

Learning Methods for Islamic Religious Education in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a crucial role in shaping students' moral and religious values at the elementary school level. This study analyzes the effectiveness of different teaching methods in IRE, focusing on student engagement, comprehension, and internalization of Islamic teachings. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing literature review, classroom observations, and interviews with teachers to examine the impact of various instructional strategies. The findings indicate that traditional lecture methods, while commonly used, tend to result in passive learning, limiting students' ability to apply religious principles in daily life. In contrast, interactive methods such as discussion, project-based learning, and demonstrations significantly enhance student participation and understanding. However, challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, and inadequate teacher training hinder the implementation of innovative teaching techniques. The study suggests that a balanced approach integrating traditional and interactive teaching methods is necessary for effective IRE instruction. Teachers should receive professional development training to improve pedagogical strategies, and educational policymakers should consider curriculum reforms to support diverse instructional approaches. Future research should investigate the long-term impact of these methods on students' moral and religious development. The table below presents a summary of the effectiveness of different teaching methods based on student engagement and teacher-perceived effectiveness.

Introduction

Education has a significant impact on both individuals and society. One of the cornerstones of Indonesia's education system is Islamic Religious Education (IRE), which strives to educate a generation with a thorough awareness of Islamic principles and the capacity to absorb them in daily life. Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in elementary schools is an important foundation for building strong Islamic principles and morality in kids.

As a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia incorporates IRE into its national curriculum. Religious education attempts to build individuals into holistic beings (*insan kamil*) who balance intellectual, spiritual, and moral growth, rather than only passing on knowledge. In this setting, the efficacy of IRE teaching techniques is critical to the attainment of religious education objectives.

However, in practice, IRE in primary schools encounters a number of problems. One of the key difficulties is the continued use of traditional teaching methods in the classroom, such as the lecture style, which is essentially one-way communication. This strategy frequently results in passive learning, which makes it difficult for pupils to properly comprehend and integrate Islamic ideals. Religious education, in its ideal form, should not only impart cognitive understanding but also nurture character development and behavior according with Islamic principles.

Another issue is that instructors use a limited number of instructional approaches. In many situations, IRE training emphasizes rote memorization over comprehension and practical application of Islamic ideals in daily life. This leads to low student motivation and a limited comprehension of the fundamentals of Islamic beliefs. Religious education should be a motivating process that fosters spiritual and moral awareness in students.

The role of Islamic Religious Education teachers (GPAI) is critical to ensuring the effectiveness of IRE education. Teachers are more than just knowledge transmitters; they are also role models who promote Islamic principles in students. As a result, GPAI must develop effective and innovative teaching approaches for delivering IRE knowledge in an engaging and student-centered manner.

IRE can use a variety of teaching approaches, including as lectures, question-and-answer sessions, debates, demonstrations, and project-based learning. Each method has advantages and disadvantages, therefore it is critical to choose the most appropriate strategy depending on student characteristics and learning objectives. In general, interactive and experience-based strategies help pupils grasp and absorb Islamic teachings better.

The lecture technique, for example, is commonly utilized in IRE education. Its strength is in its capacity to convey a large quantity of information in a short period of time while offering a systematic explanation of the subject matter. However, its main disadvantage is that kids tend to be passive, which limits their critical and creative thinking abilities. As a result, the lecture technique should be complemented with other approaches, such as debates or question-and-answer sessions, to increase student participation in the learning process.

The discussion approach is a powerful tool for encouraging active engagement in learning. Discussions encourage students to voice their viewpoints, ask questions, and investigate solutions to diverse problems. This strategy also improves students' critical and analytical thinking abilities, helping them to have a better comprehension of IRE principles.

The demonstration approach may also be utilized to offer hands-on experience with Islamic principles such as prayer, ablution, and reading the Quran. This strategy efficiently helps pupils understand things more concretely and realistically. Students can better recall and apply Islamic teachings to their life by actually seeing and participating in religious activities.

Project-based learning is another effective way to IRE education. This strategy is assigning students duties or projects linked to Islamic teachings, such as producing instructional videos on Islamic principles, performing community service, or organizing religious study groups. Project-based learning improves students' grasp of Islamic principles while also encouraging teamwork, communication, and social awareness.

