

Assistance in The Implementation of Innovative Islamic Religious Education Learning Models for Teachers

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ABSTRACT

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This paper aims to improve the competence of teachers in implementing the innovative Islamic Religious Education learning model at madrasas. The background of this activity is based on the findings that PAI teachers in the madrasah still use many conventional lecture methods, have limitations in designing innovative learning tools, and have not received training or assistance in applying active, collaborative, and contextual learning approaches. Therefore, this activity is designed to provide intensive training and mentoring to introduce innovative learning models and their applications in the classroom. The activity was carried out for six weeks and involved various parties, including the PKM team, madrasah heads, expert resource persons, and PAI teachers as the main participants. The success of the program is measured through increasing teachers' understanding of innovative learning models, the ability to prepare contextual lesson plans, and significant changes in the implementation of learning that are more active, interesting, and touch the affective realm of students. The final results of the activity show that this assistance has a positive impact on the quality of PAI learning, both in terms of process and student learning outcomes. This activity is expected to be a model for empowering teachers in developing religious learning that is relevant to the challenges of 21st century education.

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INTRODUCTION

Madrasah Tsanawiyah Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo is one of the First Level Advanced Schools (SLTP) with Islamic characteristics located in Gending District, Probolinggo Regency. This madrasah has a mission to produce students who not only excel in academic aspects, but also strong in spirituality

and noble morals. As an Islamic-based educational institution, the subject of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is one of the main components in the curriculum and is the main support in the formation of student character (Arifin, 2024; Ataman et al., 2024; Efendi, 2022). However, in its implementation, there are various problems faced by partners, especially in the application of learning methods used by PAI teachers.

First, the learning approach used is still dominated by lecture or expository methods (BZ et al., 2024; Faiz et al., 2023; Hamdan et al., 2022). Teachers transfer more material in one direction without actively involving students in the learning process (Amin, 2024; Purwanto & Wafa, 2023; Sanjani et al., 2024). As a result, students tend to be passive, bored, and do not have a strong emotional or spiritual attachment to the learning material (Chitra & Gurung, 2021; Safitri, 2024; Zuhdi et al., 2024). This condition also hinders efforts to instill Islamic values that should touch the affective and psychomotor realms of students.

Second, teachers' understanding of innovative learning models is still very limited (Madkour & Alaskar, 2024). Teachers are not familiar with activity-based learning approaches (active learning), collaborative learning (cooperative learning), and contextual approaches (contextual teaching and learning) that can actually increase learning effectiveness (Mutmainnah et al., 2024). The inability to implement these learning models is rooted in the lack of special training or intensive assistance that teachers have received so far (Lahmar, 2024).

Third, teachers' ability to design innovative PAI learning tools still needs to be improved. Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) still tend to be textual, do not contain variations in learning strategies (Andiono et al., 2025), and lack of integration between religious values and students' daily lives (Maduningtias et al., 2022). The learning media used is also limited and less interesting for students (Yunita & Mulyadi, 2024).

Fourth, the learning evaluation carried out has also not been able to comprehensively measure the achievement of student competencies, especially in the attitude and spiritual aspects (Akib & Salnawati, 2022). The evaluation model is still dominant in cognitive aspects, such as writing and memorization tests, which do not reflect the success of internalizing Islamic religious values in its entirety (Safitri & Lateh, 2025; Slamet & Mukminatien, 2024).

Fifth, PAI teachers at MTs. Nurur Rohmah have also not received the opportunity for direct assistance from outsiders who have competence in learning innovation. In fact, the existence of a companion is very important to provide new insights, technical guidance, and motivation for teachers to be able to transform learning.

The study to be discussed in this service activity is how to improve the competence of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo in designing and implementing innovative learning models. Therefore, this service activity is designed to assist PAI teachers

at MTs. Nurur Rohmah in understanding, designing, and implementing learning models that are innovative, interactive, and relevant to the needs of today's students. It is hoped that this activity will be able to improve the quality of PAI learning as a whole, as well as foster an active and meaningful learning environment for students.

METHOD

This service activity uses a participatory approach based on collaboration. The activity began with an assessment of the need to map PAI learning problems, especially related to teachers' limitations in utilizing innovative learning models (Miller et al., 2020). After that, an intensive workshop was held on the theory and practice of learning models, such as problem-based learning, cooperative learning, and the use of digital media.

This service activity involved several parties: the head of the madrasah, the deputy head of the madrasah, and the PAI teacher, along with students at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending, Probolinggo, who represented grades VII, VIII, and IX. The selection of samples was carried out purposively, considering that the teachers had different backgrounds, ranging from relatively new young teachers to senior teachers with long experience. Likewise with students, each of them has a representative representative of both classes VII, VIII, and IX. With this diversity, mentoring activities can provide a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of innovative learning models on various characteristics of teachers.

