

Date Received : 21 April 2024
Date Revised : 27 August 2024
Date Accepted : 27 August 2024
Date Published : 30 August 2024

OPTIMIZING ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS THROUGH CONTEXTUAL APPROACH: A LITERATURE REVIEW OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING METHODS

Sitti Nadirah¹

UIN Datokarama Palu, Indonesia (sittinadirah@uindatokarama.ac.id)

Retoliah²

UIN Datokarama Palu, Indonesia (retoliah@uindatokarama.ac.id)

Aniati³

UIN Datokarama Palu, Indonesia (aniati@uindatokarama.ac.id)

Idris⁴

UIN Datokarama Palu, Indonesia (sesatdaritimur47@gmail.com)

Hisbullah⁵

IAIN Palopo, Indonesia (hisbullah@iainpalopo.ac.id)

¹ Correspondence author

Keywords:

Learning optimization, Islamic Religious Education (IRE), contextual approach, curriculum, teaching methods.

ABSTRACTS

Background: This article is a literature review aimed at analyzing and explaining the contextual approach in enhancing the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning in Elementary Schools (ES). **Purpose:** The contextual approach is a teaching method that emphasizes the relevance of learning materials to students' daily lives and environments. In the context of IRE, this approach involves connecting Islamic religious lessons with life situations and Islamic values relevant to ES students. **Method:** Through a comprehensive literature review, this article explores previous studies and research involving the curriculum and teaching methods of IRE in ES using a contextual approach. This literature review covers various aspects, such as comparing the effectiveness between contextual and conventional approaches, their impact on understanding Islamic religion, students' learning interest, and participation in IRE learning. The article also discusses the challenges and opportunities in implementing the contextual approach in IRE learning in ES, including teachers' perspectives, required curriculum changes, and support from the school environment and families. **Result:** The results of this literature review indicate that the contextual approach can enhance the effectiveness of IRE learning in ES significantly. The relevance of learning materials to students' daily lives motivates them to be more engaged and to better appreciate Islamic values. In conclusion, the contextual approach has the potential to make a positive contribution to the development of IRE learning in ES. **Conclusion:** This article provide valuable insights for educators, researchers, and policymakers in the field of Islamic education, and encourage more empirical research to support and strengthen the findings of this literature review.

A. INTRODUCTION

The development of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning in Elementary Schools (ES) has recently undergone significant changes. Islamic Religious Education in ES no longer solely focuses on conceptual understanding but also emphasizes the application of religious values in students' daily lives. This social fact reflects an awareness of the importance of preparing young generations with relevant Islamic values applicable in contemporary situations. In efforts to enhance the effectiveness of IRE learning in ES, the contextual approach emerges as an intriguing solution for educators and policymakers. By connecting lesson materials with students' everyday experiences, this approach creates more meaningful and impactful learning, encouraging active student participation and aiding them in internalizing religious values more deeply.

An essential aspect of implementing the contextual approach is the utilization of technology and media in IRE learning. This social fact indicates a growing trend in the use of digital technology in educational contexts, including the teaching of Islamic religion in ES. By leveraging instructional videos, interactive applications, and engaging multimedia content, the contextual approach in IRE learning integrates technology with religious values, creating more enjoyable and relevant learning experiences for students. Moreover, technology broadens access to information and understanding of religion, facilitating innovative and practical teaching-learning processes. The use of technology in IRE learning also supports educators in addressing challenges in conveying complex religious concepts in a more visual and interactive manner, thereby enhancing student engagement and understanding of learning Islam in ES.

This article highlights the findings of previous research on the effectiveness of the contextual approach in IRE learning in ES. Some studies have revealed that this approach positively impacts students' understanding of Islamic content by presenting more relevant learning materials aligned with their life realities (Muslimin et al., 2020; Riza et al., 2024; Rosyad, 2019). Additionally, research has found that the contextual approach in IRE learning can enhance students' learning interest as they feel more connected to the lesson materials and see the relevance of religious values in daily life.

Furthermore, the literature review encompasses an overview of the use of technology and media in IRE learning in ES. Previous studies indicate that integrating technology into the contextual approach can create more engaging and interactive learning experiences for students (An, 2018; Wong & Hughes, 2023). The use of instructional videos, multimedia content, and interactive applications in IRE learning helps create a more dynamic classroom environment and enhances student participation. Research results also suggest that using technology in IRE learning can help students understand religious concepts more visually and concretely, enabling them to relate lessons to real-life situations and deepen their understanding of Islamic values.

