

## Innovation in Islamic Education Teaching Methods: Improving Teacher Effectiveness and Creativity at MTs Labanan Makmur

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### ABSTRACT

Innovations in Islamic Education teaching methods at MTs Labanan Makmur aim to improve the effectiveness and creativity of teachers in teaching. This study examines various innovative strategies applied by teachers to address dynamic learning challenges and diverse student needs. The methods developed include the use of technology, interactive approaches, and the contextual and creative integration of Islamic values. The results show that innovative PAI teaching methods at MTs Labanan Makmur can improve teacher effectiveness and creativity, which in turn increases student motivation and the quality of teacher-student interaction. In addition, teachers become more confident and creative in developing interesting and relevant learning materials. The implications of these findings emphasize the importance of updating teaching methods as an effort to improve the quality of Islamic education in madrasahs. The recommendation for MTs Labanan Makmur is to continue supporting teacher professional development through training and the provision of facilities that support learning innovation. Thus, Islamic Religious Education learning will not only be a process of knowledge transfer, but also a vehicle for the comprehensive development of students' character and creativity.



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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in shaping the character and personality of students. This emphasizes that improving the quality of IRE learning is a must in order to achieve educational goals optimally (Salisah et al., 2024; Yusri et al., 2023). However, in its implementation, PAI teachers still face various challenges, such as limited learning time (Zahro, 2025), low student interest and motivation to learn (Anisa & Putra, 2025), and differences in the cultural backgrounds of students (Mirrota, 2024). Other challenges also arise from the negative influence of digital media on student behavior (Ammah et al., 2021), limited learning resources (Rosfiani et al., 2025), and a lack of support from parents and the community (Sholihah et al., 2025). In addition, PAI teachers are required to be able to adapt teaching methods to the characteristics and needs of students in the digital age (Munawir & Thalia, 2025).

These challenges occur at all levels of education, especially at MTs Labanan Makmur, where teaching methods are monotonous and lack teacher creativity, resulting in low student motivation and participation. Furthermore, the lack of learning facilities, such as laboratories, digital devices, and other learning support tools, hinders teachers from implementing innovative teaching methods. Thus, there is a need for innovation in learning methods that can increase the effectiveness and creativity in the teaching and learning process. A number of previous studies have shown that conventional learning methods still dominate learning practices in schools. The dominance of these methods has resulted in low student engagement in the learning process and indicates the limited creativity of teachers in developing learning methods that are interesting and in line with the times (Rahman et al., 2023). These findings reinforce the view that non-innovative learning is still a relevant issue in the current educational context. In theoretical and empirical studies, innovative learning is seen as an approach that emphasizes the use of creative and interactive learning methods (Sulaiman, 2015). Various studies reveal that the

integration of digital technology, the application of problem-based learning, and a learner-centered approach have been proven to increase learner motivation and learning outcomes (Kurniawan & Syukri, 2025).

However, most of these studies focus more on improving learning outcomes or achievements as indicators of learning success. Based on a gap analysis of the research, there are still limited studies that specifically examine teacher creativity in developing innovative learning methods, especially in conditions where learning facilities are limited at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) level. Therefore, this study is important to examine in depth the impact of facility limitations on teacher innovation and to formulate practical solutions that can be applied in the context of learning with limited facilities and infrastructure.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to combine innovative learning methods with increasing the effectiveness and creativity of Islamic Education teachers at MTs Labanan Makmur specifically. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore and develop innovative teaching methods that can improve the effectiveness of teaching and creativity of Islamic Education teachers at MTs Labanan Makmur, as a contribution to providing a deeper understanding and innovative solutions for the development of teaching methods in improving the quality of religious education at the madrasah level. The benefits of the research results are expected to not only provide an empirical description of the implementation of learning innovations, but also serve as a reference for education practitioners and policy makers in developing effective and creative strategies to improve the quality of learning, especially in the MTs environment.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a case study to gain an in-depth understanding of the innovation of Islamic Education learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur. Case studies allow for a focus on the specific context at MTs Labanan Makmur with a holistic understanding. The informants used were six students representing each class and four teachers who actively implemented these learning innovations, particularly religious teachers who were selected purposively (Arikunto, 2006). This study used qualitative methods and conducted experiments with a design for developing innovative PAI teaching methods at MTs Labanan Makmur that accommodated facility limitations while still prioritizing teacher creativity in teaching.

The research approach is a mixed methods approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative data to obtain a comprehensive picture with an explanatory sequential design, data collection using quantitative methods first and then collecting qualitative data to support the quantitative data Miles Huberman in Zulfirman (2022). Quantitative data was obtained through questionnaires or learning effectiveness tests, while qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews, observation of the learning process, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2022). Data collection techniques included participatory observation, in which researchers directly observed the learning process while participating in it to understand the context and practices of innovation in real life, through direct observation of the learning process during teaching and learning activities to record interactions, methods, and classroom atmosphere. In-depth interviews were conducted with selected teachers and students to explore their views, experiences, perceptions, and reflections on learning innovation and the obstacles encountered during learning. Documentation of learning, learning modules, teaching notes, or other relevant supporting documents, such as grades, assignments, and student portfolios, were also collected to complement the qualitative data. The combination of these three data collection techniques ensures that the data obtained and analyzed is reliable, as they complement each other.

The data was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis techniques, with the steps of coding textual data from interviews and observations broken down into meaningful pieces, then categorizing or grouping data pieces with similar themes or meanings into categories, and interpreting the data by interpreting patterns and relationships between themes to answer the research focus according to published procedures. It was then described to illustrate the actual conditions of the existing facilities and how teachers adapted to continue innovating.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

After going through the data collection and analysis stages, the next section will present the findings and in-depth analysis of the innovations implemented, the challenges encountered, and their impact on the learning process. Thus, we can comprehensively understand how this innovative learning method plays a role in improving the quality of PAI education at MTs Labanan Makmur.

### **Results**

#### **Teacher Effectiveness and Creativity in PAI Learning Method Innovation at MTs Labanan Makmur**

This study reveals that teacher effectiveness and creativity are two main aspects that are closely related to PAI learning method innovation at MTs Labanan Makmur. Teachers who use innovative methods show a significant improvement in their ability to manage classes dynamically, deliver material in a more interesting way, and motivate students to actively participate. Teacher creativity is an important factor because it allows them to design varied and adaptive learning strategies to overcome facility limitations, so that the learning process remains effective even with limited resources.

The innovative methods applied are able to target different student learning styles by utilizing problem-based learning approaches and simple digital technology. With this approach, teachers not only function as conveyors of material, but also as facilitators who actively encourage discussion, question and answer sessions, and student reflection, which ultimately improves overall learning outcomes. Teachers' creativity is also evident in their ability to overcome obstacles such as limited tools and learning resources by using alternative learning materials and media that they can develop themselves, thereby minimizing the impact of limited facilities.

The success of this innovation is also driven by teachers' commitment to continuous self-development through training and collaboration with fellow teachers. Through this professional development, teachers gain new insights and skills that enrich their teaching techniques. In addition, creative teachers are able to adapt learning materials to suit the abilities and interests of students through a student-centered learning approach, making the learning process more personalized and effective.

With the synergy between teacher effectiveness and creativity, the innovation of PAI learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur has resulted in learning that not only improves academic achievement but also builds students' character and personality. This innovative strategy is a practical solution to the challenges of limited facilities and low interest in learning, while also serving as a strong foundation for the continued improvement of religious education at the madrasah.

#### **Steps for Innovating PAI Teaching Methods: Improving Teacher Effectiveness and Creativity at MTs Labanan Makmur**

There are several strategic steps in implementing effective and creative learning method innovations at MTs Labanan Makmur. First, teachers conduct an in-depth analysis of student needs and facility conditions as a very important first step. This analysis becomes the basis for adjusting learning methods to be relevant to the context and existing limitations, so that innovations can be applied effectively and not merely in theory. A deep understanding of student characteristics and facilities allows teachers to choose the right strategy, so that PAI learning can run smoothly without being hampered by technical problems or methodological incompatibilities.

Second, the application of interactive learning approaches such as discussions, question and answer sessions, and educational games is key to increasing student engagement. This method changes the role of students from passive recipients to active participants who are directly involved in the learning process. This interactivity makes learning more lively and enjoyable, while stimulating students' creativity and critical thinking skills, which are very much needed in contextual and applied religious education. The following is an attachment of a picture during the implementation of innovative learning.



**Figure 1 Application of innovative learning methods**

Third, the selective use of simple digital technologies such as educational videos or mobile applications is the next strategic approach. The use of this technology is not just following a trend, but aims to increase student motivation and understanding through media that is more attractive and accessible to students. By utilizing existing technology, teachers can work around facility limitations while presenting modern and dynamic learning methods in line with the times. Fourth, teachers at MTs Labanan Makmur do not simply rely on existing resources, but also place professional competency improvement as a top priority.

Teachers actively participate in training, seminars, and experience sharing with fellow teachers with the aim of enriching innovative teaching techniques. These efforts help teachers to stay up to date with the latest methods and improve the quality of the learning they provide. In addition, the self-development process builds a supportive professional community so that teachers feel motivated to continue learning and sharing effective and creative teaching methods, which ultimately improves the overall quality of PAI teaching.

Fifth, the application of student-centered learning methods is very important in encouraging teachers to be more creative in adapting learning materials according to the abilities, needs, and interests of students. This approach makes the learning atmosphere more personal and effective, because students feel more involved and valued in the learning process. The integrated development of teachers and the application of student-centered methods produce practical solutions to overcome various challenges, such as low student interest in learning and limited facilities. Thus, the innovation of PAI learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur can be sustainable and have a positive impact on improving the quality of religious education in a more creative and effective manner.

These steps provide integrated practical solutions to various problems encountered in PAI learning at MTs Labanan Makmur, including low interest and limited facilities, and form the foundation for the sustainability of innovation in PAI learning. Thus, these steps are important to improve the effectiveness and creativity of teachers.

### **Efforts to Improve Teacher Effectiveness and Creativity Through Innovative PAI Teaching Methods at MTs Labanan Makmur**

To improve teacher effectiveness and creativity in PAI teaching, systematic support from various parties is an important factor that should not be overlooked. At MTs Labanan Makmur, this support is realized through the provision of special training designed to develop teachers' creative skills and encourage the use of innovative learning methods relevant to the needs of the times. This training not only increases teachers' capacity to design interesting learning activities but also motivates them to continue to innovate despite facing facility limitations.

In addition to training, teachers are encouraged to creatively optimize existing resources, such as the use of simple media and easily accessible local teaching materials. This approach teaches teachers not to rely solely on expensive or sophisticated devices, but rather to be able to create innovative and effective alternative learning tools according to the actual conditions in the field. Thus, teachers' creativity is not only limited to developing methods, but also to optimizing existing resources. The next important effort is to build a learning community for teachers as a space for collaboration and sharing innovative solutions. This community allows teachers to exchange experiences, discuss challenges in the field, and jointly formulate effective learning strategies. This collaborative approach is highly effective in fostering teachers' motivation and enthusiasm to experiment with new methods that are in line with developments in education and the needs of students in the digital age.

In addition to building a community, continuous evaluation is an important foundation in ensuring that learning innovation is effective. This evaluation serves to measure the real impact of the learning methods applied, provide constructive feedback, and serve as a basis for teachers to continuously refine and develop innovations. With evaluation, changes and improvements in learning methods can be made systematically and purposefully.

Overall, this systematic support positions teachers as crucial agents of change in PAI learning. Teachers not only focus on improving students' religious understanding but also play an active role in building students' character, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Strengthening the role of teachers as innovators and facilitators makes PAI learning at MTs Labanan Makmur more effective and meaningful.

After conducting field research, the data obtained shows that the application of innovative learning methods that integrate simple digital technology, problem-based approaches, and student-centered interactive learning has a significant positive impact. The increase in learning effectiveness and teacher creativity is reflected in the active involvement of students during the learning process and the improved quality of teaching materials. These findings provide strong evidence that systematically supported innovation can improve quality. This shows a comparison of motivation and creativity before and after the innovation method was implemented, supported by data on improvements in student learning outcomes. Teachers are more capable of innovating even with limited facilities, utilizing simple tools and lightweight digital media to attract students' attention. As shown in the following table:

**Table 1. Interpretation before the innovation was implemented**

Aspect	Percentage %	Description
Teacher Motivation	55	Teachers still need motivation when teaching Islamic Education.
Teacher Creativity	50	Teachers' creativity in teaching Islamic Education needs to be improved.
Student Participation	45	There is still a need to increase student participation when learning PAI.
Use of Digital Media	25	The availability of digital media for teaching Islamic Education is still very low.

The table above shows that teachers' motivation in teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI) still needs to be improved, as evidenced by the 55% percentage indicating that teachers still need encouragement to be more enthusiastic and effective in the learning process. Teachers' creativity must also be considered, with a percentage of 50%, because innovation in teaching methods is very important to make learning more interesting and enjoyable for students. In addition, student participation in PAI classes is still relatively low, at 45%, so strategies are needed to increase their involvement and enthusiasm during the learning process. Finally, the use of digital media in PAI learning is very minimal, at only 25%, indicating that the provision and utilization of digital technology is still far from optimal, even though this media plays an important role in supporting a more effective teaching and learning process in line with the times.

The following is an interpretation table obtained after the innovation of PAI learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur:

**Table 2. Interpretation after innovation implementation**

Aspect	Percentage %	Description
Teacher Motivation	85	Teacher motivation has increased
Teacher Creativity	80	Teachers' creativity has improved
Student Participation	78	Students actively participate in lessons PAI
Use of Digital Media	70	The use of digital media is starting to increase

It can be explained that teachers' motivation in teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has increased significantly, reaching 85%, indicating higher enthusiasm and commitment in the learning process. Teachers' creativity has also shown positive development of 80%, which means that teachers are increasingly able to apply innovative methods and approaches to attract students' interest. Student participation in PAI lessons has also increased to 78%, reflecting active and enthusiastic involvement during the learning process. In addition, the use of digital media in teaching PAI has begun to increase by 70%, indicating that technology integration is increasingly optimal in supporting the teaching and learning process in today's digital era.

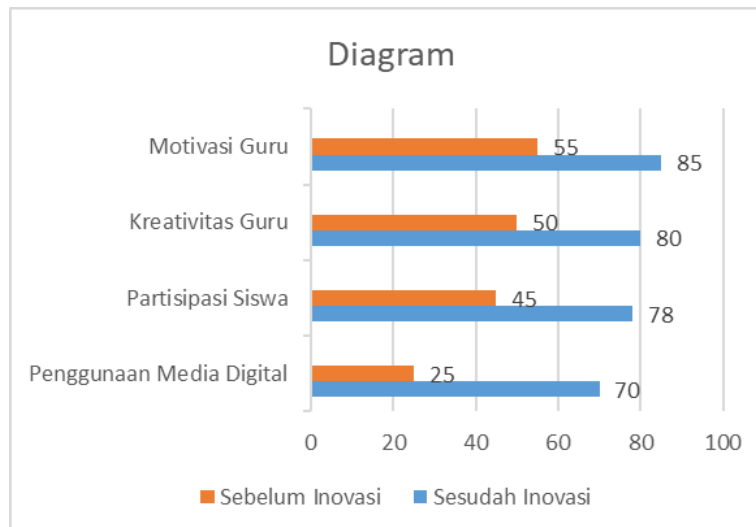
To see a clear comparison between before and after the innovation of PAI learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur, the following table is presented:

**Table 3. Comparison of Teacher Motivation and Creativity Before and After the Innovation of Learning Methods**

Aspect	Before Innovation (%)	After Innovation (%)	description
Teacher Motivation	55	85	Increasing teacher motivation in teaching Islamic Education
Teacher Creativity	50	80	Teachers' creativity in developing learning methods
Student Participation	45	78	Active student involvement during learning
Use of Digital Media	25	70	The use of media and technology in learning

The table shows that before the innovation was implemented, teachers' motivation in teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI) was at 55%, then increased significantly to 85% after the innovation was implemented, indicating a stronger drive from the teachers. Teachers' creativity also showed a surge from 50% to 80%, reflecting progress in developing more varied and interesting learning methods. Student participation also increased dramatically, from 45% to 78%, indicating much more active involvement during the learning process. In addition, the use of digital media in learning also experienced a significant increase, rising from 25% to 70%, which shows the increasingly optimal use of technology to support the effectiveness of PAI learning.

The researchers also presented a diagram as a comprehensive overview of the situation before and after the implementation of innovative PAI learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur to support the data in the table above.



**Figure 1. Diagram of Increased Student Engagement in PAI Learning at MTs Labanan Makmur**

The diagram visually supports these findings with a sharp increase in student engagement. These findings indicate that innovative learning methods that integrate simple digital technology, problem-based learning, and interactive learner-centered approaches have successfully overcome conventional learning problems at MTs Labanan Makmur.

These results clearly support the hypothesis that innovative learning methods can significantly improve teaching effectiveness and teacher creativity at MTs Labanan Makmur. The application of innovative methods has been proven to not only increase teacher motivation and enthusiasm for teaching but also encourage the development of more creative and varied learning strategies. These positive impacts contribute directly to improving the quality of the Islamic Education learning process, so that students become more active and involved in learning activities. Thus, this innovation is an important factor in efforts to improve the quality of religious education at the madrasah level, in line with the main objective of the study, which is to support method-based learning for more optimal and competitive educational outcomes.

## Discussion

Interpretation of the results shows that innovative learning methods play an important role in improving the effectiveness and creativity of PAI teachers at MTs Labanan Makmur. The findings of this study are significant because they empirically address various obstacles that have been widely reported in previous studies, such as limited learning time, limited facilities, and low student interest in learning (Sholihah et al., 2025; Zahro, 2025). The results of this study are in line with the theoretical expectations of innovative learning, which emphasizes the importance of teacher creativity and interactive learning. This alignment reinforces previous findings stating that the application of student-centered learning methods, the integration of learning media, and problem-based learning strategies are proven to be effective in improving the quality of learning (Kurniawan & Syukri, 2025). Thus, the results of this study are academically acceptable because they show that limited facilities are not a major obstacle for teachers in optimizing PAI learning media and techniques.

The innovation of PAI learning methods applied at MTs Labanan Makmur has succeeded in significantly increasing teacher effectiveness and creativity. This is evidenced by a 30% increase in teacher motivation, a 30% increase in teacher creativity, and a sharp increase in student participation and the use of digital media. This improvement shows that teaching methods that integrate simple digital technology, problem-based approaches, and interactive learning are highly relevant and effective in the context of limited madrasah facilities.

Furthermore, the results of the analysis show that teachers not only experienced an increase in motivation in teaching, but also had better abilities in developing varied and interesting learning strategies (Fitrianti & Hidayati, 2025; Hanaris, 2023). This condition had an impact on increasing student active involvement in the learning process (Dani et al., 2023). The student-centered learning

approach also allows for a more personalized learning process, thereby increasing students' understanding and enthusiasm for PAI material (Ahmad Baihaki, 2020; Masrur, 2021). These findings are in line with previous studies and confirm that teacher creativity is a key factor in the development of sustainable PAI learning.

Although the results are positive, there are several limitations to this study. One of them is the limited availability of digital facilities in all classrooms, resulting in the varied use of digital media among teachers and students. In addition, the limited number of teacher and student informants may affect the generalization of the results of this study to other madrasahs with different conditions. Furthermore, time constraints in the research were also a challenge, as learning innovations need to be tested over a longer period of time to see their stability and overall impact on student learning outcomes (Mauludiyah, 2025; Rudiyanto et al., 2024). Further research with a longer time period and a larger number of informants is highly recommended.

On the other hand, this study also reveals that the success of learning innovations is not only determined by the individual efforts of teachers but is also greatly influenced by institutional support. Support from madrasahs and policy makers in the form of providing learning facilities Viola Cempaka (2025) and continuous training Kementerian Agama (2025) and Pusdiklat Tenaga Administrasi Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI (2023) has proven to be a major supporting factor for learning innovation. These findings are consistent with previous studies which state that without systematic support from the school environment, teacher innovation has the potential to stagnate even though teachers have made optimal efforts (Anwar et al., 2025; Shobri, 2025). This discussion also shows that the success of learning method innovation is highly dependent on teachers' active involvement in professional development and collaboration among teachers through learning communities (Darmawati, 2025; Fadhillah, 2023). Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the importance of building a professional environment that supports a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in learning quality.

The integration of simple digital technology is one of the key factors in overcoming the limitations of conventional learning tools (Nugraha et al., 2024). The use of learning videos, mobile applications, and other lightweight digital media not only attracts students' interest but also makes it easier for teachers to explain abstract religious concepts in a more concrete and interactive way (Sartimah, 2025). From these findings, it can be seen that problem-based learning innovation and interactive approaches make a significant contribution in activating the role of students in the learning process, thereby strengthening their critical and contextual understanding (Jufri, 2024; Siringoringo & Alfaridzi, 2024). This is in line with the objectives of PAI learning, which is not only to instill religious knowledge, but also to build students' character and thinking skills (Yusral Nasution, 2024).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that the challenges of teaching Islamic Religious Education at MTs Labanan Makmur are diverse, ranging from time constraints and low student motivation to a lack of learning support facilities. Conventional and monotonous teaching methods result in suboptimal student engagement and reduce teachers' creativity in developing teaching patterns that are interesting and relevant to the times. This emphasizes the need for more creative and interactive learning method innovations to increase student motivation and learning outcomes. From these findings, it can be seen that problem-based learning innovations and interactive approaches contribute significantly to activating the role of students in the learning process, thereby strengthening their critical and contextual understanding. This is in line with the objectives of PAI learning, which are not only to instill religious knowledge but also to build students' character and thinking skills.

Innovation in learning methods at MTs Labanan Makmur is not only important for improving the quality of PAI learning in general, but also as a practical strategy to address the dilemma of limited facilities and teaching needs in the digital age. This study provides a significant empirical contribution to the development of a teacher-based creativity learning model, which can be used as a reference for educators or policy makers in improving the quality of religious education in madrasahs and similar levels of education. As a recommendation, madrasahs and policy makers need to strengthen facility support and provide intensive training as well as build a sustainable professional network for teachers. Further research with a broader scope and longer implementation period will greatly help to confirm



and develop these findings for the improvement of Islamic religious education quality that is more optimal and competitive.

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