The core stage of the activity is direct mentoring in the classroom, where teachers apply the model that has been learned with the supervision of the service team. Teachers received input in the form of constructive feedback which was discussed in a joint reflection session (Espinosa & Verney, 2021). Monitoring is carried out periodically to assess the consistency of implementation and achievement of learning objectives.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Preparation

Before The first stage of the program involves identifying needs and conducting an initial assessment of the existing conditions in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo. During this phase, data was collected to understand the teaching methods currently applied by PAI teachers, the challenges they face, and the actual conditions of the students. This assessment included a combination of interviews with teachers, classroom observations, and the analysis of lesson plan documents.

This initial preparation and assessment phase is crucial for laying the foundation for the mentoring program aimed at implementing innovative learning models for teachers. The objective is to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the current state of PAI learning in the partner madrasa, and to

identify the specific needs and challenges teachers are facing in their instructional practices. The process began with coordination between the service team and the madrasa's leadership, including the principal, vice principal, and PAI teachers. This initial meeting clarified the purpose, objectives, and stages of the mentoring activities, ensuring that all parties had a shared understanding and strong support for the initiative.

After establishing coordination, data collection was conducted through various techniques. These included direct classroom observations, interviews with PAI teachers, and an analysis of lesson plan documents, such as Learning Implementation Plans (RPP). The results of the observations revealed that the majority of teachers continued to rely heavily on the one-way lecture method in their teaching. There was limited teacher-student interaction, and the classroom lacked active learning approaches that could engage students more effectively. Additionally, many of the lesson plans reviewed were found to be monotonous, offering little variety in learning strategies, and showed minimal integration of Islamic values with the students' real-life contexts.

The findings from this initial assessment provided a detailed map of the teachers' needs, which formed the basis for the development of training materials. The key areas for improvement identified in this phase were the teachers' pedagogic competence, particularly in terms of designing innovative learning strategies and implementing active learning techniques that are more suited to the characteristics of the students and the challenges of contemporary education.

The data collected from the initial assessment highlight a significant gap between the traditional methods still prevalent in PAI classrooms and the more innovative, active learning approaches necessary for engaging students in the 21st-century learning environment. The reliance on lectures, limited interaction, and static lesson plans are major obstacles to achieving more dynamic and participatory learning experiences. This underscores the need for targeted teacher training in active learning strategies, modern pedagogical techniques, and methods for contextualizing Islamic teachings to make them more relevant to students' everyday lives. The low level of integration between Islamic values and real-world contexts also points to the necessity of creating more meaningful connections between the curriculum and students' lived experiences. Addressing these issues in the next stages of the program will be essential for improving the quality of PAI education at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo.

Stages of Implementation of Activities

The innovative learning model training activities carried out at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo are an integral part of the Community Service (PKM) program of Nurul Jadid University. This activity was designed as a response to various problems in the learning process of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) which is still dominated by conventional lecture methods and

the low implementation of active and participatory learning strategies. Therefore, this training aims to improve teachers' pedagogic competence in designing and implementing learning models that are more innovative, contextual, and touch on the affective realm of students.

This training was held in the second week of the series of PKM activities and involved the service team, expert resource persons, and PAI teachers as the main participants. The implementation of the activity took place in the madrasah meeting room with an interactive, open, and participatory atmosphere. The method used in this training is a combination of interactive lectures, case studies, learning simulations, group discussions, and hands-on practice in preparing learning implementation plans (RPP) based on innovative models.

The material presented in the training included the introduction of various innovative learning models such as Problem Based Learning (PBL), Discovery Learning, Project Based Learning (PjBL), and Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). In addition, participants were also invited to understand the basic principles of 21st century learning which emphasizes active student involvement, collaboration, critical thinking, and the integration of technology in learning. The resource person emphasized that innovative learning models not only require teachers' creativity in delivering materials, but also the ability to design learning experiences that are able to touch students' spiritual values.

During the training session, PAI teachers were guided to conduct curriculum analysis, set learning goals, develop innovative learning steps, and choose media and evaluation tools that are in accordance with the learning approach applied. The participants were given the opportunity to compile a lesson plan that integrates innovative learning models with the PAI materials they teach. The results of the RPP draft were then discussed in groups and reviewed by the resource persons as material for reflection and refinement.

This training not only focuses on the conceptual aspect, but also emphasizes practical application in the classroom. Therefore, teachers are given the task of trying to apply the learning model that has been learned in their respective classes in the following week with direct assistance from the PKM team. Thus, this training becomes a bridge between theory and practice that has a direct impact on the learning process in madrasas.