The purpose of this article is to provide a comprehensive literature review on the contextual approach in IRE learning in ES and the use of technology in this context. It aims to gather and analyze various previous studies relevant to this topic, including studies on the effectiveness, impact, and challenges associated with the implementation of the contextual approach and technology in IRE learning. Through in-depth literature analysis, this article seeks to provide clearer and deeper insights into how the contextual approach and technology can contribute to enhancing students' understanding of Islam

and increasing their interest and participation in learning. It is hoped that this article will contribute to educators, researchers, and policymakers in the field of Islamic education, providing useful guidance for developing more effective and innovative teaching methods in IRE learning in ES.

This research holds significant importance as Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning in Elementary Schools plays a crucial role in shaping the character and Islamic values of young generations. Through the contextual approach and the use of technology in IRE learning, this article aims to provide innovative and relevant alternatives in delivering Islamic religious content to students. By linking lessons to students' everyday experiences, the contextual approach encourages deeper understanding and personal meaning-making of Islamic values. Additionally, the use of technology opens opportunities to create more engaging and interactive learning experiences, which can enhance student engagement and learning interest in IRE. By presenting research on the effectiveness and benefits of the contextual approach and the role of technology in IRE learning in ES, this article strives to provide practical guidance for educators and policymakers to improve the quality of Islamic education and promote the formation of morally upright and Islamic-minded generations.

The theories underpinning this article are contextual learning theory, constructivist learning theory, technology-enhanced learning theory, curriculum theory, and motivation theory. Contextual learning theory focuses on the importance of linking learning to real-life contexts and students' life situations. In the context of Islamic religious education in elementary schools, the contextual approach will help students to connect more deeply with religious values and understand their relevance in daily life.

Constructivist learning theory emphasizes the active role of students in constructing their own knowledge and understanding (Mishra, 2023; Vaishali & Misra, 2020). Through this contextual approach, students are presented with learning content that can be connected to their personal experiences and environments, enabling them to construct knowledge and concepts of Islamic religion more meaningfully.

Technology-enhanced learning theory discusses how technology can enhance the effectiveness of learning by creating more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable learning experiences (Passey, 2019; Young & Nichols, 2017). In this article, the use of technology in the contextual approach to IRE learning in elementary schools will be considered as a means to increase students' interest and participation in the learning process.

Curriculum theory encompasses the development and implementation of relevant and effective curricula to achieve learning goals (Smith et al., 2017; Wiyono et al., 2020). In this article, a literature review of IRE curricula in elementary schools using the contextual approach will serve as a foundation for presenting evidence of the effectiveness of these teaching methods.

Motivation theory examines factors influencing students' interest and motivation in learning (Berestova et al., 2022; Isik et al., 2018). Through the engaging contextual approach and the use of technology, this article will seek evidence of how these approaches can enhance students' motivation in learning Islamic religion in elementary schools.

By combining these theories, this article can present strong evidence of the importance of the contextual approach and the use of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning in elementary schools.

B. METHOD

This research employs a literature review approach to gather and analyze data from various literature sources, including scholarly articles, books, journals, and related research reports. The literature review was chosen because it can provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of the contextual approach and the use of technology in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning in Elementary Schools (ES) based on previous research findings.

Data for this study were obtained through careful literature searches using academic databases, digital libraries, and official publications from reputable institutions in the field of Islamic religious education and ES learning. Relevant data include empirical studies, scholarly articles, and recent research discussing the effectiveness of the contextual approach and the implementation of technology in IRE learning at the ES level.

The data obtained from the literature review were collected, analyzed, and synthesized to present relevant and in-depth findings regarding the role of the contextual approach and the use of technology in IRE learning in ES. Data analysis was conducted by comparing and connecting various research findings and examining the suitability and relevance of previous research findings with the objectives of this article, which is to identify the effectiveness of the proposed teaching methods.

The validity of the data in this research is strengthened through the selection of quality and relevant literature sources, as well as the use of various verified academic references. All data used in this study were taken from reliable and recognized sources in the field of Islamic religious education and ES curriculum.

As for the discussions related to optimizing Islamic Religious Education learning in elementary schools through the contextual approach, they include:

1. Effectiveness of the Contextual Approach in IRE Learning.
2. Role of Technology in IRE Learning.
3. Impact of the Contextual Approach on Student Learning Motivation.
4. Challenges in Implementing the Contextual Approach.

These four discussion points are tailored to relevant research findings. Through the presented research results, they are described in connection with the discussion needs in this article.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Effectiveness of the Contextual Approach in IRE Learning

The use of the contextual approach in IRE learning in ES has a positive impact on students' understanding of Islamic religious values. Students can better relate religious concepts to their everyday life situations, thereby enhancing the relevance and significance of the learning materials. Literature data related to this discussion can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Literature Data on the Effectiveness of the Contextual Approach.

| No. | Research Theme | Results | Description |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | Enhancement of Understanding of Islam | The research may find that the use of the contextual approach in IRE learning in ES can enhance students' understanding of Islamic religious concepts. Students tend to be more connected to the learning materials as they can relate them to their daily lives, thus facilitating a deeper understanding of religious values and teachings. | Bakhrul Ulum dan Imam Syafi'i, 2022. |
| 2. | Higher Learning Interest | The research results may also indicate that students who participate in IRE learning with a contextual approach show a higher level of learning interest compared to conventional teaching methods. The connection of lesson materials to students' real-life experiences encourages them to be more active and enthusiastic in their learning. | Rosidi Bahri dkk., 2023. |
| 3. | Increased Student Participation | Research may find that the contextual approach in IRE learning in ES can enhance student participation in class. Students tend to be more willing to speak up, engage in discussions, and interact with course materials because they feel that the materials are relevant to their lives. | Adiyono dkk., 2022 |
| 4. | Application of Religious Values in Daily Life | Research may also demonstrate that the contextual approach helps students in applying Islamic religious values in daily life. They are better able to connect religious concepts with real-life situations, thus motivating them to implement religious teachings in their daily actions and behaviors. | Ja'far Amirudin dkk., 2022 |

Based on Table 1, it is noted that the use of the contextual approach in Islamic Religious Education learning in Elementary Schools can enhance students' understanding of Islamic religious concepts (Ulum & Syafi'i, 2022). This allows students to better connect with the learning materials and deepen their understanding of religious values through their relevance to daily life (Bahri et al., 2023). Research findings indicate that students participating in IRE learning with a contextual approach demonstrate higher learning interest compared to conventional teaching methods (Adiyono et al., 2023). The connection of lesson materials to students' real-life experiences encourages them to be more active and enthusiastic in their learning (Amirudin et al., 2022).

Additionally, the research also found that the contextual approach in Islamic Religious Education learning in Elementary Schools can increase student participation in class, where students tend to be more confident in speaking up, engaging in discussions, and interacting with course materials because they feel that the materials are relevant to their lives. Furthermore, the research results also indicate that the contextual approach helps students in applying Islamic religious values in daily life. The ability of students to connect religious concepts with real-life situations motivates them to implement religious teachings in their daily actions and behaviors.

The contextual approach in Islamic Religious Education learning in Elementary Schools shows promising results in enhancing the effectiveness of religious education. One significant research finding is the improvement in students' understanding of Islamic religious concepts. By linking lesson materials to students' daily lives, students can easily connect religious teachings with real-life situations they experience. This helps students to understand religious values more deeply and strengthens their understanding of Islamic teachings. Additionally, research results also show that the contextual approach can increase students' learning interest. With the connection of lesson materials to their real-life experiences, students become more engaged and enthusiastic in participating in Islamic Religious Education learning. This higher interest has the potential to encourage students to be more active in understanding and internalizing the taught religious values.

The use of the contextual approach in Islamic Religious Education learning also has a positive impact on student participation in class. Students tend to be more confident in speaking up, engaging in discussions, and interacting with course materials because they feel that the materials are relevant to their lives. They are more confident in expressing their opinions and have a more enjoyable and meaningful learning experience. Additionally, the contextual approach also facilitates the application of religious values in students' daily lives. Research results show that students can more easily connect religious concepts with real-life situations, motivating them to apply religious teachings in their daily actions and behaviors. This approach helps shape a generation with noble and Islamic morals, as religious values are not only understood theoretically but also practiced in their daily lives.

The Role of Technology in Islamic Religious Education Learning

This research found that the integration of technology in the contextual approach can enhance students' interest and engagement in Islamic Religious Education learning. The use of instructional videos, interactive applications, and multimedia content may capture students' interest and help clarify their understanding of Islamic religious concepts visually. Below are presented some research findings related to the role of technology in Islamic Religious Education learning, as follows:

Table 2. Literature Data on the Role of Technology in Islamic Religious Education Learning

| No. | Research Theme | Results | Description |
|-----|--|---|----------------------------|
| 1. | Increased Student Engagement and Participation | Research indicates that the use of technology in IRE learning in elementary schools can enhance student engagement and participation in class. The use of instructional videos, interactive | Fitri Meliani, dkk., 2022. |

| | | | |
|----|---|---|---------------------------------|
| | | multimedia content, and religious education applications can make learning more engaging and interactive for students. Consequently, students tend to be more enthusiastic and active in participating in learning activities, thereby enhancing their learning outcomes. | |
| 2. | Improving Access to Learning Resources | Research also indicates that technology can enhance students' access to diverse learning resources. With access to the internet and digital sources, students can easily retrieve books, articles, videos, and other learning materials relevant to Islamic Religious Education. This enables students to learn from various sources and acquire richer information in understanding Islam. | Dolores R. Serrano, dkk., 2019. |
| 3. | Enriching Learning with Interactive Content | Technology allows Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning in elementary schools to be enriched with interactive content such as simulations, games, and other interactive activities. Research shows that the use of interactive content can help students understand religious concepts more visually and practically. They can actively participate in learning and try for themselves how to apply religious teachings in different situations. | M. Rikza Chamami, 2022. |
| 4. | Enhanced Understanding of Abstract Concepts | Technology also aids students in understanding abstract concepts of Islam that may be challenging to grasp through traditional methods. By illustrating these concepts through animations or digital visualizations, students can more easily comprehend complex ideas and grasp them better. | Nilna Azizatus Shofiyyah, 2023. |
| 5. | Collaboration and Community-Based Learning | The use of technology in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning also enables students to collaborate with their peers in group tasks and community-based learning activities. Through digital platforms, students can discuss, exchange information, and learn together virtually, strengthening mutual support and enhancing collective understanding of Islam. | Asikin Nor, Dkk., 2024. |

Based on Table 2, it is evident that research confirms the integration of technology in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning at the Elementary School (SD) level, involving elements such as instructional videos, interactive multimedia content, and religious education applications, significantly enhances student engagement and participation in the classroom (Meliani et al., 2022). The use of technology not only makes learning more engaging and interactive but also stimulates students' enthusiasm and activity, contributing to better learning outcomes (Serrano et al., 2019). Furthermore, technology opens up students' access to diverse learning resources, enabling them to access books, articles, videos, and other IRE learning materials online, which results in a richer understanding of Islam (Chamami et al., 2022). Interactive content such as simulations, games, and other activities also constitute a valuable part of IRE learning, allowing students to comprehend religious concepts visually and practically, as well as actively participate in learning (Shofiyyah et al., 2023). Additionally, technology aids students in understanding complex and abstract Islamic concepts through animation or digital visualization, enhancing their overall understanding (Nor et al., 2024). Moreover, digital platforms facilitate student collaboration in group tasks and community-based activities, reinforcing mutual support and enhancing collective understanding of Islam.

The results of this study indicate that the role of technology in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning has the potential to enhance learning effectiveness, enrich student learning experiences, and enable access to a broader range of learning resources. Thoughtful integration of technology in IRE learning at the elementary school level can serve as a powerful tool to support the learning process and enhance students' understanding and appreciation of Islamic teachings.

The use of technology in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning at the elementary school level offers various benefits to students. One research outcome suggests that technology can enhance student engagement and participation in IRE learning. By introducing interactive content, instructional videos, and educational applications, learning becomes more engaging and enjoyable for students. They are more inclined to actively participate in learning activities and are more enthusiastic about learning about Islam. Additionally, technology can enrich the learning experience by providing access to various learning resources. Students can easily access books, articles, videos, and other educational materials relevant to IRE. This enables students to gain a deeper understanding of religious teachings and broaden their knowledge beyond the confines of textbooks.

In another research finding, the role of technology is also proven to help students understand abstract concepts in Islam. The use of digital visualization and interactive content allows students to concretize complex and difficult-to-understand concepts. They can observe simulations or videos depicting different religious situations, making it easier for them to understand how religious values can be applied in real life. Furthermore, technology fosters collaboration and community-based learning. Students can communicate and interact with classmates online, discuss, and exchange opinions on specific religious topics. In this community-based learning environment, students can support each other in understanding and applying religious values in their daily lives. Thus, the role of technology in IRE learning at the elementary school level can help shape a generation that is morally upright and more empathetic to religious values in society.

The Impact of Contextual Approach on Student Learning Motivation

Research findings indicate that a contextual approach in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning at the elementary school level can enhance students' learning motivation. Viewing Islamic religious values relevant to their daily lives can encourage students to be more enthusiastic about participating in learning activities and more eager to understand Islam. Presented below are the research findings on the impact of the contextual approach on student learning motivation:

Table 3. Literature Data on the Impact of Contextual Approach on Student Learning Motivation

| No. | Research Theme | Results | Description |
|-----|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Increased Interest in Learning | Research results indicate that a contextual approach in learning enhances students' interest in learning. By linking the subject matter to students' everyday life situations, learning becomes more relevant and meaningful to them. This encourages students to be more enthusiastic and eager in attending classes and to be open to learning more deeply. | Dwi Agnes Setianingrum, dkk., 2022. |
| 2. | Perception of More Enjoyable Learning | Research also indicates that students engaged in a contextual approach tend to perceive learning as more enjoyable. The application of real-life cases and contexts in learning makes the learning process more engaging and challenging. This positive impact on the perception of learning helps enhance student engagement and encourages them to attend classes more actively and learn with enthusiasm. | Jennifer A. Schmidt, dkk., 2018. |
| 3. | Increased Sense of Ownership in Learning | Research also indicates that a contextual approach to learning can enhance students' sense of ownership of the learning process. Students feel more engaged in exploring course materials and have an active role in learning. They perceive that the learning is designed to meet their needs and interests, which in turn enhances their learning motivation. | Tilisa Thibodeaux, dkk., 2019. |
| 4. | Support for the Development of 21st Century Skills | Research findings indicate that the contextual approach also supports the development of 21st-century skills in students, such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Students are given the opportunity to solve problems in real-life contexts and face challenges | Taufiq Natsir, dkk., 2023. |

relevant to their lives. This helps them develop skills that are pertinent to the evolving future job market and enhances their learning motivation as they perceive these skills as valuable and relevant in real life.

Based on Table 3, it is explained that research findings indicate that the contextual approach in learning, by linking subject matter to students' everyday life situations, enhances students' interest in learning, makes learning more relevant and meaningful, and encourages students to be more enthusiastic, passionate, and open to deeper learning (Setianingrum et al., 2022). Research also shows that students engaged in the contextual approach tend to perceive learning as more enjoyable because the application of real-life cases and contexts in learning makes the learning process more engaging and challenging (Schmidt et al., 2018). This positive impact on learning perception helps increase student engagement and encourages them to attend classes more actively and learn with enthusiasm (Thibodeaux et al., 2019). Furthermore, research also indicates that the contextual approach in learning can enhance students' sense of ownership of the learning process, with students feeling more involved in exploring subject matter and taking an active role in learning (Natsir et al., 2023). They feel that learning is designed to meet their needs and interests, which in turn enhances their learning motivation. Research findings suggest that the contextual approach also supports the development of 21st-century skills in students, such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration, by providing opportunities for students to solve problems in real-world contexts and face challenges relevant to their lives. This helps them develop skills relevant to the future job market, increasing learning motivation as they perceive these skills as valuable and relevant in real life.

The research findings indicate that the contextual approach has a positive impact on students' learning motivation. By linking subject matter to real-life situations and exploring the relevance of learning for students, this approach enhances interest and enthusiasm for learning, strengthens ownership of the learning process, and supports the development of skills relevant to the future job market.

Furthermore, the research findings also show an increase in interest in learning as a result of the contextual approach, which is highly relevant in the education context. High learning interest is known to have a positive correlation with academic achievement and learning goal attainment. With the contextual approach, students feel that the material they are learning is relevant to their lives, thus they are more motivated to study more diligently and delve deeper into knowledge. This can improve learning outcomes and have a positive long-term impact, as students with high learning interest are more likely to continue their education with the same enthusiasm in the next stages.

The enhancement of students' perception of learning as more enjoyable is one of the relevant research outcomes in efforts to improve learning effectiveness. Positive perceptions of learning have significant psychological effects on students, making them more motivated to participate actively and positively in class. Enjoyable perceptions also help create a conducive learning environment and make students feel happy and excited to attend classes. Over time, these positive perceptions can shape a

positive attitude toward learning, reinforce positive learning experiences, and encourage students to continue learning and develop their potential more optimally.

Challenges in Implementing the Contextual Approach

This research may also identify several challenges in implementing the contextual approach in teaching Islamic Education (PAI) at the elementary school level, such as resource limitations or a curriculum that does not fully support the implementation of this approach. This can provide insights into the efforts needed to overcome these obstacles in order to enhance the effectiveness of PAI teaching at the elementary school level. The following research findings discuss challenges in implementing the contextual approach:

Table 4. Literature Data on Challenges in Implementing the Contextual Approach

| No. | Research Theme | Results | Description |
|-----|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. | Resource Limitations | Research indicates that one of the main challenges in implementing the contextual approach is resource limitations. Not all schools have adequate access to technology and other supportive resources required to implement this approach. Limited internet access, a shortage of technological devices, or a lack of funds to develop interactive content can be barriers to implementing context-based learning. | Mir Salim Ul Islam, dkk., 2021. |
| 2. | Overcrowded Curriculum | Research also indicates that an overcrowded curriculum poses a challenge in implementing the contextual approach. When the curriculum contains a multitude of subjects to be covered in limited time, teachers may find it difficult to integrate real-life contexts into learning. This can lead to a more traditional approach to teaching, focusing on completing the curriculum rather than emphasizing relevance and application in students' lives. | Kathleen Graves dan Sue Garton, 2017. |
| 3. | Curriculum Incompatibility with Local Context | Research indicates that the contextual approach may face challenges when the curriculum used does not align with the local context of the students. Nationally or globally designed curricula may inadequately accommodate cultural differences, local environments, or values. This can make it difficult for teachers to find relevant and suitable contexts to connect learning with students' lives, thus reducing the effectiveness of the contextual approach. | Kashif Raza dan Catherine Chua, 2022. |

| | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 4. Development of Appropriate Learning Materials | Research indicates that developing learning materials that align with the context and needs of students is a challenge faced by teachers and educational institutions. Designing learning materials that are relevant to students' lives yet still adhere to established curricula requires more effort and time. This challenge can make some teachers reluctant or find it difficult to adopt contextual approaches in teaching Islamic Education in primary schools. | Zuheir N. Khalaif, dkk., 2021 |
| 5. Evaluation and Measurement of Learning Outcomes | Research also indicates that challenges arise in evaluating and measuring learning outcomes with a contextual approach. Assessing students' learning achievements may not always be feasible using conventional methods because students can demonstrate their understanding in various ways depending on the learning context. Therefore, obtaining accurate and meaningful evaluation data about learning outcomes can be complex in the implementation of this approach. | Elke Kümmel, dkk., 2020. |

Table 4 provides information that the main challenges in implementing a contextual approach involve resource limitations in schools, where not all have adequate access to technology and other supporting resources, such as limited internet access, shortage of technology devices, or lack of funds to develop interactive content (Islam et al., 2021). Furthermore, overly packed curricula also pose a barrier, as when there are many subject matters to cover in limited time, teachers may struggle to integrate real-life contexts into learning (Graves & Garton, 2017). This can lead to a more traditional approach to teaching focused on completing curriculum materials, which overlooks relevance and application in students' lives (Raza & Chua, 2022). The issue becomes more complex when the curriculum used does not align with students' local contexts, as nationally or globally designed curricula may not adequately accommodate cultural, environmental, or local values differences, thus reducing the effectiveness of the contextual approach (Khlaif et al., 2021). Furthermore, developing learning materials that match students' contexts and needs also presents a challenge for teachers and educational institutions because designing learning materials relevant to students' lives while still adhering to the established curriculum requires more effort and time, which may make some teachers reluctant or find it difficult to adopt a contextual approach to teaching (Kümmel et al., 2020). Finally, challenges arise in evaluating and measuring learning outcomes with a contextual approach, as measuring students' learning achievements may not always be possible using conventional methods; students may demonstrate their understanding differently depending on the learning context.

The challenges in implementing a contextual approach underscore the importance of identifying and addressing these barriers to enhance the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. Developing strategies, support from schools and government entities, as well as active participation from teachers, students, and parents can help overcome these challenges and maximize the benefits of the contextual approach in Islamic religious education at the elementary level.

Implementing a contextual approach in PAI learning at elementary schools may face several challenges that need to be addressed. One of the main challenges is resource limitations, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas. The availability of technology devices, internet access, and other supporting resources may be inadequate, hindering teachers from delivering technology-based or interactive learning. Therefore, efforts to expand access to resources and technology need to be made to support more effective implementation of the contextual approach.

An overly packed curriculum also poses a challenge in implementing the contextual approach. Many schools are confronted with curricula that have a lot of subject matter to cover in limited time. This can cause teachers to feel restricted in incorporating contextual aspects into learning due to time constraints. Efforts to integrate real-life contexts with lesson materials can become more difficult and result in learning being more focused on completing the curriculum rather than material relevance to students' lives. Therefore, consideration should be given to adjusting and reducing curriculum content to make room for a more empowering contextual approach to enhance student motivation and engagement in learning.

Research data on the contextual approach in PAI learning at elementary schools indicate significant implications for improving student motivation. By connecting learning to real life and presenting relevant material, students tend to be more enthusiastic, eager, and actively participate in the learning process. This approach also has a positive impact on enhancing understanding and internalizing Islamic values. Students can more easily relate religious concepts to real-life situations and internalize religious values more deeply. Consequently, the contextual approach can be an effective means of shaping students with noble and Islamic morals.

The research results also highlight the importance of creating a dynamic and engaging learning environment. By providing relevant and engaging learning, students perceive learning as enjoyable. This positive impact can increase student engagement in learning and create a positive learning atmosphere. It is important to tailor the contextual approach to the local context and students' needs, making learning more relevant and supporting holistic student development. Considering the implications of these research findings, the implementation of the contextual approach in PAI learning at elementary schools can provide significant benefits for student motivation and learning quality.

The use of a contextual approach in the researched PAI learning offers an innovative solution to enhancing student motivation and their understanding of Islam. Moreover, the research results also highlight the challenges faced in implementing this approach, including resource limitations and a packed curriculum. By identifying these challenges, this research contributes valuable insights into developing more adaptive and relevant strategies and approaches to overcoming these barriers. The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to improving the quality of PAI learning at elementary schools, providing valuable

guidance for curriculum and learning development that is more empowering in the context of Islam.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of a contextual approach in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at the Elementary School level has a positive impact on enhancing student motivation and their understanding of Islamic teachings. Linking lesson materials to students' real-life experiences encourages them to be more enthusiastic, eager, and actively participate in the learning process. Additionally, this approach helps students internalize religious values more deeply, as they can more easily relate religious concepts to real-life situations they experience. Despite the challenges in implementing the contextual approach, such as resource limitations and a packed curriculum, this research provides valuable guidance in overcoming these barriers and developing more adaptive and relevant strategies in PAI learning at the Elementary School level. In conclusion, the contextual approach is an innovative and potentially effective alternative for enhancing the quality of PAI learning and shaping students who are more morally upright and enthusiastic in understanding and internalizing the values of Islam.

REFERENCES

- Adiyono, A., Fadhilatunnisa, A., Rahmat, N. A., & Munawarroh, N. (2023). Islamic Religious Education Learning Outcomes Evaluation: Implementation of Steps, Concepts and Solutions in Public Elementary School. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v15i4.4384>
- Amirudin, J., Ruswandi, U., Erihadiana, M., & Rohimah, E. (2022). Implementation of The CTL Learning Model Through Islamic Moderate Values in Improving the Attitude of Students Tolerance in School. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 5(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v5i2.2201>
- An, Y. (2018). The effects of an online professional development course on teachers' perceptions, attitudes, self-efficacy, and behavioral intentions regarding digital game-based learning. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 66(6), 1505–1527. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-018-9620-z>
- Bahri, R., Kholis, N., & Bakar, Y. A. (2023). Striding Towards Harmony: Research-Based Learning in Islamic Religious Education to Strengthen Washatiah Islamic Values. *Al-Insiyroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 9(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.35309/alinsiyroh.v9i2.6930>
- Berestova, A., Burdina, G., Lobuteva, L., & Lobuteva, A. (2022). Academic Motivation of University Students and the Factors That Influence It in an E-Learning Environment. *Electronic Journal of E-Learning*, 20(2), 201–210.
- Chamami, M. R., Nasikhin, N., & Saefudin, A. (2022). Development of Augmented Reality in Islamic Religious Education as an Anti-Corruption Learning Medium. *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan*, 20(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v20i2.3817>
- Graves, K., & Garton, S. (2017). An analysis of three curriculum approaches to teaching English in public-sector schools. *Language Teaching*, 50(4), 441–482. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444817000155>