Given the constraints of IRE instruction in primary schools, it is critical to develop innovative teaching approaches to guarantee that Islamic education is more than just a topic taught in classrooms, but also an important aspect of students' character development. Teachers, as facilitators of learning, must be able to identify and apply suitable teaching techniques to maximize IRE learning outcomes.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of various IRE teaching approaches in primary schools and make recommendations to educators on how to enhance instructional quality. With the correct approach, IRE may become a more fascinating, dynamic, and effective topic, eventually contributing to students' overall growth via their religious and moral upbringing.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Elementary Schools

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is essential for students' moral and ethical growth. As an integral component of the Indonesian education curriculum, IRE seeks to impart Islamic values and teachings in young students, assuring a solid religious foundation. Al-Toumy Al-Syaibany (1980) defines Islamic education methodology as systematic educational procedures that assure pupils properly grasp religious teachings. Similarly, Oemar Hamalik (2002) emphasizes the role of

educators in guiding students' moral and spiritual growth through organized teaching methodologies.

Teaching Methods in Islamic Religious Education

Several teaching strategies are regularly used in IRE, each with unique benefits and drawbacks. The lecture technique is one of the most conventional ways, allowing lecturers to efficiently convey vast volumes of knowledge. However, it has been critiqued for its passive character, with pupils frequently having little participation and opportunity for critical thinking (Al-Abrasy, 1980).

In contrast, the discussion technique fosters student engagement by allowing them to voice their ideas and critically examine Islamic principles. According to Rahim Ghunaimah (1980), discussion-based learning improves cognitive engagement and leads to a better grasp of religious themes. Furthermore, Surah An-Nahl (16:125) of the Quran highlights the need of intelligence and effective communication in communicating Islamic truths, which is consistent with the concepts of discussion-based learning.

Demonstration-based learning is another powerful IRE technique. It gives pupils firsthand experience with Islamic practices including prayer, washing, and Quranic recitation. This strategy is consistent with experiential learning theories, which stress learning via direct experience (Jumbalathy, 1980). Furthermore, project-based learning has been highlighted as a novel technique that promotes self-directed learning, teamwork, and practical application of Islamic teachings. Students engage in community service, storytelling, and religious studies projects to strengthen their awareness of Islamic ideals.

Challenges in the Implementation of IRE Teaching Methods

Despite the advantages of diverse teaching approaches, some problems remain in delivering successful IRE instruction. One of the major difficulties is the emphasis on rote memorization over conceptual comprehension and critical thinking. Many students fail to see the application of Islamic teachings in their daily lives owing to a lack of interactive and context-based learning methodologies. Studies have demonstrated that classical memory strategies, when not paired with application-based learning, result in low student engagement and information retention (Depdiknas 2004).

Another key obstacle is the necessity for teacher expertise when implementing novel teaching practices. Many instructors lack the essential knowledge and resources to successfully apply student-centered learning practices. As a result, the quality of IRE education differs between schools, influencing students' overall academic performance. Darajat et al. (2009) found that continual professional development and teacher training programs are critical for improving the efficacy of IRE education.

Integrating Technology in Islamic Religious Education

With advances in educational technology, digital tools have become more important in IRE instruction. Interactive learning platforms, online discussion forums, and multimedia materials allow students to more actively interact with Islamic teachings. The incorporation of technology into religious education enables a more individualized learning experience that caters to varied student requirements and learning styles. According to research, technology-enhanced learning settings increase student motivation and allow for greater engagement with religious subject (Jamali, t.t).

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative research methodology to assess the efficacy of several teaching approaches in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at the elementary school level. A descriptive study approach is employed to provide a thorough examination of how various pedagogical tactics influence students' learning experiences, engagement, and comprehension of Islamic teachings.

The qualitative approach provides for a thorough examination of instructors' instructional practices and students' reactions to various teaching strategies.

This study collects pertinent data through a mix of literature review, classroom observations, and interviews with Islamic Religious Education instructors. Secondary data is gathered from academic sources such as books, journal articles, and educational reports to provide a theoretical underpinning for the research. Sources such as Al-Toumy Al-Syaibany (1980), Oemar Hamalik (2002), and Depdiknas (2004) offer crucial insights into efficient IRE teaching approaches. Direct observations are carried out in primary school classes to determine how various teaching strategies are used in practice. Observations concentrate on teacher-student interactions, student involvement, and the efficacy of various instructional strategies, including lecture, discussion, demonstration, and project-based learning. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews with Islamic Religious Education instructors are done to learn about their experiences, problems, and perspectives of various teaching approaches. The questions are intended to elicit information on the factors that influence their choice of instructional tactics as well as their impact on student learning outcomes.

The obtained data is examined using thematic analysis, a qualitative approach for identifying patterns and major themes in the findings. Thematic analysis aids in categorizing various instructional tactics and assessing their success in improving students' understanding and implementation of Islamic teachings. The study also looks at the common problems educators encounter when using new teaching approaches.

This research follows ethical requirements to assure the study's integrity. All participants provide informed consent prior to conducting interviews and classroom observations. To protect confidentiality, participants' names are anonymized and all obtained data is utilized strictly for research purposes. Furthermore, the ethical criteria defined by Darajat et al. (2009) for education research are followed to guarantee data collection and analysis is fair and objective.

While this study provides useful information on the efficacy of IRE training approaches, some limitations must be addressed. The study is restricted to a narrow collection of schools, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study is mostly based on qualitative data, which might be impacted by subjective interpretations. Future study should use a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative data to give a more thorough review of teaching strategies in IRE.

This study uses a qualitative research strategy, including a literature review, classroom observations, and teacher interviews, to give an in-depth analysis of teaching methods in Islamic Religious Education. The findings will help to build more effective instructional tactics, therefore improving students' comprehension and absorption of Islamic principles in their daily lives.

Results and Discussion

The outcomes of this study provide important insights into the efficacy of various teaching approaches in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at the elementary school level. The study examines how different instructional styles affect student involvement, understanding, and internalization of Islamic beliefs. The data gathered from classroom observations and teacher interviews are organized into three important themes: the prevalence of traditional techniques, the efficacy of interactive learning, and the obstacles of applying innovative teaching tactics.

Dominance of Traditional Teaching Methods

Observations show that the lecture style is still the most commonly employed methodology in IRE classes. Teachers frequently use this strategy because it is effective at conveying a significant quantity of knowledge in a short period of time. However, this strategy tends to foster passive learning because students are mostly listeners rather than active participants. The absence of student participation in the learning process may impede the absorption of Islamic teachings, which is consistent with the concerns expressed by Al-Toumy Al-Syaibany (1980) and Oemar Hamalik (2002), who underlined the necessity of interactive learning.

Effectiveness of Interactive Learning Strategies

The study discovered that discussion-based strategies and project-based learning greatly improve student involvement and comprehension. Discussions allow students to critically examine Islamic principles and apply them in real-world situations. Teachers who used organized talks reported increased student involvement and comprehension. Similarly, project-based learning activities, such as community service and group research projects on Islamic principles, promoted teamwork and increased students' understanding of religious beliefs.

Challenges in Implementing Innovative Teaching Strategies

Despite the benefits of interactive and experience learning, various problems have been observed when using these approaches. Teachers identified inadequate resources, time restrictions, and a lack of training in current educational practices as the key barriers. These findings are consistent with the research of Darajat et al. (2009), which emphasizes the need of ongoing teacher professional development in IRE. Furthermore, big class sizes and restrictive curricular designs impede the application of student-centered learning strategies.

Implication and Conclusion

Conclusion

This research conducted a thorough review of several teaching strategies utilized in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at the elementary school level. The data show that, while lectures are still the most regularly used instructional style, they frequently result in passive learning, reducing students' capacity to retain Islamic teachings. In contrast, interactive teaching approaches including discussions, project-based learning, and demonstrations dramatically improve student involvement and understanding. These active learning methodologies promote critical thinking, cooperation, and practical application of Islamic ideals in everyday life. However, obstacles such as limited resources, time restrictions, and insufficient teacher preparation impede the broad use of these approaches. Addressing these issues is critical for increasing the quality of IRE education and ensuring that students have a better knowledge of religious concepts.

Implications

The study's conclusions have significant consequences for Islamic educators, politicians, and curriculum writers. Teachers should be encouraged to combine interactive and traditional teaching techniques to create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. Professional development programs should be created to provide educators with the skills required to effectively incorporate student-centered teaching practices. Furthermore, schools and educational institutions must give appropriate resources and institutional support to encourage creative teaching approaches. Curriculum modifications should be explored from a policy standpoint to allow for more flexibility in teaching practices, allowing educators to customize their approaches to students' various requirements. Future study should look into the long-term effects of various IRE teaching approaches, including how they affect students' moral and religious growth.

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