Table 1. Indicator Training

Indicator	Description
Teacher Pedagogic Competence	Improvement in the ability of teachers to design and implement innovative learning models.
Learning Model Variety	Introduction and understanding of various innovative models (PBL, Discovery Learning, PjBL, CTL).
Active Learning Strategies	Implementation of active, participatory, and contextual learning strategies.
Curriculum Analysis Skills	Ability to analyze curriculum and align learning goals with innovative methods.

Development of Lesson Plans (RPP)	Teachers' ability to develop and refine lesson plans that integrate innovative learning models.
Application of Learning Models	Teachers' application of learned models in their classrooms with direct assistance from the PKM team.
Integration of Technology	Integration of technology in the learning process, as part of 21st-century learning principles.
Collaborative Learning	Teachers' ability to foster collaboration and critical thinking among students.
Student Involvement and Engagement	Increase in student engagement and involvement in the learning process.
Reflection and Refinement	Ability to reflect on and refine the lesson plans based on feedback and discussions.
Teacher Confidence and Motivation	Increase in teachers' confidence and motivation to implement innovative teaching strategies.
Practical Classroom Implementation	Teachers' ability to apply new models in real classroom settings effectively.

The innovative learning model training activity received a positive response from teachers. They feel more confident and motivated to change their teaching approach to be more creative and relevant to the needs of today's students. The success of this training is a strong basis for continuous improvement of the quality of PAI learning at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo.

Implementation Assistance in The Classroom

Implementation assistance activities in the classroom are the core stages in a series of community service programs that aim to improve the competence of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo in implementing innovative learning models. This activity was carried out in the third to fourth week of the entire program, after the previous teachers received intensive training on various active, collaborative, and contextual learning approaches.

Mentoring is carried out directly in the classroom, where the implementation team from Nurul Jadid University is actively involved in observing, evaluating, and providing feedback on the implementation of learning carried out by teachers. PAI teachers are given the opportunity to apply the innovative learning models they have learned, such as problem-based learning (PBL), project-based learning (PJBL), contextual teaching and learning (CTL), and cooperative learning. In its implementation, teachers play the role of facilitators who direct students to actively participate, think critically, and solve problems based on the context of daily life.

The accompanying team is not only present as an observer, but also as a reflective partner who helps teachers evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the learning process. During the mentoring process, teachers are given the freedom to experiment with learning models that suit the characteristics of the students

and the material being taught. Each learning session is accompanied by a joint reflection session, where the teacher and the accompanying team discuss things that are going well, the challenges faced, and the improvement strategies for the next meeting.

In its implementation, the mentoring team also provides technical input regarding classroom management, the use of learning media, and strengthening affective aspects in the learning process. Students are actively involved in group activities, open discussions, presentations, and formative evaluations that encourage them to think critically and internalize Islamic values in a more meaningful way. Teachers are starting to show significant changes in the way they manage the classroom, where the learning atmosphere becomes more lively, communicative, and fun.

One of the successes of this activity is shown by the increase in student participation in the learning process and the emergence of teachers' enthusiasm in trying new things that they have never applied before. Teachers began to integrate Islamic values in the contemporary context, such as associating religious teachings with social, environmental, and technological phenomena.

Implementation assistance activities in the classroom are not only a place to apply the theories that have been given in the training, but also a medium for reflection and transformation of PAI learning practices in a sustainable manner. Through this approach, teachers are not only required to master the teaching material, but also to be able to become innovators in the learning process that touches the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions of students in a balanced manner.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are crucial stages in the implementation of this service program because it functions as a tool to measure the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of the process and results of assistance activities for the implementation of the innovative Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning model. This activity was carried out in the fifth week by involving the PKM Team, and PAI teachers who were the main participants in the mentoring. The purpose of this stage is to find out the extent to which the program has run as planned, identify successes and obstacles encountered in the field, and provide input for improvement for the sustainability of the program in the future.

In general, the monitoring process is carried out with an observational and participatory approach. The PKM team made direct visits to the classrooms where teachers applied innovative learning models that had been studied before. During the learning process, observations were made on the application of the methods used by teachers, student involvement in learning activities, and interaction between teachers and students. The aspects observed include the readiness of learning tools, clarity of material delivery, the use of active media and strategies, and the learning climate created by teachers. In addition, the team

also observed the consistency of teachers in applying a contextual, collaborative, and touching approach to the affective realm of students as the main goal of the previous training.