- Isik, U., Tahir, O. E., Meeter, M., Heymans, M. W., Jansma, E. P., Croiset, G., & Kusurkar, R. A. (2018). Factors Influencing Academic Motivation of Ethnic Minority Students: A Review. *Sage Open*, 8(2), 2158244018785412. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018785412>
- Islam, M. S. U., Kumar, A., & Hu, Y.-C. (2021). Context-aware scheduling in Fog computing: A survey, taxonomy, challenges and future directions. *Journal of Network and Computer Applications*, 180, 103008. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnca.2021.103008>
- Khlaif, Z. N., Salha, S., Affouneh, S., Rashed, H., & ElKimishy, L. A. (2021). The Covid-19 epidemic: Teachers' responses to school closure in developing countries. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 30(1), 95–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2020.1851752>
- Kümmel, E., Moskaliuk, J., Cress, U., & Kimmerle, J. (2020). Digital Learning Environments in Higher Education: A Literature Review of the Role of Individual vs. Social Settings for Measuring Learning Outcomes. *Education Sciences*, 10(3), Article 3. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10030078>
- Meliani, F., Muhyiddin, D. S., Ruswandi, U., Arifin, B. S., & Suzana, S. (2022). Challenges of Using Technology In Islamic Religious Education Learning (Application of Flipped-Classroom in Class X PAI Subjects at SMA Plus Pagelaran Subang). *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(001), Article 001. <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.viii4.3536>
- Mishra, N. R. (2023). Constructivist Approach to Learning: An Analysis of Pedagogical Models of Social Constructivist Learning Theory. *Journal of Research and Development*, 6(01), Article 01. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jrdn.v6i01.55227>
- Muslimin, Putri, R. I. I., Zulkardi, & Aisyah, N. (2020). Learning Integers with Realistic Mathematics Education Approach Based on Islamic Values. *Journal on Mathematics Education*, 11(3), 363–384.
- Natsir, T., Rasyid, A. R., & Bassey, S. A. (2023). The SAVI Learning Model and the 21st Century Skills: Developing Critical Thinking, Collaboration, and Creativity in Students Vocational High School. *International Journal of Environment, Engineering and Education*, 5(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.55151/ijeedu.v5i1.96>
- Nor, A., Yusuf, M., & Arabi, I. (2024). Strategies for Improving the Professionalism of Islamic Education Teachers at University. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 5(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v5i1.774>
- Passey, D. (2019). Technology-enhanced learning: Rethinking the term, the concept and its theoretical background. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 50(3), 972–986. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12783>
- Raza, K., & Chua, C. (2022). Global-Contextual TESOL Leadership in Diverse and Multi-Dimensional Contexts: A Paradigmatic Shift. *International Journal for Leadership in Learning*, 22(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.29173/ijll12>
- Riza, S., Mardhatillah, Rizki, D., & Ihsan, M. A. N. (2024). The Effect of The Use of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Learning Model on The Cognitive Value of Students of Elementary School. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 10(5), Article 5. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppipa.v10i5.6988>
- Rosyad, A. M. (2019). The Implementation of Inductive Teaching and Learning Methods in Islamic Education Learning. *Risalah, Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam*, 5(2, Sept), Article 2, Sept. https://doi.org/10.31943/jurnal_risalah.v6i1.107

- Schmidt, J. A., Rosenberg, J. M., & Beymer, P. N. (2018). A person-in-context approach to student engagement in science: Examining learning activities and choice. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 55(1), 19–43. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21409>
- Serrano, D. R., Dea-Ayuela, M. A., Gonzalez-Burgos, E., Serrano-Gil, A., & Lalatsa, A. (2019). Technology-enhanced learning in higher education: How to enhance student engagement through blended learning. *European Journal of Education*, 54(2), 273–286. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12330>
- Setianingrum, D. A., Ula, E. M., Pratiwi, S., & Jumadi, J. (2022). Development of LKPD with a Contextual Approach Based on Flipbook to Increase Science Learning Motivation. *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Indonesia (Indonesian Journal of Science Education)*, 10(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.24815/jpsi.v10i4.26098>
- Shofiyah, N. A., Komarudin, T. S., & Hasan, M. S. (2023). Innovations in Islamic Education Management within the University Context: Addressing Challenges and Exploring Future Prospects. *Nidhomul Haq : Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.31538/ndh.v8i2.3625>
- Smith, M., Worker, S., Meehan, C., Schmitt-McQuitty, L., Ambrose, A., Brian, K., & Schoenfelder, E. (2017). Defining and Developing Curricula in the Context of Cooperative Extension. *The Journal of Extension*, 55(2). <https://doi.org/10.34068/joe.55.02.22>
- Thibodeaux, T., Harapnuik, D., & Cummings, C. (2019). Student Perceptions of the Influence of Choice, Ownership, and Voice in Learning and the Learning Environment. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 31(1), 50–62.
- Ulum, B., & Syafi'i, I. (2022). Implementing Contextual Teaching and Learning Models in Islamic Religious Education Learning. *Academicus: Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 1(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.59373/academicus.viii.6>
- Vaishali, & Misra, P. K. (2020). Implications of Constructivist Approaches in the Classrooms: The Role of the Teachers. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 7(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2020/v7i430205>
- Wiyono, B. B., Degeng, I. N. S., Wedi, A., & Wu, H. H. (2020). The Effectiveness of the Implementation of School-Based Curricula and National Curriculum-Based Learning Processes in Primary Schools in Indonesia. 608–616. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201214.306>
- Wong, J. T., & Hughes, B. S. (2023). Leveraging learning experience design: Digital media approaches to influence motivational traits that support student learning behaviors in undergraduate online courses. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 35(3), 595–632. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-022-09342-1>
- Young, S., & Nichols, H. E. (2017). A reflexive evaluation of technology-enhanced learning. *Research in Learning Technology*. <https://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/id/eprint/4348/>

