

Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious and Ethics at SMP Negeri 3 Batang

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ABSTRACT

The need for Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and ethics that can accommodate the diversity of students' intelligence. This study aims to analyze the background of the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based IRE and ethics, teachers' implementation strategies, and their impact on academic outcomes, which include three aspects, namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method at SMP Negeri 3 Batang. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. The results showed that PAI and Budi Pekerti learning based on Multiple Intelligences created an interactive, contextual, and humanistic learning atmosphere. Students were more motivated, actively involved in classroom activities, and experienced integrated strengthening of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This study confirms the contribution of Howard Gardner's theory in designing learning that values student intelligence. Thus, this learning approach is relevant as a transformative strategy to produce a generation that is not only academically superior but also has character, is adaptive, and is able to face the challenges of 21st-century education.

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Introduction

Islamic Religious Education serves as a vehicle for transformation that not only equips students with religious knowledge, but also develops their potential comprehensively. (Mukhlis, 2024) Although ideally Islamic Religious Education should be taught holistically, the reality on the ground shows that its implementation is still far from expectations. The current PAI learning process is still dominated by a conventional approach that is textual in nature and emphasises memorisation alone. (Muwafiqoh et al., 2023) This approach places more emphasis on cognitive mastery of the material without touching on the affective and psychomotor dimensions that should be an integral part of religious learning. Teaching methods are often teacher-centred with a monotonous delivery style that lacks interactivity and pedagogical innovation. (Harmi, 2022) The field of education, which is essentially a place to learn, read, understand one's personality and abilities, and discover one's true competence in life, is an ideal and significant field. However, the problem lies in the

movement and process of the field itself, which is not yet effective and efficient in meeting the needs and desires of society. Existing education is merely a process of knowledge transfer and has not touched on more fundamental issues such as exploring one's potential to face the rapid changes of the times.(Sutrisno, 2005)

The learning process in the school environment plays a strategic role in developing students' intelligence. The nine types of intelligence as proposed by Howard Gardner need to be developed optimally, especially for students who do not excel in certain types of intelligence, so that they can receive assistance and guidance through appropriate learning methods in the education process.(Mansir & Purnomo, 2020) In the context of Islamic Religious Education, which is part of the national curriculum, the application of multiple intelligences theory also contributes to producing graduates who not only have broad and deep scientific knowledge but also have faith and piety towards Allah SWT.(Fikriyah & Aziz, 2018) Therefore, teachers are required to understand and recognise the potential, talents, and abilities of students in order to develop their intelligence comprehensively as part of achieving educational goals.

This study aims to support and complement previous studies. This study is important given the need for education that liberates students. At the same time, educational reform has been part of Indonesia's policy since its independence in 1945. Based on this background, this study aims to identify three main issues. First, the background of Islamic Religious Education and Morality-based Multiple Intelligences learning is examined. Second, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education and Morality-based Multiple Intelligences learning is examined. Third, the impact of Islamic Religious Education and Morality-based Multiple Intelligences learning on student achievement is examined.

This study is based on the argument that Islamic Religious Education should provide freedom that encourages students to become active subjects in the classroom. Liberating education is the key to optimally developing students' potential. Miskan & Abdul Gafur argue that Islamic education should be a vertical platform that gives students the freedom to explore their creativity and abilities. This means that students are not only objects but also subjects.(Gafur, 2022) Furthermore, Howard Gardner emphasises that every human being has a different level of intelligence.(Gardner, 1983)

Research Methods

The research approach used by researchers is qualitative research methods with a type of data analysis in the form of case study. The choice of qualitative research method is which aims to provide an in-depth analysis of a specific phenomenon, namely Islamic Religious Education and Ethics based on Multiple Intelligences at SMP Negeri 3 Batang. The case study focuses on a specific case with specific place and time constraints.(Creswell, 2023)

The research approach used in this study is a qualitative method employing a case study design. The selection of a qualitative approach aims to provide an in-depth understanding of a specific educational phenomenon, namely the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education and Ethics at SMP Negeri 3 Batang. A case study was considered appropriate because it focuses on a particular case within a specific setting and period, enabling a comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon in its natural context (Creswell, 2023).

Qualitative research emphasizes understanding participants' perspectives, experiences, and interactions rather than measuring variables quantitatively. This approach allows researchers to examine educational processes holistically by considering the social, cultural, and institutional contexts in which learning activities take place. Consequently, the findings are

expected to provide rich and meaningful insights into the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based learning.

The case study design enables an intensive investigation of educational practices within a single institution. Rather than seeking broad generalizations, the study aims to generate a detailed understanding of how Multiple Intelligences principles are integrated into Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. This approach facilitates the exploration of planning, implementation, evaluation, and the challenges encountered during the learning process.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Batang because the school has implemented instructional practices that accommodate students' diverse intellectual potentials. This setting provides a suitable context for examining how teachers adapt learning strategies to address different learning characteristics and abilities. The selection of the research site was therefore based on its relevance to the objectives of the study.

Data were collected through multiple qualitative techniques, including observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations provided direct evidence of teaching and learning activities, while interviews with school leaders, teachers, and students offered comprehensive perspectives on the implementation of the learning model. Supporting documents such as lesson plans, curriculum materials, and school records were also examined to enrich the findings.

The use of multiple data collection methods enabled data triangulation, thereby enhancing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings. Information obtained from one source was compared with data from other sources to ensure consistency and accuracy. This triangulation process helped minimize researcher bias and strengthened the validity of the interpretations.

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative model involving data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Throughout the research process, data were continuously organized, categorized, and interpreted to identify emerging themes related to the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. This iterative analysis allowed the findings to develop systematically from the collected evidence

To ensure research rigor, several trustworthiness criteria were applied, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Member checking, prolonged engagement in the research setting, and careful documentation of the research process were employed to enhance the reliability of the findings. These procedures ensured that the conclusions accurately reflected the participants' experiences and the actual conditions in the field

The qualitative case study also provides flexibility for exploring complex educational interactions that cannot be adequately explained through quantitative measurement alone. By focusing on participants' experiences, classroom dynamics, and institutional practices, the study offers a deeper understanding of how Multiple Intelligences can be effectively integrated into Islamic Religious Education and Ethics

Overall, the qualitative case study approach provides a comprehensive framework for investigating the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based learning at SMP Negeri 3 Batang. Through an in-depth examination of educational practices within their real-life context, the study contributes meaningful insights into the development of innovative learning strategies that accommodate students' diverse intellectual abilities while supporting the objectives of Islamic education.

This study uses primary and secondary data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Primary data was obtained directly from sources at SMP Negeri 3 Batang, namely the Deputy Head of Curriculum (Wakakur), all Islamic Education (PAI) teachers, and representatives of eighth and ninth grade students. Interviews with these informants aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education and Character Education. Secondary data included official school documents, such as the Operational Curriculum of the Education Unit (KOSP), PAI teaching tools, teacher teaching schedules, audio recordings, photos and videos, and relevant scientific references. The observation technique was used to directly observe the learning process and the use of supporting facilities, while documentation helped in analyzing school policies and learning implementation. This secondary data provided additional context and supported comprehensive research analysis.

This study focuses on describing Islamic Religious Education and Character Education based on Multiple Intelligences at SMP Negeri 3 Batang. More specifically, this study highlights three main aspects that are the focus of the study. First, it explores the strategic and pedagogical reasons behind the application of the Multiple Intelligences approach in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education. Second, it describes and analyzes how the learning process is designed and implemented by educators. Third, it examines the impact of Multiple Intelligences-based learning on student learning outcomes, particularly in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, as indicators of overall learning success.

1. Analysis of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics on Multiple Intelligences

Islamic Religious Education and Ethics-based learning using multiple intelligences at SMP Negeri 3 Batang accommodates the diversity of students' potential and learning styles. Through this learning approach, it is possible to reach all types of student intelligence in a more meaningful and fair manner. Each student has different intelligences, especially in this subject matter, which teaches students spiritual values through various approaches in accordance with their potential. With this approach, it is hoped that the potential of students in Islamic Religious Education and Morality can be maximized, which is useful for developing their potential holistically.

Based on field data, the initial conditions for teaching Islamic Education and Ethics based on multiple intelligences present significant challenges. This teaching method faces major challenges in helping students determine the learning style that suits their type of intelligence. This challenge arises because students have different dominant intelligences, learning styles and diverse learning preferences.

As for the initial conditions based on the students' perspective, student 3 revealed that PAI and Budi Pekerti learning based on multiple intelligences at SMP Negeri 3 Batang showed a shift towards more adaptive and enjoyable learning, which is a much more meaningful learning approach. This elicited positive reactions from the students. They feel more involved because learning activities are no longer monotonous and instructive, but varied according to their intelligence. Students with linguistic intelligence, for example, appear enthusiastic when asked to make presentations or write reflections on Islamic values, while students with musical intelligence respond well when learning is linked to recitations from the Qur'an or nasyid. Similarly, students with kinesthetic intelligence find it easier to understand the material through practical worship activities.

Furthermore, according to Thomas R. Hoerr, when considered carefully, the theory of multiple intelligences-based learning can make the world of education appreciate the diversity (intelligences) of students. In fact, it is possible to recognise the different uniqueness of each individual. (Hoerr, 2000)

If the most important part (the core) or even the entirety of the theory can be implemented, then it can be said that innovation in PAI and character education has been successful. Conversely, if this is not yet the case, then reforms need to be made in other areas that have a direct or indirect influence so that implementation can be optimised. To borrow Agus Efendi's argument, in the world of education, building a tradition and culture of philosophical and scientific thinking is certainly not easy. A democratic education and learning system is needed, as well as an innovative-creative and transformative-responsive curriculum system that adapts to societal changes, a systematic thinking training system, communicative-persuasive and effective-innovative textbooks, an intellectual tradition and a democratic socio-political system, and a cultural system that supports excellence and respects spiritual-religious human rights.(Efendi, 2010)

Ki Hadjar Dewantara believed that the most important thing in education was to instil culture and immerse children in culture so that they could become well-rounded individuals. Therefore, children have a natural ability to overcome problems and should be given the opportunity to think freely and broadly.(Suparlan, 2016)

From all of these theories and articles, a consistent pattern emerges that the application of Multiple Intelligences in PAI is able to overcome the weaknesses of traditional approaches that tend to emphasise cognitive memorisation. These studies support field results showing that MI-based learning not only improves academic outcomes but also encourages active engagement, strengthens social skills, and fosters religious and adaptive character in students. Thus, the findings of this study do not stand alone but are reinforced by various national and international academic studies, making this thesis theoretically and empirically sound.

From all of these theories and previous studies, a consistent pattern emerges indicating that the application of Multiple Intelligences (MI) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) effectively addresses the limitations of traditional instructional approaches that primarily emphasize cognitive memorization. By recognizing the diversity of students' intellectual potentials, MI-based learning provides opportunities for learners to develop their abilities through varied instructional strategies that are more engaging, meaningful, and student-centered.

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that MI-based instruction enhances not only academic achievement but also students' motivation, creativity, and participation in classroom activities. Learning experiences that accommodate different types of intelligence enable students to become more actively involved in constructing knowledge while improving their confidence and communication skills. Such findings reinforce the importance of adopting differentiated instructional approaches in contemporary Islamic education.

In addition to improving cognitive outcomes, previous research highlights the contribution of Multiple Intelligences to the development of affective and social competencies. Collaborative learning activities, reflective practices, and experiential learning encourage students to strengthen interpersonal relationships, empathy, cooperation, and respect for others. These competencies are particularly important in Islamic Religious Education, where moral and character development constitutes a primary educational objective.

The findings of the present study are consistent with these theoretical and empirical perspectives. The implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based learning at SMP Negeri 3 Batang demonstrates that accommodating diverse learning styles creates a more inclusive learning environment in which students are encouraged to participate actively according to

their individual strengths. This approach contributes not only to improved learning outcomes but also to the cultivation of religious values, positive attitudes, and adaptive behaviors.

Overall, the convergence between the present findings and previous national as well as international studies indicates that Multiple Intelligences provides an effective pedagogical framework for Islamic Religious Education. The consistency of these findings strengthens the theoretical and empirical foundation of this study, confirming that MI-based learning represents a valuable strategy for improving educational quality while fostering students' intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual development in a balanced and holistic manner.

Conclusion

Based on the problem formulation and the results of the discussion in this study, the author concludes as follows. The implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education at SMP Negeri 3 Batang is motivated by the need to provide a more contextual, inclusive, and relevant educational model that accommodates the diversity of students' intelligences. This background also addresses the limitations of conventional learning models, which have tended to emphasize cognitive aspects and memorization alone. The implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education at SMP Negeri 3 Batang is carried out using a variety of learning strategies, involving linguistic, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and spiritual intelligences. This strategy enables teachers to become not only conveyors of material, but also facilitators who provide space for each student to express their dominant intelligence.

The impact of implementing Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education is evident in student learning outcomes, both in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Students show improvement in understanding the material, strengthening religious and social attitudes, and practical worship skills. Thus, the application of this approach has been proven to contribute to the formation of religious, adaptive, and characterful students in line with national education objectives.

The impact of implementing Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education is evident in student learning outcomes across the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Students demonstrate improved understanding of Islamic concepts, stronger religious commitment, enhanced social attitudes, and better practical worship skills. These findings indicate that the integration of Multiple Intelligences principles contributes significantly to the holistic development of learners by addressing their diverse intellectual potentials.

The cognitive impact is reflected in students' increased ability to understand, analyze, and apply Islamic Religious Education concepts in various learning contexts. The use of diverse instructional strategies enables students to engage with learning materials according to their dominant intelligences, resulting in greater comprehension, critical thinking, and long-term retention of knowledge. This student-centered approach also encourages active participation and independent learning.

In the affective domain, the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based learning strengthens students' religious awareness, moral values, and social responsibility. Learning activities designed to accommodate interpersonal, intrapersonal, and spiritual intelligences foster attitudes such as discipline, honesty, empathy, cooperation, and respect for others. These values are gradually internalized through meaningful learning experiences that connect religious teachings with students' everyday lives.

The psychomotor aspect also demonstrates positive outcomes, particularly in the development of practical religious skills. Students become more proficient in performing acts of worship, reciting the Qur'an, and participating in various religious activities through hands-on learning experiences. By engaging learners in practical applications of Islamic teachings, the instructional process bridges the gap between theoretical understanding and real-life practice.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the Multiple Intelligences approach creates a more inclusive and motivating learning environment. Students with different learning styles and abilities are provided with equal opportunities to demonstrate their strengths and participate actively in classroom activities. This inclusiveness increases learning motivation, self-confidence, and collaborative engagement among students while reducing dependence on conventional teacher-centered instruction.

The implementation of this approach also enhances teachers' instructional effectiveness. By employing varied teaching methods, educational media, collaborative activities, and authentic assessments, teachers are better able to facilitate meaningful learning experiences that address the diverse needs of students. This flexibility supports continuous improvement in both teaching quality and student achievement.

Another significant impact is the integration of academic learning with character education. Multiple Intelligences-based instruction not only develops students' intellectual capacities but also strengthens ethical behavior, emotional maturity, and spiritual awareness. As a result, learning becomes a comprehensive process that prepares students to face academic, personal, and social challenges responsibly.

The findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing that Multiple Intelligences-based learning promotes balanced educational development by integrating cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. Such an approach aligns with the principles of holistic education, where success is measured not only by academic achievement but also by the development of character and life skills.

Overall, the implementation of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education demonstrates substantial educational benefits for both students and the learning process. The approach contributes to improved academic performance, stronger religious values, enhanced social competence, and practical religious skills while creating a more engaging and inclusive learning environment.

In conclusion, the application of Multiple Intelligences-based Islamic Religious Education has proven to contribute significantly to the formation of religious, adaptive, competent, and character-driven students. These outcomes are consistent with the objectives of Indonesia's national education system, which seeks to develop learners who are intellectually capable, morally responsible, spiritually grounded, and socially engaged.

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