On the other hand, the evaluation process is carried out by collecting feedback from various parties. PAI teachers were asked to fill out evaluation instruments in the form of questionnaires and open-ended questions to assess the extent to which the training and mentoring provided had improved their understanding and ability to implement innovative learning models. Evaluations are also conducted through a reflective discussion forum between teachers and PKM teams to explore their first-hand experience in classroom implementation, including obstacles faced such as time constraints, student readiness, or other technical obstacles.

Students are also involved in evaluations through short interviews or small group discussions. They were asked to express their opinions regarding the learning experience with the teacher after the mentoring took place—whether the learning felt more interesting, fun, and relevant to their daily lives. This information from students is very important to know the real impact of learning innovations on increased student motivation and participation.

From the results of monitoring and evaluation, data was obtained that most teachers were able to adapt the active and contextual learning approach quite well. This can be seen from the variety of methods used, such as group discussions, simulations, and the use of visual media and story narratives in conveying religious materials. Teachers are also starting to be more confident in designing activities that involve students directly. However, there are still some teachers who have difficulty balancing the demands of the curriculum, time, and the use of new methods. Therefore, in the final evaluation, it is recommended that follow-up be carried out in the form of periodic assistance and the development of a learning community between teachers.

This monitoring and evaluation activity makes a great contribution to ensuring the quality of program implementation and strengthening the sustainability of innovative learning practices in partner madrasahs. The findings from this stage will be used as a basis for the preparation of final reports and madrasah policy recommendations.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the initial phase of the program, which involved needs assessment and the identification of existing conditions in the teaching of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo, successfully highlighted critical areas requiring improvement. The data revealed that the predominant use of lecture-based teaching methods was limiting student engagement and hindering the implementation of active learning strategies. Moreover, the lack of integration between Islamic teachings and real-world contexts made the content less

relatable for students (Kuswandi & Asmoni, 2025). These findings underline the need for significant pedagogical change to enhance the learning experience, which would require both teacher training and the development of more innovative teaching strategies.

The training program, which introduced a variety of innovative learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), Discovery Learning, Project-Based Learning (PjBL), and Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), aimed to address these issues. The training focused on equipping teachers with the skills needed to design and implement more engaging and participatory learning experiences. The training aimed to shift the focus from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, promoting greater interaction, critical thinking, and collaboration among students (Munawwaroh et al., 2024). The success of this stage is reflected in the positive feedback from teachers, who expressed increased confidence and motivation to adopt new teaching methods.

An essential element of the training was its emphasis on the contextualization of learning. Teachers were encouraged to connect Islamic teachings with the students' daily lives, thus making the lessons more meaningful and relevant. This approach was particularly important in fostering a deeper understanding of the spiritual and ethical values embedded in the PAI curriculum. The ability to link religious education with real-world contexts is essential in helping students internalize Islamic values and apply them in their daily interactions (Nasor et al., 2022), creating a more holistic learning experience that extends beyond the classroom.

The mentoring stage, which took place in the third to fourth week, was instrumental in translating the theoretical aspects of the training into practical classroom applications. This phase allowed teachers to experiment with the innovative learning models they had been introduced to, with direct support from the PKM team. The mentoring process not only involved observing and evaluating the teachers' teaching methods but also facilitated reflective discussions where teachers could evaluate their own practices, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and develop strategies for overcoming challenges (Hidayah, 2021; Indra et al., 2020). This approach ensured that teachers received personalized feedback and were able to adapt the models to better suit their students' needs and the specific characteristics of their classrooms.

Monitoring and evaluation, conducted in the fifth week, further validated the effectiveness of the mentoring program. The observations confirmed that most teachers successfully implemented active and contextual learning approaches. Students were more engaged in the learning process, demonstrating improved participation and enthusiasm. However, the evaluation also highlighted some challenges, such as time constraints and difficulties in balancing the curriculum with the new teaching methods (Zain & Mustofa, 2024; Zainal et al., 2022). These challenges suggest that while teachers are making

progress, additional support and resources are needed to help them fully integrate innovative learning strategies into their teaching.

The findings of this study have several important implications for the improvement of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo and similar educational institutions. The study demonstrates the importance of teacher professional development programs that focus on innovative, active, and contextual learning models. Such programs not only enhance teachers' pedagogical skills but also contribute to the development of more engaging and meaningful learning experiences for students. The implications of this study extend beyond the specific context of MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo and can serve as a model for similar efforts aimed at improving the quality of religious education in other schools.

CONCLUSION

Mentoring of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers at MTs. Nurur Rohmah Gending Probolinggo, has succeeded in improving their competence in designing and implementing innovative learning models. Through the stages of training, classroom implementation, and monitoring and evaluation, teachers demonstrate a better understanding of active, collaborative, and contextual learning approaches. The lesson plans that are prepared become more varied and relevant, and learning activities become more interactive and touch on the affective aspects of students. