crucial role in ensuring school operations

remain efficient and sustainable. The implementation of a Sharia financial system by educational institutions such as Tadika Aulad Ceria Kedah plays a vital role in providing a framework for fair, transparent, and Islamically compliant fund management within institutions like Tadika Aulad Ceria (Khafidhoh et al., 2024). The principles of justice, accountability, and transparency in finance are essential for fund management and education. Sharia-compliant saving fosters discipline and responsibility. Early childhood education not only enhances intellectual development but also shapes life attitudes in accordance with Sharia (Nasution, 2023; Sholeh et al., 2025). Through the implementation of Sharia finance, institutions can improve funding efficiency, minimize financial risks, and optimally allocate resources to support operational sustainability and enhance educational quality (Istikomah & Minarti, 2025; Riinawati, 2022)

Research by Tri Novita Syahfitri & Alfi Amalia (2025) describes the role of Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard, Malaysia, in Islamic financial education for children. The focus is on identifying effective strategies to enhance Islamic financial inclusion. The method used is qualitative descriptive research involving interviews, observations, and documentation. Fun educational programs have proven to be effective. Waqf and zakat can support education. Waqf can fund infrastructure, scholarships, and research, while zakat can help provide education for underprivileged families (Rohmatillah, 2023; Sadiq et al., 2025). Collaboration and institutional strengthening are crucial for this success. In-depth analysis is needed to understand Islamic financial strategies at Tadika Aulad Ceria Kedah. This research is important to fill a gap in the literature and provide a better understanding.

In addition to academic considerations and previous empirical findings, the researcher's interest in examining Islamic financial literacy at Tadika Aulad Ceria Kedah stemmed from the researcher's firsthand experience during initial field observations. The researcher found that although Islamic-based early childhood education institutions have instilled religious values in the learning process, the implementation of Islamic financial literacy both in the institution's financial management and in fostering habits among students has not yet been fully structured or systematically integrated. This situation indicates a gap between the urgency of Islamic financial literacy as a foundation for building Islamic economic character from an early age and actual practices within educational institutions. Based on this, the researcher is interested in conducting a more in-depth examination of the strategies for enhancing Islamic financial literacy implemented at Tadika Aulad Ceria in Kedah, Malaysia, to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the practices, challenges, and opportunities for developing Islamic financial literacy in early childhood education institutions.

Based on the background described above, it can be concluded that Islamic financial literacy plays a crucial role in shaping Islamic economic values from an early age; however, its implementation in early childhood education institutions still faces various limitations. This situation highlights the need for a more in-depth examination of strategies for implementing contextual Islamic financial literacy that align with the characteristics of early childhood. Therefore, this study aims to analyze strategies for enhancing Islamic financial literacy at Tadika Aulad Ceria in Kedah, Malaysia. This study contributes to expanding the body of research on Islamic financial literacy in the context of early childhood education, which remains relatively limited, and presents an empirical overview of habit-based strategies for implementing Islamic financial literacy in Islamic educational institutions. Consequently, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a practical reference for educational administrators and provide implications for the development of policies regarding Islamic financial literacy from an early age.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative research design, chosen for its ability to provide a deep understanding of the strategies implemented for improving Islamic finance at Tadika Aulad Ceria (Bhangu et al., 2023; Pregoner, 2024). A qualitative approach is ideal for exploring the meanings, interpretations, and experiences of the institution's administrators in managing finances based on Islamic principles. The research is grounded in a phenomenological approach, which focuses on the subjective experiences and daily practices of Islamic finance managers at the institution. Phenomenology is appropriate because financial strategies at Tadika are not only administrative practices but also reflect Islamic values, ethics, and adherence to Sharia principles (Moleong, 2021). A case study design is employed to explore the phenomenon in depth within the specific context of Tadika Aulad Ceria, a single institution that serves as the unit of analysis. According to (Yin, 2018) case studies are effective for exploring phenomena intensively within a particular setting.

Data collection techniques include non-participatory observation, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders (such as the principal, treasurer, and teachers), and document analysis. These methods provide comprehensive insights into the financial management strategies and practices at the institution. For data analysis, the study follows the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data condensation (reducing data to focus on key themes), data display (organizing data for easy interpretation), and data verification (cross-checking findings to ensure accuracy and reliability). This systematic approach ensures that the data collected are analyzed rigorously and contextually to draw meaningful conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on direct observations, in-depth interviews with the head of the kindergarten, the treasurer, and the teachers, as well as document analysis, this study shows that Tadika Aulad Ceria Kedah has gradually and contextually implemented strategies to improve Islamic financial literacy, in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood education institutions.

First, regarding the institution's financial management, Tadika Aulad Ceria applies the fundamental principles of Islamic finance, particularly trustworthiness, transparency, and fairness. The management of educational funds, particularly those derived from student contributions, is conducted through simple yet organized financial record-keeping. Financial reports are submitted periodically to parents as a form of accountability. This practice demonstrates the institution's commitment to avoiding usury and ensuring that funds are used solely for educational purposes.

