

## Integrative strategy of learning methods to improve academic achievement in Islamic religious education

Mukhlis Fathurrohman<sup>a,1,\*</sup>, Ngatmin Abbas<sup>b,2</sup>, Edy Muslimin<sup>c3</sup>

<sup>\*abc</sup> Institut Islam Mamba'ul Ulum, Surakarta, Indonesia.

<sup>\*1</sup> [mukhlisfr70@gmail.com](mailto:mukhlisfr70@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup> [ngatminabbas@gmail.com](mailto:ngatminabbas@gmail.com), <sup>3</sup> [edymuslimin1@gmail.com](mailto:edymuslimin1@gmail.com).

\*Correspondent Author :

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### KEYWORDS

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### ABSTRACT

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) occupies a strategic position in shaping the character and spiritual values of students. However, the effectiveness of achieving IRE learning objectives is highly dependent on the methods employed by teachers. The use of single learning methods has proven inadequate in addressing all learning domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Therefore, an integrative strategy is required in developing combinations of relevant and contextual learning methods. This study aims to examine the influence of integrating various learning methods on student academic achievement in IRE subjects, as well as to formulate an ideal strategy for developing method combinations that can strengthen all dimensions of student competency. This research employs a qualitative approach with library research methodology, sourcing from relevant books and scientific journals. The findings indicate that the integration of methods such as lectures, discussions, demonstrations, assignments, and exemplary conduct (*uswatun hasanah*) can create more dynamic, effective, and long-term impactful learning. Integrative learning strategies that involve method variations within a single learning cycle have proven to enhance student engagement, deepen material comprehension, and significantly shape religious character. The implications of this research emphasize that IRE teachers need to design flexible, reflective, and transformative learning plans to support the comprehensive achievement of Islamic educational objectives.

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## Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a central role in forming the religious and moral character of students. In IRE learning practices, teaching methods serve as key elements that determine the success of achieving educational objectives. Learning methods are not merely technical instruments but also reflect the philosophy and approach of teachers in transforming Islamic teaching values. The use of methods such as lectures, discussions, assignments, demonstrations, and exemplary conduct (*uswatun hasanah*) has become common practice; however, their effectiveness is largely determined by context, student characteristics, and the integration among methods

themselves (Zulaicha & Wulandari, 2025). Teachers cannot rely on a single method alone in conveying complex religious values. Therefore, a more integrative approach is necessary so that the learning process is not only cognitively effective but also touches the affective and psychomotor aspects of students (Sukarlan, 2025).

The problem emerging in the field is the suboptimal utilization of learning method combinations that can address the challenges of competency-based education, namely preparing students who are capable of internalizing knowledge while applying it in daily life. Many previous studies have only examined the effectiveness of specific learning methods separately, without considering how synergy among methods can create more holistic learning. This creates a research gap regarding how the integration of learning methods can tangibly improve academic achievement while enhancing students' spiritual values in the IRE context.

Several educational theories strengthen the urgency of method integration. Vygotsky's social constructivism theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process, where discussion and collaborative methods are highly relevant (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). Meanwhile, behaviorist theory supports the use of assignments and demonstrations as tools for habit formation and behavioral change through reinforcement (Schneirla, 1966). On the other hand, the humanistic approach emphasizes exemplary conduct as an effective instrument in value cultivation. Thus, the integration of learning methods not only fulfills academic needs but also shapes the religious character and personality of students.

In this context, research examining the integration of learning methods on IRE academic achievement becomes highly relevant. This research brings novelty in comprehensively examining how the use of learning method combinations—not merely single method selection—can support more meaningful, contextual, and transformative IRE learning. Furthermore, this approach aims to identify the most suitable learning model for addressing competency-based curriculum demands and the dynamics of student development in the modern era.

The research problems that form the basis of this study are: (1) How does the integration of various learning methods affect student academic achievement in Islamic Religious Education? (2) Which learning methods can enhance students' understanding and practice of Islamic values? (3) What is the ideal strategy for developing learning method combinations to simultaneously strengthen cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions?

## **Method**

This research employs a qualitative approach using library research methodology (Subagiya, 2023). This approach was selected because the primary focus of the research is to examine, study, and analyze theoretical concepts and practices of learning method integration in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) based on various credible literature

sources. Library research seeks to explore and synthesize various thoughts from educational experts, learning theories, national education policies, and findings from previous research related to IRE learning topics (Zed, 2008).

The data in this research were obtained from library-based sources consisting of primary and secondary literature. Primary literature includes Islamic education textbooks, peer-reviewed and accredited scientific journals indexed in recognized national and international databases, such as SINTA, Google Scholar, DOAJ, Scopus, and Web of Science, as well as official education policy documents, including the National Curriculum and the National Education System Law. Meanwhile, secondary literature comprises previous research findings, dissertations, theses, and other academic reports relevant to the discussion of learning methods.

Data collection was conducted by exploring library sources through physical and digital libraries, using keywords such as "IRE learning methods," "learning method integration," "Islamic religious education," "spiritual competence," and "religious character education." The selected literature sources were those with academic authority and high relevance to the study focus.

Data analysis was performed using content analysis and thematic approaches. The researcher identified, categorized, and interpreted data in the form of ideas, theories, and findings from various literature, then synthesized them into a coherent framework of thought (Mulyana et al., 2024). This analysis aims to reveal how various learning methods can be integrated theoretically and practically in Islamic religious education to improve students' academic and spiritual achievement.

To maintain the validity and objectivity of the study, the researcher employed source triangulation strategies by comparing various references from different perspectives. Additionally, source criticism was conducted to assess the feasibility and relevance of data. Through this method, the research is expected to provide conceptual contributions in formulating integrative, contextual, and transformative IRE learning strategies.

## **Result and Discussion**

The integration of learning methods in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has proven to provide significant influence on improving student academic achievement. (Astutik, 2023) states that the combination of various learning methods can address the challenges of diverse learning styles among students in the modern era. In the IRE context, this is highly relevant considering that the teaching materials encompass cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects that must be developed holistically.

The lecture method remains relevant for explaining conceptual Islamic materials, such as the pillars of faith and pillars of Islam. However, (Amru, 2024) reminds that the use of lectures alone causes students to tend to be passive. Therefore, this approach

should be integrated with question-and-answer and discussion methods to create two-way communication and active student involvement in the learning process (Sulaiman et al., 2024).

In the aspect of worship practice, the demonstration method has proven effective. Ansyari (2025) shows that direct practice, such as congregational prayer or zakat simulation, has a significant impact on students' psychomotor abilities. When students not only listen but also practice, their understanding becomes deeper and more applicable.

Meanwhile, the assignment method encourages student responsibility and independence. Tasks in the form of material summaries, memorization of Quranic verses, or projects to create da'wah posters, if well-designed, will enhance cognitive aspects while instilling religious values. According to (Mulyasa, 2023), the importance of task variation is emphasized to avoid boredom and facilitate diverse student potential.

The exemplary method or *uswatun hasanah* is the most powerful method in touching the affective aspect. According to Puskur Kemendikbud (2020), IRE teachers are not only instructors but also models of religious attitudes and Islamic ethics. Exemplary conduct is more effective than verbal instruction in forming students' character and morals deeply and sustainably.

The contribution of each method to learning achievement is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Contribution of Each Method to Learning Achievement

Learning Method	Cognitive Domain	Affective Domain	Psychomotor Domain
Lecture	Very High	Low	Very Low
Question-Answer	High	Medium	Low
Assignment	Medium	Medium	Medium
Demonstration	High	High	Very High
Uswatun Hasanah	Medium	Very High	High

This table confirms that no single method can reach all learning domains in a balanced manner. Therefore, method integration becomes a primary need so that IRE learning objectives can be achieved completely and effectively.

Furthermore, the integrative approach allows learning to proceed flexibly, adaptively, and contextually. Teachers who are sensitive to classroom dynamics and student needs can combine methods according to situations, for instance, starting with lectures, then continuing with group discussions, worship practice, and closing with value reflection through exemplary conduct.

Findings from recent literature show that method integration provides higher results compared to single approaches in religious learning. This is because integration can combine students' reasoning (mind), heart (emotions), and actions (behavior) in one series of mutually reinforcing learning processes.

Thus, the success of IRE learning is greatly influenced by teachers' ability to design and implement learning method integration. This approach aligns with the demands of the 2013 Curriculum and Independent Curriculum, which emphasize the development of students' complete competencies in the domains of knowledge, skills, and religious attitudes.

## **2. Synergy of Learning Methods on IRE Student Academic Achievement**

In implementing the IRE curriculum that emphasizes holistic competence, learning method integration becomes a highly recommended strategic approach. As explained by (Arifin & Nurhakim, 2025), teachers need to design learning that not only transfers knowledge but also shapes attitudes and builds student skills through varied and contextual method combinations.

When teachers integrate lecture methods with group discussions, there occurs a combination between core concept delivery and dialogue that stimulates students' critical reasoning. According to (Septiani & Badarudin, 2024), discussion is an effective medium for enhancing students' analytical power and communication skills, especially when supported by explorative questions from teachers that trigger reflection on Islamic values in daily life.

The demonstration method combined with assignments has proven to improve worship practice skills and student responsibility. In research conducted by (Fakhrudin & Sutarto, 2023), students who were given *dhuha* prayer practice assignments at home and then reported them in worship journals experienced improvements in discipline and understanding of religious rituals.

Meanwhile, the integration of *uswatun hasanah* with narrative approaches (storytelling) provides significant affective impact. Teachers who convey stories of Prophet Muhammad SAW while displaying courteous attitudes in daily classroom activities will provide strong moral influence. Research by (Abbas & Khoir, 2023) confirms that exemplary conduct packaged in value-based learning can enhance students' empathy and religious spirit.

The importance of selecting complementary methods is also emphasized by Suryadinata (2025), who reminds that method integration is not only about technical variation but also concerns harmonization between learning objectives, student character, and social context. Teachers who successfully integrate methods appropriately will create learning environments that are alive, reflective, and productive.

To strengthen the analysis, the following table 2 presents a comparison between single-method learning and integrative method learning on learning achievement dimensions.

Table 2. Comparison of Single Method and Integrative Method Learning on Learning Achievement Dimensions

<b>Learning Achievement Dimension</b>	<b>Single Method Learning</b>	<b>Integrative Method Learning</b>
Cognitive	Limited to memorization and basic understanding; lacks depth	Deeper and contextual; develops critical reasoning
Affective	Less touching attitudes and values; instructional in nature	Touches value aspects, attitudes, and character through active reflection
Psychomotor	Passive student activities; limited practice	More diverse and applicable student activities
Student Participation	Teacher dominance; students tend to be passive	Collaborative; students actively discuss and ask questions
Learning Motivation	Quickly bored; not all students motivated	More enjoyable; increases interest and curiosity
Knowledge Transfer	Limited to classroom and textual materials	Relevant to real life and cross-disciplinary

The above table shows the comparison between single method and integrative method learning across various learning achievement dimensions. Single method learning tends to focus on basic cognitive aspects, such as memorizing and understanding materials textually, but less develops affective and psychomotor dimensions. This often causes students to feel bored quickly and less actively involved in the learning process.

Conversely, integrative methods show broader and deeper contributions. In cognitive aspects, students are invited to think critically and understand materials contextually. From the affective side, integrative methods are better able to cultivate attitudinal values, such as responsibility, tolerance, and curiosity. Learning activities also become more dynamic, with student involvement in discussions, projects, and direct practice. Learning also becomes more meaningful by connecting subject materials with real-life contexts, making knowledge easier to transfer and apply.

This table demonstrates that the integrative approach excels in building complete and sustainable learning outcomes. It not only produces good understanding but also forms positive attitudes and habits that last long.

Analysis results from several recent literature studies strengthen that teachers need to perform reflective functions in selecting and combining learning methods. As conveyed by (Qur'an, Zakariah, & Novita, 2024), the success of religious teaching is not sufficient to

be measured only from students' academic scores but also from the internalization of spiritual values evident in behavior.

In practice, integrative learning can be conducted through simple scenarios: teachers open lessons with brief lectures, followed by small group discussions, continued with practice demonstrations, reflective assignments, and reinforcement through teachers' daily attitudes. This strategy allows learning to proceed comprehensively without fragmentation.

Learning method integration becomes a primary factor in IRE learning success. Learning designed collaboratively and structurally will not only improve academic achievement but also build students' complete personality and religious attitudes, which align with contemporary Islamic education vision.

### **3. Ideal Strategy for IRE Learning Method Integration in Three Competency Dimensions**

Developing combination strategies for learning methods that can strengthen all three student competency dimensions—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor—requires comprehensive and reflective planning. (Mulyasa, 2022) states that learning success greatly depends on the compatibility between methods, learning objectives, and student characteristics. In the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) context, the integrative approach becomes a strategic approach relevant to Independent Curriculum demands and Pancasila Student Profile.

The first recommended strategy is applying a scaffolding approach, where teachers begin with lecture methods to build basic understanding (cognitive), then continue with discussions and question-answers that encourage value exploration (affective), and end with demonstrations or worship practice (psychomotor). According to (Rahmawati, Kusuma, & Hamdani, 2023), this approach helps students understand, internalize, and practice materials gradually.

The second strategy is method rotation within one learning session. In this scenario, one IRE class hour can be divided into three parts: the initial part for classical material delivery (lecture), the middle part for active learning (discussion, educational games), and the final part for real action (worship practice, project assignments). (Pratama & Rudyanto, 2024) notes that method variation in one learning cycle will increase student concentration and involvement.

The third strategy is method differentiation based on student characteristics. In one heterogeneous class, teachers can divide students into groups based on learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. According to (Haryono et al., 2025), methods such as demonstration are suitable for kinesthetic students, while storytelling is effective for auditory students, and visual media is suitable for visual students. Thus, learning can target all students' needs fairly.

The fourth strategy emphasizes integration of methods and authentic assessment. For example, students invited to practice prayer in demonstration methods are also assessed through reflective journals or group presentations. According to (Suryani, 2022), assessment must align with methods to reflect achievements in all three domains: understanding, attitudes, and skills.

The fifth strategy is strengthening the teacher's role as facilitator and model. In this model, teachers not only deliver materials but also demonstrate religious attitudes in real actions. (Abbas, Rochmawan, Fathurrohman, & Ulfah, 2024) reminds that exemplary conduct (*uswatun hasanah*) is not merely a method but part of a religious learning spiritualization strategy that has strong impact on student affection.

Table 3. IRE Learning Method Integration Strategy

Learning Stage	Method	Competency Domain	Assessment Tool
Opening	Lecture, Storytelling	Cognitive	Quiz, Question-Answer
Core 1	Discussion, Question-Answer	Cognitive + Affective	Discussion Sheet
Core 2	Demonstration, Practice	Psychomotor + Affective	Direct Observation
Closing	Reflection, Exemplary Conduct	Affective	Journal, Student Feedback
Independent Task	Project, Memorization, Written Task	Cognitive + Psychomotor	Portfolio, Peer Review

This table provides systematic structure for teachers to arrange methods according to learning stages and competency achievement targets. Teacher flexibility in modifying stages according to classroom context is crucial so this strategy remains adaptive.

From these various strategies, the basic principle is balance between methods, media, and learning objectives. Teachers do not need to use all methods in one meeting but choose the most relevant and impactful ones according to material needs and student characteristics. (Yufiarti, Japar, & Siska, 2023) suggest using weekly reflective techniques by teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of methods used.

Thus, the ideal strategy in developing IRE learning method combinations is one that targets all three learning domains proportionally, flexibly, and oriented toward forming noble character and student academic achievement. This aligns with the direction of national education transformation that emphasizes integration of values, skills, and knowledge as a whole.

## Conclusion

The integration of learning methods in Islamic Religious Education represents a highly effective pedagogical strategy for improving student academic achievement

comprehensively. Study results show that each method, such as lectures, question-answers, demonstrations, assignments, and exemplary conduct, has its respective advantages and limitations. Therefore, the use of single methods is inadequate to achieve all learning objectives that involve cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains simultaneously.

The integrative use of methods has proven capable of creating more dynamic, contextual, and long-term impactful learning processes. Lecture and discussion methods are effective in building conceptual knowledge; demonstration and assignments encourage practical skills and responsibility; while teacher exemplary conduct has great influence in forming students' religious attitudes and character. This strategy aligns with competency-based learning paradigms and humanistic approaches in Islamic education.

Furthermore, ideal strategies in developing method combinations include: implementing scaffolding approaches, method rotation within sessions, differentiation based on student characteristics, alignment between methods and assessment techniques, and strengthening teacher exemplary conduct. These strategies support achieving complete learning objectives in accordance with Independent Curriculum demands and Pancasila Student Profile.

Thus, it can be concluded that learning method integration is not merely a technical choice but becomes a strategic necessity in religious education processes oriented toward building student character, competence, and spirituality. Teachers capable of developing and implementing integrative strategies appropriately will contribute greatly to producing learners who are intellectually intelligent, spiritually resilient, and socially excellent.

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