

Holistic Learning Strategies of Islamic Education Teachers in Enhancing Students' Learning Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the importance of effective learning strategies in improving students' learning outcomes, particularly in Islamic Religious Education at the elementary school level. In many cases, learning processes are less effective due to limited variation and ineffective teaching strategies, ultimately affecting student engagement and achievement. Therefore, this research aims to describe the strategies used by Islamic Religious Education teachers in improving students' learning outcomes at SDN Pungging 1, Mojokerto, and to examine their implications for students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. This study employs a qualitative case study design. The research subjects include Islamic Religious Education teachers, the school principal, and students. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques to ensure validity through triangulation. The findings reveal that teachers employ various strategies, including systematic lesson planning, varied and interactive teaching methods, effective classroom management, and motivational and reward-based approaches. In addition, teachers encourage active student participation and implement peer tutoring to enhance understanding. These strategies significantly improve students' learning outcomes, as reflected in increased academic achievement, stronger religious character, higher motivation, and better social skills. The implications of this study indicate that holistic, context-based learning strategies supported by academic and non-academic programs contribute to comprehensive student development across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of primary education, Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role in shaping students' religious character while also enhancing their academic achievement (Aziz et al. 2025; Fahrudin and Warti'ah 2023). However, classroom learning often does not run optimally due to the lack of variety and effectiveness in the teaching strategies employed by teachers (Qutsiyah et al. 2023). This condition affects student engagement and limits the learning outcomes achieved. Therefore, learning strategies are needed that are not only effective but also creative, innovative, and adaptable to the characteristics of the students (Bahruddin et al. 2026; Barokah et al. 2025). As the frontline of the learning process, teachers are required to possess professional competence in designing and implementing appropriate teaching strategies to achieve educational goals optimally (Jogezai et al. 2025; Nasrudin et al. 2025).

Learning strategies play a crucial role in determining the success of the teaching and learning process (Hakim and Mahmudati 2024; Gojali et al. 2024). The implementation of appropriate strategies can create an interactive learning environment, enhance motivation, and encourage students to be more actively engaged in understanding the learning material (Fatima Z et al. 2023; Suwarno 2020). Conversely, inadequate strategies can result in a monotonous and less meaningful learning experience. In Islamic Religious Education, the strategies employed are not only oriented toward cognitive achievement but also encompass the development of attitudes, skills, and students' religious character. Thus, the expected learning outcomes are holistic, covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, while simultaneously fostering Islamic values such as discipline, responsibility, honesty, and tolerance in daily life (Fitriani et al. 2026; Hasbullah et al. 2019; Mukhammad Muzakki and Dewi Afiatul Qutsiyah 2025)

Previous studies have shown that Islamic Religious Education teachers' strategies have a significant contribution to improving students' learning outcomes. Research findings indicate that the implementation of expository strategies combined with religious habituation, such as time discipline, the culture of smiling, greeting, saying salam, and activities like reciting Surah Yasin and Asmaul Husna, can enhance students' understanding, participation, and discipline. These strategies have also proven effective in shaping religious character and increasing student engagement in the learning process (Ismawati 2023; Fathoni et al. 2024; Huda et al. 2024). These findings suggest that systematic and contextual learning strategies significantly contribute to developing both the cognitive and affective aspects of students (Aisyah and Fitriyah 2024). Other studies have shown that learning strategies play an important role in improving Islamic Religious Education outcomes. Literature-based studies reveal that learning strategies pertain to the planning stage, while methods represent their implementation in teaching and learning activities. Teachers can employ various methods, such as modeling, habituation, lecturing, question-and-answer sessions, discussions, and demonstrations, to support the achievement of learning objectives (Deng and Yu 2014; Zamsiswaya et al. 2024)

Nevertheless, these studies generally still focus on the general aspects of learning strategies or are conducted within specific educational contexts and levels. Research that specifically examines the strategies of Islamic Religious Education teachers in improving students' learning outcomes at the elementary school level particularly in the context of continuous and contextual learning at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto remains limited. Therefore, a research gap exists that needs further investigation in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of effective learning strategies within this context.

