

The Strategies of Teachers in Developing Islamic Social Awareness through Social Studies Instruction at MI Nurul Huda Raji, Demak

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Abstract

This study aims to examine and describe teachers' strategies in fostering Islamic social awareness through Social Studies learning at MI Nurul Huda Raji, Mijen District, Demak Regency. The background of this research is based on the importance of integrating Islamic values into Social Studies education as part of strengthening students' character in madrasahs. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that teachers implement integrative, contextual, and inspirational learning strategies. Islamic values such as ukhuwah Islamiyah (Islamic brotherhood), trustworthiness (amanah), and social responsibility are integrated into Social Studies content through thematic approaches, exemplary stories, and reflective learning modules. Teachers also apply active learning methods such as group discussions, case studies, and role-playing, allowing students to directly construct value understanding through experiential learning. Students' responses to these strategies are highly positive, as evidenced by behavioral changes that reflect empathy, responsibility, and participation in both social and religious activities. Key supporting factors for the success of these strategies include the teacher's role as a role model, the religious culture of the madrasah, and parental involvement. The study concludes that Social Studies learning designed in an integrative manner with Islamic values is effective in shaping students' Islamic social awareness. Appropriate strategies, strong teacher modeling, and a supportive environment form the foundation of contextual and sustainable Islamic character education

Keywords: Teachers strategies, Islamic social awareness, Social Studies learning

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dan mendeskripsikan strategi guru dalam menumbuhkan kesadaran sosial Islami melalui pembelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) di MI Nurul Huda Raji, Kecamatan Mijen, Kabupaten Demak. Latar belakang penelitian ini didasarkan pada pentingnya integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam pendidikan IPS sebagai bagian dari penguatan karakter siswa madrasah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menerapkan strategi pembelajaran yang integratif, kontekstual, dan inspiratif. Nilai-nilai Islami seperti ukhuwah Islamiyah, amanah, dan kepedulian sosial diintegrasikan ke dalam materi IPS melalui pendekatan tematik, kisah keteladanan, dan modul ajar reflektif. Guru juga menggunakan metode pembelajaran

aktif seperti diskusi, studi kasus, dan permainan peran yang memungkinkan siswa membangun pemahaman nilai secara langsung dari pengalaman belajar. Respon siswa terhadap strategi ini sangat positif, ditunjukkan dengan perubahan sikap yang mencerminkan empati, tanggung jawab, dan partisipasi dalam kegiatan sosial dan keagamaan. Faktor pendukung utama keberhasilan strategi ini adalah peran guru sebagai teladan, kultur madrasah yang religius, serta keterlibatan orang tua. Simpulan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran IPS yang dirancang secara integratif dengan nilai-nilai Islam efektif dalam membentuk kesadaran sosial Islami siswa. Strategi yang tepat, peran guru yang kuat, dan dukungan lingkungan menjadi fondasi utama dalam pendidikan karakter Islami yang kontekstual dan berkelanjutan

Kata kunci: Strategi guru, kesadaran sosial Islami, Pembelajaran IPS.

Introduction

Social Studies (IPS) learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level holds a central role in shaping students into individuals with strong social awareness and sensitivity toward their environment. More importantly, within the context of Islamic education, Social Studies also serves as a strategic medium for instilling Islamic values in community life. This means that Social Studies education is not solely aimed at cognitive development but also encompasses affective and spiritual dimensions, fostering a comprehensive sense of Islamic social awareness among students (Daradjat, 2005).

The enhancement of Islamic social awareness in Social Studies learning at madrasahs can be understood through various educational theoretical perspectives. Thomas Lickona emphasizes that character education involves three essential components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. These aspects are reflected in the teacher's strategy, which not only teaches social concepts but also facilitates students in experiencing and practicing Islamic values such as empathy, trustworthiness (*amanah*), and mutual assistance (*gotong royong*) in daily life. Furthermore, the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach proposed by Johnson (2002) is relevant, as it connects learning material with students' real-life experiences for instance, linking Social Studies lessons with practices like charity (*infak*), community service, or Islamic-based social concern. In its implementation, teachers may also leverage students' multiple intelligences as proposed by Howard Gardner, particularly focusing on interpersonal and spiritual intelligences through group discussions, reflection, and collaborative learning. The holistic education perspective introduced by Ron Miller (2000) further reinforces the importance of instructional strategies that not only emphasize academic achievement but also develop students' social and spiritual dimensions comprehensively. Additionally, the social construction of knowledge theory by Berger and Luckmann explains that knowledge is shaped through social interactions and cultural experiences, highlighting the teacher's role as a facilitator of values in constructing contextual and meaningful Islamic

social awareness. Thus, integrating these approaches offers a strong theoretical foundation for developing Social Studies instructional strategies rooted in Islamic values and aligned with the character development needs of madrasah students today.

The urgency of this research arises from contemporary educational challenges, particularly the degradation of social and moral values. Elementary-level students need to be equipped with social knowledge that is not only theoretical but grounded and aligned with Islamic teachings. As emphasized by Mujahidun (2020), ideal Islamic education is one that shapes individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also socially and spiritually sensitive in their daily lives. Based on pre-observation conducted by the researcher at MI Nurul Huda Raji in Mijen Subdistrict, Demak Regency, it was found that teachers had attempted to relate IPS content to Islamic values such as honesty, cooperation (*gotong royong*), and responsibility. However, the implementation of learning strategies tended to be conventional and had not fully activated students' Islamic social awareness. Students remained passive in responding to social phenomena and did not consistently demonstrate care toward their social environment at school or in the community. This indicates a gap between the ideal goals of Islamic value-based IPS learning and its practical application in the classroom. Therefore, further research is needed to explore effective learning strategies that can actively cultivate Islamic social awareness. A transformative teaching strategy becomes crucial one that not only instructs (teaching) but also holistically educates (educating) students (Tilaar, 2002).

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative focus between Social Studies learning and the development of Islamic social character an area that remains underexplored, particularly within the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Most previous studies have emphasized cognitive aspects or general learning achievement in IPS without investigating the dimension of Islamic values and spirituality within instructional strategies. Thus, this research aims to fill that gap. Theoretically, it enriches Islamic education literature, particularly in the integration of general subjects and Islamic values. This aligns with Amin Abdullah's (2012) concept of integrated-interconnected knowledge in Islamic education, wherein every science, including Social Studies, should be contextualized with Islamic values as a foundation for character development.

Practically, this study offers a reference model for teachers in designing IPS instructional strategies that address affective and spiritual dimensions. Teachers are no longer seen merely as transmitters of knowledge but as facilitators in the formation of Islamic character within social contexts. In this dual role, teachers become educators and value shapers

in the realm of Islamic social education. MI Nurul Huda Raji was chosen as the research site due to its strong religious character and its placement within a socially diverse community. These factors make the school a strategic setting for investigating how Social Studies teachers develop instructional strategies that are both socially relevant and aligned with Islamic principles. Furthermore, the school's location in Demak a region with deep Islamic historical roots adds contextual and historical significance to this study.

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze teachers' strategies in fostering Islamic social awareness through Social Studies learning at MI Nurul Huda Raji, Demak. This research also aims to identify the forms of internalized Islamic social values, the teaching approaches used, and the supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing those strategies. Accordingly, the findings are expected to contribute practically to the development of socially grounded Islamic education practices in madrasah ibtidaiyah

Method

Penelitian This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of teachers' strategies in fostering Islamic social awareness through Social Studies (IPS) learning at a madrasah. This approach was chosen because it allows for a comprehensive depiction of social reality, especially within an educational context that is rich in values and meaning. Qualitative research provides room for the researcher to naturally observe learning processes and interpret teachers' strategies based on direct field experiences (Moleong, 2017). The research was conducted at MI Nurul Huda Raji, an Islamic elementary school (madrasah ibtidaiyah) located in Mijen Subdistrict, Demak Regency. The school was purposively selected due to its strong commitment to instilling Islamic values within the learning process and its location in a socially diverse community. The primary subject of this research was the IPS (Social Studies) teacher, supported by the school principal and several upper-grade students as additional informants. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives.

Data were collected through three main techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participant observation was used to directly observe IPS learning processes, teacher-student interactions, and the implementation of Islamic social values within the classroom. Interviews were conducted with the Social Studies teacher to explore the strategies used, the goals of Islamic values integration, and the teacher's perceptions of students' social awareness. Additional interviews with the school principal and students were carried out to provide broader perspectives. Documentation analysis involved reviewing learning documents such as Learning Outcomes (CP), Learning Objectives Flow (ATP), teaching modules, and

school activity records relevant to IPS learning and Islamic values.

Data analysis was conducted interactively, following the stages proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction was done by sorting relevant data aligned with the research focus, then presenting them in narrative or thematic form for easier interpretation. Conclusions were drawn based on field findings and were repeatedly verified to avoid misinterpretation. To ensure data validity, the researcher applied triangulation techniques—both source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from teachers, students, and the principal, while methodological triangulation compared the results from observation, interviews, and documentation. Additionally, a member check was carried out by confirming findings with informants to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation.

The researcher also paid close attention to ethical considerations by obtaining formal permission from the school before data collection. Throughout the research process, the confidentiality of informants' identities was protected, and all information was reported honestly and objectively. The relationship between the researcher and the informants was built on mutual respect, openness, and professionalism, creating a conducive atmosphere for data gathering. Through this methodological approach, the study aims to provide a valid, in-depth, and contextually relevant portrayal of teachers' strategies in fostering Islamic social awareness through IPS learning, while offering meaningful contributions to the development of contextual learning practices within the Merdeka Curriculum in Islamic elementary schools. Ethics in Islamic Education research is not merely about administrative procedures, but also concerns moral values such as honesty and responsibility. Researchers must uphold the dignity of participants and ensure fairness throughout the research process (Aliwan, 2025)

Result and Discussion

A. Teachers' Strategies in Integrating Islamic Social Values into Social Studies Learning

The integrative strategy implemented by Social Studies teachers at MI Nurul Huda Raji involves embedding Islamic values in every topic of the Social Studies curriculum. For example, when discussing social harmony, the teacher connects the material to the concept of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* and interfaith tolerance. This strategy reflects a synergy between the curriculum content and Islamic teachings. Teachers also design learning activities by including Islamic narratives, such as the stories of prophets and companions that demonstrate Islamic social behavior. These stories help students understand values through affective and contextual

approaches. Students are not merely memorizing material, but are also encouraged to reflect on the values within it.

This integration is also evident in the development of teaching modules. The modules used by teachers contain Islamic reflection points and assignments that encourage students to demonstrate social behavior aligned with Islamic teachings. As a result, the internalization of values occurs systematically. The thematic approach in the Merdeka Curriculum offers teachers the flexibility to creatively blend social and spiritual values.

Teachers have the freedom to design learning content that reflects local and religious values without straying from the learning outcomes. Teachers understand that elementary students tend to absorb values more effectively through direct practice and exemplary stories. Therefore, their teaching strategies are not only instructional but also inspirational, fostering Islamic social awareness through meaningful learning experiences. This strategy is supported by constructivist theories by Piaget and Vygotsky, which emphasize the importance of constructing knowledge through social and contextual interaction (Slavin, 2009). In the context of Islamic education, this aligns with the *tarbiyah* approach, which emphasizes character formation through experience and habituation (Muhaimin, 2011).

B. Teaching Methods and Media Used

To foster Islamic social awareness, teachers employ a variety of active and collaborative learning methods. Group discussions, case studies, and role-plays are preferred methods as they allow students to engage actively and directly in the learning process. This transforms students from passive listeners into active participants. Case studies are often used to highlight local social phenomena, such as how to respond appropriately to a peer experiencing difficulties. The teacher then guides students in seeking solutions through Islamic approaches, such as encouraging mutual assistance or almsgiving.

The media used in the learning process include short videos, situational images, and reflective worksheets. These media are adapted to the character of madrasah students, incorporating religious and moral nuances to strengthen the ethical foundation of the learning experience. Teachers also utilize the local environment as a learning resource. Students are invited to observe social activities in their community, such as community service or religious events, and discuss them in the context of Social Studies and Islamic teachings. This strategy builds a strong connection between lesson content and students' real-life experiences.

In addition, teachers develop their own modules that explicitly incorporate Islamic values into each learning activity. These modules include activities, projects, and assessments that emphasize the integration of social knowledge with Islamic values. This approach is in line with

the humanistic learning theory developed by Carl Rogers, which emphasizes meaningful and student-centered learning (Sanjaya, 2007), as well as Paulo Freire's transformative pedagogy that calls for education to liberate and foster critical consciousness (Freire, 2006).

C. Students' Responses and Behavior Toward the Learning Strategies

Students' responses to Islamic social value-based Social Studies learning are highly positive. Based on observations and interviews, students expressed strong enthusiasm for learning activities such as discussions, role-playing, and social projects. They found it easier to understand material when connected to real-life experiences or moral stories. Students also exhibited behavioral changes in their daily routines, such as helping friends more often, being more orderly in queues, and actively participating in religious activities at school. This demonstrates that the implemented learning strategies influenced not only their knowledge but also their actual behavior.

Some students were even able to relate classroom content to their personal experiences. For instance, when discussing community support, a student shared how they helped a sick neighbor. This emotional connection reinforces the internalization of Islamic social values. Reflective learning practices also help students recognize the importance of ethics in social life. Teachers provide space for students to write personal reflections or express their thoughts verbally, making students feel respected and encouraged to think critically. Support from the school's religious environment also plays a vital role in reinforcing students' Islamic social behavior. Activities such as communal prayers, regular charity collections (*infak*), and classroom cleanliness programs serve as habitual practices that align with the goals of Social Studies learning.

These student responses affirm the effectiveness of Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which states that behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1986). When students observe Islamic social behaviors modeled by teachers and peers, they are more likely to emulate them.

D. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Strategies

The success of teachers in fostering Islamic social awareness is supported by several factors. One of the most crucial is the support from the school principal, who provides space for innovation in the development of teaching modules and the implementation of contextual learning. This support creates a positive academic climate that is open to values-based approaches. The religious culture of the madrasah also serves as a key asset in the learning process. Values such as mutual respect, cooperation, and community spirit are embedded in the

school culture, making it easier to link Social Studies lessons with actual practices in the school environment.

Parental involvement is another important factor. Parents who are concerned about their children's moral development tend to support school activities that promote Islamic social values, such as social service projects, donations to orphans, and Ramadan activities. However, there are also some challenges. One of them is limited classroom time, which requires teachers to select strategies that are efficient yet meaningful. In addition, there is a lack of teaching materials that specifically integrate Social Studies with Islamic values, pushing teachers to innovate independently. The lack of training on integrative learning approaches is also a barrier. Teachers need collaborative forums to share best practices and access academic references that can enrich Islamic value-based Social Studies teaching. According to Aisyah and Rahmawati (2023), improving teacher professionalism in Islamic character education requires structured training and institutional support.

E. The Role of Teachers as Social Role Models

Teachers serve not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as influential social role models for students. A teacher's example in behavior, speech, and fair treatment of students serves as a vital source of implicit value-based learning. Students often imitate their teachers' conduct in daily life. For instance, a teacher who consistently greets students warmly, listens patiently, and shows concern for others becomes a real-life example that students emulate both at school and at home. Such modeling is an integral part of character education that cannot be separated from the learning process. Teachers also become sources of inspiration when sharing their social experiences with students, such as community engagement or acts of compassion. These stories create a strong emotional impact that supports the internalization of Islamic social values.

According to Al-Attas (1990), ideal Islamic education contains an element of *ta'dib*—the cultivation of ethical behavior and manners through example. In this context, teachers fulfill that role in their daily interactions with students. When teachers consistently serve as models of ethical and value-based conduct, the internalization of Islamic social awareness occurs not mechanically, but through meaningful and consistent habituation. Recent research by Nizar and Yusron (2023) also emphasizes that role modeling plays a significant role in shaping students' social character in madrasah settings.

F. Relevance to Learning Outcomes (CP) and Learning Objectives (ATP)

The Learning Outcomes (*Capaian Pembelajaran* or CP) in the Social Studies subject under the Merdeka Curriculum emphasize social awareness, diversity, and civic responsibility. At MI

Nurul Huda Raji, Social Studies teachers interpret these outcomes through an Islamic lens—understanding responsibility as a form of *amanah* (trust) and care for others as a form of social worship (*ibadah sosial*). The Learning Objectives Flow (*Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran* or ATP) developed by teachers reflects an integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. In practice, these objectives are translated into learning activities that encourage critical thinking as well as the demonstration of Islamic social behavior.

The teaching modules used incorporate reflection activities, authentic assessments, and social action tasks—all designed to strengthen both the curriculum goals and Islamic values. This shows that value integration does not contradict the curriculum, but rather enriches the meaning of learning. Thus, Social Studies learning becomes not only cognitively meaningful but also spiritually and socially engaging for students. This is aligned with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, which positions students as active and holistic learners (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). The alignment between CP, ATP, and teachers’ strategies in integrating Islamic social values demonstrates that character development can be systematically built within the national curriculum framework.

G. Implications for Islamic-Based Character Education

Social Studies learning that integrates Islamic social values significantly contributes to strengthening Islamic-based character education. Students not only understand social concepts, but also experience and practice the importance of Islamic behavior in community life. Values such as empathy, cooperation, justice, and responsibility become part of students’ daily routines through teacher-designed learning activities. These implications are visible not only in the classroom but also in students' social interactions at school and home. In this way, Social Studies becomes not merely a subject of memorization, but a vehicle for character education. The character education referred to here goes beyond discipline and school rules it involves a deep awareness rooted in Islamic teachings and social realities.

Such a learning approach helps shape individuals who are spiritually and socially resilient. Students learn that knowledge must impact life, and values must form the foundation of action. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that Social Studies learning based on Islamic social values is an effective pathway to forming a generation that is knowledgeable, moral, and socially conscious. Islamic education becomes increasingly contextual when it successfully integrates knowledge (*'ilm*) and action (*'amal*) into a unified learning experience (Sutrisno, 2023).

Table

No	Main Focus	Key Summary
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1	Integrated & Contextual Strategy	Islamic values were systematically integrated into Social Studies using thematic approaches, Islamic stories, and reflective modules.
2	Student Character Development	Students showed improved empathy, discipline, and participation in religious and social activities.
3	Supporting Factors	Teacher role models, school religious culture, and parental support were crucial to success.

Conclusion

The Based on the results of the study on teachers' strategies in fostering Islamic social awareness through Social Studies learning at MI Nurul Huda Raji, Demak, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Integrated and Contextual Learning Strategies. Teachers successfully integrated Islamic social values into Social Studies instruction in a systematic and contextual manner. Through thematic approaches, the use of Islamic narratives, and reflective and applicable teaching modules, students not only understood Social Studies content cognitively but were also guided to internalize values such as *ukhuwah* (Islamic brotherhood), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) in their daily lives.
2. Positive Changes in Student Attitudes and Social Awareness. The implemented learning strategies had a tangible impact on students' character development. There were notable improvements in empathy, discipline, social concern, and students' participation in religious and social activities at the madrasah. Active and reflective learning made students more aware of their social responsibilities as members of both their community and the Muslim ummah.
3. The Role of Teachers and the Learning Environment as Key Factors. The success of this learning approach was supported by the central role of the teacher as a role model, the religious culture of the madrasah, and the support of both the school principal and parents. Despite challenges such as limited time and a lack of specific instructional media, teachers demonstrated innovation and resilience. The teacher's exemplary conduct proved to be a key element in sustainably fostering Islamic social awareness

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