Second, when it comes to teaching Islamic financial literacy to children, Tadika Aulad Ceria adopts a habit-forming approach through daily activities. Children are taught concepts such as saving, sharing, and using money wisely through play and simple simulations. Values such as living simply, avoiding extravagance, and giving charity are taught as part of Islamic teachings. This approach is considered effective because it aligns with the cognitive and emotional developmental stages of young children, who are more responsive to direct experiences.

Third, the role of teachers is a crucial element in implementing Islamic financial literacy. Teachers not only deliver instructional material but also serve as role models in Islamic financial attitudes and behaviors. Values such as honesty, responsibility, and simplicity are evident in daily interactions in the classroom. However, this study also found that most teachers have not received specialized training on Islamic financial literacy, so their understanding and application remain limited and context-dependent.

Fourth, parental participation serves as a crucial supporting factor in strengthening Islamic financial literacy. Communication between the kindergarten and parents helps align Islamic financial practices both at school and at home. Parents recognize that the habits of saving and sharing taught at school have a positive impact on children's behavior within the family environment. However, this study also identified various challenges, including a shortage of human resources with in-depth expertise in Islamic finance, the absence of a formal curriculum for Islamic financial literacy at the early childhood level, and a lack of appropriate learning materials.

Research findings indicate that the approach to improving Islamic financial literacy at Tadika Aulad Ceria Kedah has been implemented in a practical manner grounded in Islamic values. The application of the principles of

responsibility and transparency in the institution's financial management aligns with the concept of financial management in Islamic education, which prioritizes accountability and public trust. This reinforces the view that Islamic finance functions not only as a technical system but also as a moral instrument in the governance of educational institutions (Daulay, 2022)

The habituation approach used in Sharia financial literacy education for young children aligns with child development theory, which emphasizes the importance of concrete experiences and modeling (Nasution, 2023; Siregar, 2021). This strategy helps build Islamic economic character from a young age, where children not only learn about money but also recognize the moral values associated with it. In this way, understanding of Islamic finance is not presented as a difficult concept but is integrated into children's daily lives.

The role of teachers as key agents of Islamic financial literacy underscores the importance of educators' capabilities for the success of literacy programs (Makhrus et al., 2022). The shortcomings in training programs identified in this study indicate a need to continuously strengthen teachers' competencies so that the implementation of Islamic financial literacy can be carried out in a more systematic and in-depth manner. Furthermore, parental participation has been shown to reinforce the Islamic financial literacy environment, as habits cultivated at school receive support and reinforcement from the family.

Overall, the findings and discussion of this study, according to (Prabowo & Fitri, 2025), indicate that Islamic financial literacy can be effectively developed in early childhood education institutions through a simple, contextual, and sustainable approach. However, to enhance the resilience and quality of implementation, support is needed through curriculum development, human resource capacity building, and strengthened collaboration with universities and Islamic financial institutions.

## CONCLUSION

The study highlights that Islamic financial literacy at Tadika Aulad Ceria Kedah can be effectively nurtured through a combination of Sharia-based institutional financial management, integration of financial values into children's learning activities, and active engagement of teachers and parents. The findings demonstrate that early exposure to principles of fairness, transparency, and Islamic ethical conduct through habit formation and role modeling can cultivate foundational financial understanding in young children. The research also underscores the importance of accountable and transparent financial practices, which not only strengthen parental trust but also support the operational

sustainability of early childhood education institutions. A key lesson learned is that Islamic financial literacy is not only about knowledge acquisition but also about shaping values and behaviors in a holistic, contextually relevant manner from an early age.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on implementing Islamic financial literacy in early childhood education, bridging a gap between theoretical principles and practical application. At the same time, it identifies limitations, such as insufficient teacher training and the absence of a structured formal curriculum, which constrain the full potential of the program. Future research should focus on developing systematic, age-appropriate curricula, enhancing teacher and parental capacity through continuous professional development, and exploring partnerships with Islamic financial institutions and universities. Such initiatives would enable a more sustainable, evidence-based approach and offer deeper insights into the effectiveness and long-term impact of Islamic financial literacy programs in early childhood settings.

## REFERENCES

- Akbaş, M. Ç., & Seedsman, T. (2024). Financial Literacy as Part of Empowerment Education for Later Life: A Spectrum of Perspectives, Challenges and Implications for Individuals, Educators and Policymakers in the Modern Digital Economy. *Economics*, 18(1), 20220097. <https://doi.org/10.1515/econ-2022-0097>
- Al-Mursal, N. M., Karim, H. A., & Azhari, H. (2025). Effective Strategies in the Financial Management of Islamic Educational Institutions: Identifying Sources and Optimizing Management. *Jurnal Bina Ilmu Cendekia*, 6(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.46838/jbic.v6i1.740>
- Amelia, R., & Karim, H. A. (2025). The Importance of Education Financing Management in Islamic Institution. *FiTUA: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 6(1), 48-59. <https://doi.org/10.47625/fitua.v6i1.1013>
- Andespa, R., Yeni, Y. H., Fernando, Y., & Sari, D. K. (2024). Sustainable Development of Islamic Banks by Creating Islamic Branding: Challenges, Importance, and Strategies of Islamic Branding. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & Planning*, 19(2). <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.190221>
- Bhangu, S., Provost, F., & Caduff, C. (2023). Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods-Part I. *Perspectives in Clinical Research*, 14(1), 39-42. [https://doi.org/10.4103/picr.picr\\_253\\_22](https://doi.org/10.4103/picr.picr_253_22)

- Darifah, U. H., & Erihadiana, M. (2023). Educational Financing Management at Islamic Education Institutions. *BESTARI: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Islam*, 20(1), 55. <https://doi.org/10.36667/bestari.v20i1.666>
- Daulay, A. (2022). *Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Berbasis Syariah*. FAI UMSU.
- Fitria, T. N. (2025). Game-Based Learning in Teaching Islamic Banking: A Role-Play Approach to Enhance Students' Engagement and Understanding Among Sharia Economics Students. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam*, 11(06).
- Istikomah, Y., & Minarti, S. (2025). Pengaruh Manajemen Keuangan terhadap Kualitas Pendidikan di Lembaga Pendidikan Islam: Studi Kepustakaan. *Philosophiamundi*, 3(3), 464-472.
- Khafidhoh, K., Kencana, A. K., & Alawilhuda, M. (2024). Manajemen Pembiayaan Pendidikan Islam. *Karakter: Jurnal Riset Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*, 1(4), 183-193. <https://doi.org/10.61132/karakter.v1i4.204>
- Kholiq, A., & Wahyunik, S. (2025). Penguatan Akuntabilitas dalam Manajemen Pendidikan Islam: Studi tentang Transparansi dan Profesionalisme. *JIEM: Journal of Islamic Education and Management*, 5(2), 10-23.
- Koskelainen, T., Kalmi, P., Scornavacca, E., & Vartiainen, T. (2023). Financial Literacy in the Digital Age-A Research Agenda. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 57(1), 507-528. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joca.12510>
- Makhrus, M., Mukarromah, S., & Makhful, M. (2022). Pendampingan Pengelolaan Keuangan Sekolah Melalui Peningkatan Pemahaman Literasi Keuangan Syariah. *Proceedings Series on Social Sciences & Humanities*, 5, 53-59. <https://doi.org/10.30595/pssh.v5i.426>
- Moleong, L. J. (2021). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nasution, S. (2023). *Pembiasaan Keuangan Syariah dan Pembentukan Karakter Anak*. FAI UMSU.
- Norman, E., Marliani, L., Paramansyah, A., & Aizat, F. (2025). Implementing Sharia-Based Total Quality Management in Islamic Educational Institutions Impact on Organizational Performance. *Eduprof: Islamic Education Journal*, 6(2), 116-134. <https://doi.org/10.47453/eduprof.v6i2.299>
- Pahlawan, R. (2025). Innovative and Sustainable Financial Management in Tahfiz Schools: Strategies for Independence, Efficiency, and Transparency. *Journal of Posthumanism*, 5(5), 1885-1893. <https://doi.org/10.63332/joph.v5i5.1573>
- Prabowo, R. D., & Fitri, A. O. (2025). Strategi Bank Syariah dalam Meningkatkan Literasi Keuangan Syariah di Masyarakat. *Jurnal Intelek Insan Cendikia*, 2(5), 8673-8682.
- Pregoner, J. D. (2024). Research Approaches in Education: A Comparison of Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods. *IMCC Journal of Science*, 4(2), 31-36. <https://doi.org/10.65931/x1r6v8n4>

- Raimi, L., Abdur-Rauf, I. A., & Ashafa, S. A. (2024). Does Islamic Sustainable Finance Support Sustainable Development Goals to Avert Financial Risk in the Management of Islamic Finance Products? A Critical Literature Review. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 17(6), 236. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm17060236>
- Riinawati, R. (2022). Strategy of Financing Management to Improve the Quality of Islamic Education Institution. *AL-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 14(3), 2757-2768. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i3.1519>
- Rohmatillah, N. (2023). Peningkatan Kemajuan Pendidikan Melalui Ekonomi Syariah Berbasis Wakaf dan Zakat. *DIMENSI*, 12(1).
- Sadiq, M. M. M., Rohayati, M. I., Khalil, H. P. S. A., & Shaharudin, M. S. (2025). Waqf and Zakat as Philanthropic Fundraising Instruments in Higher Education: Evidence from Malaysian Public Research Universities. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 22(2), 210-233. <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2025.22.2.10>
- Sholeh, M. I., Habibulloh, M., Al Farisy, F., & binti Ab Rahman, S. F. (2025). Integration of Islamic Values and Local Culture in Early Childhood Education Curriculum. *Jurnal Al Burhan*, 5(1), 126-142. <https://doi.org/10.58988/jab.v5i1.433>
- Siregar, F. (2021). *Pendidikan Keuangan Syariah pada Anak Usia Dini*. Fakultas Agama Islam UMSU.
- Supriatna, D. (2025). Effective Strategies in Managing Educational Financing for Islamic Higher Education Institutions in the Contemporary Era. *Journal of Industrial Engineering & Management Research*, 6(2), 1-11.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*. Sage Publications.