Based on this, the present study offers a novelty by examining in depth the strategies of Islamic Religious Education teachers in improving students' learning outcomes, as well as their implications for cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. This study also aims to contribute to the development of more effective and contextualized learning practices at the elementary school level. Accordingly, the study seeks to describe the strategies employed by Islamic Religious Education teachers to enhance students' learning outcomes at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto and to reveal the implications of these strategies on the learning process and outcomes.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design with a case study approach, as proposed by Creswell, to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies used by Islamic Religious Education teachers in improving students' learning outcomes. The research was conducted at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto over a period of approximately three months, starting from January to March 2026. The qualitative approach was chosen to explore real conditions in the field and to capture the meaning behind teachers' actions, strategies, and interactions in the learning process.

Data were collected through three main techniques, namely in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with Islamic Religious Education teachers, the school principal, and several students to obtain comprehensive information regarding the implementation of learning strategies (Creswell 2014). Observations were carried out directly in the classroom using passive participatory observation to examine teaching practices, student responses, and classroom dynamics. Documentation techniques included reviewing lesson plans, teaching modules, student assessment results, and school program records. The informants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in the learning process.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al. 2014). Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying relevant data obtained from the field. Data display was carried out in the form of narrative descriptions and matrices to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified continuously to ensure validity. To maintain data credibility, source triangulation and technique triangulation were applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Strategies in Improving Students' Learning Outcomes

Research findings regarding the strategies of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in improving students' learning outcomes at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto. Observations, interviews with teachers, and documentation of classroom activities indicate that PAI teachers implement various strategies designed to enhance students' understanding and academic achievement. These strategies include thorough lesson planning, selecting methods appropriate to students' characteristics, using engaging learning media, and managing the classroom effectively.

Lesson planning serves as the initial step that determines the success of the learning process. Teachers prepare the Lesson Plan (RPP), teaching modules, and evaluation instruments tailored to the Merdeka Curriculum and the students' abilities. Learning materials are designed to be easily understood, relevant to students' daily lives, and organized systematically. Evaluations are conducted regularly to assess students' progress and to plan follow-up learning activities.

Motivation and rewards are an important part of the Islamic Education (PAI) teacher's strategy. Teachers provide motivation through praise, encouragement, and recognition of students' achievements, both internally and externally. In addition, teachers give high-achieving students the opportunity to serve as peer tutors, which not only assesses mastery of the material but also develops leadership, responsibility, communication, and knowledge-sharing skills. This practice has a dual impact, enhancing the competence of the tutors while simultaneously supporting their peers' understanding.

Effective classroom management is also a focus for teachers, achieved by creating a learning environment that is enjoyable, interactive, and conducive. Strategies implemented include ice-breaking activities, cooperative approaches, linking the material to real-life contexts, as well as varying methods and using engaging media such as videos and printed materials. This ensures that students remain focused and enthusiastic in participating in the learning process.

A variety of learning methods are applied to attract students' interest and reduce boredom. These methods include role-playing, group discussions, demonstrations, question-and-answer sessions, and educational games. In online learning, teachers adjust strategies by presenting material systematically, providing praise, establishing learning routines, and paying attention to students' psychological conditions. This strategy ensures active student engagement while fostering disciplined and independent learning habits.

Research findings indicate that this combination of strategies has a positive impact on students' learning outcomes. Students become more active, are able to complete tasks effectively, and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the subjects of Aqidah Akhlak, Fiqh, and Islamic History. The average student scores show an upward trend, indicating the effectiveness of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning conducted by the teacher.

Overall, the teaching strategies of the Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto have been proven to significantly improve learning outcomes. This success is driven by thorough planning, varied teaching methods, a conducive classroom management, and the provision of appropriate motivation and rewards. These findings emphasize that the teacher's role extends beyond delivering material, encompassing the holistic development of students' character, social skills, and attitudes.

Implications of Improving Student Learning Outcomes

Research findings indicate that the improvement of student learning outcomes at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto is reflected not only in academic achievement but also in various intensive programs designed to develop students' potential comprehensively. These programs include both academic and non-academic development aimed at providing broader learning experiences and fostering students' self-confidence. In an interview, it was revealed that the school emphasizes a balance between academic achievement and the development of non-academic skills through systematic programs, such as special coaching sessions outside regular

school hours to prepare students for district-level quiz competitions in commemoration of Islamic Holy Days. Through these programs, students not only deepen their understanding of the material but also practice concentration, critical thinking, and responsiveness to challenges.

In addition to academic development, non-academic activities are also a primary focus. Students are encouraged to actively participate in various programs at the district and sub-district levels, including GEMAJUZA (Movement to Memorize Juz Amma), Pondok Ramadan, Pildarama competitions, and Banjari religious arts. These activities play a crucial role in fostering a love for religion, building self-confidence, and developing students' talents and interests beyond academics. The implementation of these intensive programs has a dual positive impact: students achieve academic success while also developing attitudes, social skills, and character. Thus, holistic education is realized, shaping students who excel intellectually and possess noble character.

In daily learning practices, a contextual approach serves as an important strategy. In an interview, one teacher emphasized that PAI material is delivered by directly relating it to students' everyday experiences, making understanding more meaningful and in-depth. Motivation is also provided before the lesson begins, whether through positive words, inspirational stories, or verbal encouragement, so that students are ready to receive the material and participate actively. Periodic evaluations are conducted formatively, allowing teachers to identify students' weaknesses and provide appropriate follow-up, which has been shown to steadily improve their grades.

The use of visual learning media, such as videos, images, or concrete teaching aids, also supports the understanding of abstract concepts. Concrete experiences help with long-term information retention. Professional and enjoyable classroom management is another key factor in successful learning. Arranging seating, establishing rules, and creating an orderly yet friendly atmosphere enable students to stay focused, participate actively, and feel valued, which ultimately improves learning outcomes gradually.

In addition, providing simple rewards such as praise, star symbols, or bonus points is an effective strategy for fostering learning motivation and strengthening religious character. A communicative, open, and stress-free classroom environment allows students to be more active in asking questions, engaging in discussions, and expressing their opinions. The teacher's flexibility in adapting instruction to students' characteristics such as implementing simple projects, conducting initial assessments, and applying differentiated learning ensures that all students develop according to their individual potential. Active student participation in various classroom activities serves as a tangible indicator of success.

Overall, the strategies employed by Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto have shown a significant impact on improving student learning outcomes. Academic performance increased, students' religious character strengthened, and they demonstrated high enthusiasm in the learning process. The implications of these efforts underscore that teachers' commitment, creativity, and humanistic approach are key factors in achieving holistic learning outcomes, encompassing cognitive, affective, and classroom environment aspects. This improvement not only develops academically excellent students but also fosters balanced character, social skills, and self-confidence.

Table 1: Summary of Research Findings on PAI Teachers' Strategies and Their Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

| Aspect | Strategies / Key Findings | Impact on Students |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Lesson Planning | Preparation of lesson plans, modules, and evaluations aligned with the curriculum | Learning becomes more structured |
| Teaching Methods | Discussions, role play, Q&A, and educational games | Increases learning interest |
| Learning Media | Videos, images, and printed materials | Facilitates understanding |
| Motivation & Rewards | Praise, recognition, and peer tutoring | Enhances motivation |
| Classroom Management | Ice breaking and interactive atmosphere | Creates a conducive classroom |
| Contextual Approach | Relating material to daily life | Deeper understanding |
| Evaluation | Regular evaluation and follow-up | Improves student scores |
| Academic Programs | Competition coaching and quizzes | Develops critical thinking |
| Non-Academic Programs | Religious and art activities | Builds character |
| Online Learning | Structured materials and routines | Maintains student engagement |
| Differentiation | Adjusting to students' abilities | Supports all learners |
| Final Outcomes | Improved scores and participation | Better achievement and character |

DISCUSSION

PAI Teachers' Strategies in Improving Student Learning Outcomes

The strategies of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto indicate that the learning process not only focuses on delivering the material but also involves the development of systematic, communicative strategies oriented toward students' needs. These findings emphasize that careful lesson planning including the preparation of Lesson Plans (RPP), assessments, and adjustments to students' characteristics and the demands of the Merdeka Curriculum plays a crucial role in improving learning outcomes (Budiartini et al. 2025; Sabariah et al. 2025; Wibowo and Saliman 2025). This also addresses the research objective that the success of learning is largely determined by the quality of planning conducted by teachers. These findings align with previous studies (Karsana et al. 2025; Roin et al. 2025) indicating that systematic lesson planning significantly contributes to the effectiveness of learning.

In practice, the use of varied teaching methods such as group discussions, role-playing, demonstrations, and the utilization of contextual media has proven effective in increasing student engagement and reducing learning fatigue. These results indicate that active and participatory learning is more effective than conventional approaches (Khairida et al. 2025; Simanullang et al. 2024) which shows that interactive and contextual learning (linking material to students' real-life environments) enhances student engagement and competence, supporting more meaningful and effective learning.

Effective classroom management is also an important factor in supporting successful learning. Strategies such as ice-breaking activities, group work, and the implementation of classroom rules accompanied by educational consequences have been shown to create a conducive learning environment. These findings indicate that a positive learning environment has a direct impact on student engagement and discipline (Rahayu et al. 2024; Restiana et al. 2026) which highlights that creating a positive learning environment increases student involvement.

In addition to classroom learning, support for academic and non-academic activities also contributes to improving student learning outcomes. Activities such as quiz competitions, GEMAJUZA, Pondok Ramadan, Pildarama, and Banjari provide opportunities for students to develop their potential comprehensively (Taufik and Ma'arif 2023; Surfilda Dwi Atika et al. 2024) which show that learning occurs not only in the classroom but also through real experiences that strengthen cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This is consistent with the concept of holistic learning, which emphasizes the importance of integrating knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

The integration of in-class learning strategies with out-of-class development activities demonstrates that teachers act not only as instructors but also as facilitators and motivators. These findings (Adzewiyah et al. 2025; Islami et al. 2025) indicate that effective learning requires a comprehensive and continuous approach. This result is also consistent with various studies confirming that active student engagement in diverse learning activities can significantly enhance the quality of learning outcomes.

Overall, the strategies of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto demonstrate a strong integration between educational theory and adaptive learning practices. Systematic planning, the use of varied methods, provision of motivation, effective classroom management, and support for both academic and non-academic activities have been proven to comprehensively enhance student learning outcomes. These findings imply that teachers need to continuously develop innovative and contextual learning strategies in accordance with students' needs and the demands of the times.

In the future, further research is needed to examine more deeply the impact of each learning strategy on improving student learning outcomes, as well as to test its effectiveness in different school contexts. Thus, the development of learning strategies based on students' needs can be continuously enhanced to support higher quality education.

Implications of Improving Student Learning Outcomes

The improvement of student learning outcomes at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto indicates that the success of learning is measured not only by academic achievement but also by the development of religious character, social skills, and active participation in various activities. Research findings reveal that Islamic Education (PAI) teachers implement a comprehensive learning strategy through the integration of contextual approaches, varied methods,

motivational reinforcement, and effective classroom management. This approach has proven capable of increasing student engagement in the learning process while simultaneously strengthening their understanding of the material taught.

These findings align with the research by (Rambe and Wirdati 2022) which emphasizes the importance of teachers adapting learning materials to students' abilities, providing additional learning time, and collaborating with homeroom teachers and parents to support the achievement of learning outcomes. Thus, both studies confirm that adaptive, well-planned, and collaborative teacher strategies play a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding, skills, and performance in Islamic Education subjects. Additionally, (Marlin and Kartika 2025) highlight the importance of creating a conducive, comfortable, and communicative learning environment, so that students not only demonstrate improved academic achievement but also develop in terms of character, social skills, and active participation in various activities. Therefore, the core similarity between the two studies lies in the strategic role of teachers in optimizing students' potential through a comprehensive and holistic learning approach.

Interview results indicate that the contextual approach is one of the primary strategies for improving learning outcomes. Learning materials are linked to students' real-life experiences, facilitating a deeper understanding of concepts. This aligns (Te'a et al. 2025) who emphasize that the contextual model is effective in enhancing students' active learning, which is closely related to improved retention and comprehension of lesson materials. Research by (Kristidhika et al. 2020) also notes that elementary school students' conceptual understanding improves when learning materials are connected to experiential contexts.

In addition, the use of varied teaching methods, such as group discussions, role-playing, demonstrations, and religious quizzes, has been shown to enhance students' active participation. This finding is consistent with research by (Melianti and Mulyadi 2025) which states that providing empirical examples through demonstrations can increase both student activity and learning outcomes. Research by (Kurnia and Sriwardona 2025) also emphasizes that the implementation of cooperative learning can improve students' active participation, learning outcomes, and social skills in collaboration and communication during the learning process.

Effective classroom management also plays a crucial role in supporting the improvement of learning outcomes. Teachers create a learning environment that is orderly, comfortable, and communicative. This finding aligns with Jacob Kounin's classroom management theory, which emphasizes the importance of classroom management in creating a conducive learning environment. Research by (Rizqa et al. 2024; Agustina et al. 2025; Muhria et al. 2024) also indicates that an effective classroom has a positive and significant impact on improving student achievement by creating a more conducive class atmosphere and maximizing student engagement.

From the perspective of motivation, the provision of positive reinforcement such as praise, rewards, and trust given to students as peer tutors has been proven to enhance their learning enthusiasm. This finding is in line with (Merdeka and Basri 2025) who state that the consistent use of rewards, whether in the form of stickers or praise, increases students' learning motivation, making them more active and enthusiastic in the learning process. (Ezel Acar and Erozan 2024; Rofiq et al. 2025)

However, this study has a distinct uniqueness compared to previous research, namely the integration between classroom learning and intensive academic and non-academic programs. Programs such as PHBI, GEMAJUZA, Pondok Ramadan, Pildarama, and Banjari provide

broader learning experiences. This is in line with (Andari 2025; Yulfitra and Afrita 2024) whose studies conclude that the use of experience-based learning models enhances students' learning motivation, emphasizing that direct experience is an essential component in the learning process.

The implications of these strategies are reflected in the improvement of both academic and non-academic learning outcomes. Students not only show increased scores but also develop in terms of attitudes, skills, and religious character. Thus, the results of this study not only reinforce previous findings but also provide new contributions to the development of holistic learning.

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the improvement of student learning outcomes at SDN Pungging 1 Mojokerto is the result of the implementation of integrated learning strategies oriented toward students' needs. These strategies include a contextual approach, varied teaching methods, continuous evaluation, the use of learning media, effective classroom management, and motivational reinforcement.

In addition, the integration of classroom learning with academic and non-academic development programs serves as a key supporting factor in improving learning outcomes comprehensively. The results of this study confirm that effective learning not only enhances cognitive aspects but also shapes students' character and social skills. Therefore, adaptive, innovative, and holistic learning strategies need to be continuously developed to support the creation of quality and sustainable education.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals several significant findings that could only be fully understood after the research was conducted. One of the most notable findings is that the integration of systematic lesson planning, varied teaching methods, and contextual learning approaches, combined with motivational reinforcement and classroom management, creates a synergistic effect that significantly improves students' learning outcomes. Unexpectedly, the role of peer tutoring and the integration of academic and non-academic religious programs emerged as key factors that not only enhance academic achievement but also strengthen students' religious character, social skills, and learning motivation. These findings indicate that learning success is not solely determined by instructional delivery but also by the holistic and continuous engagement of students in both classroom and extracurricular contexts.

From a scientific perspective, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by reinforcing and extending previous research on the importance of teacher strategies in improving learning outcomes. While prior studies have emphasized individual aspects such as teaching methods or classroom management, this research offers a more integrated and holistic perspective by highlighting the combination of multiple strategies and their interconnected impact on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. In addition, this study provides a contextual contribution by focusing on elementary-level Islamic Religious Education and demonstrating how adaptive, student-centered strategies can be effectively implemented in real classroom settings, thus offering a practical and conceptual enrichment to the field.

However, this study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. The research was conducted in a single school setting with a limited number of participants, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. The contextual focus on one educational level and location also limits the variation of data across different environments. Furthermore, the use of a qualitative case study approach may not capture broader patterns that could be

identified through quantitative or mixed-method designs. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a larger sample size, diverse educational contexts, and varied methodological approaches, including quantitative and experimental designs, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of effective learning strategies and to support the development of more robust educational policies.

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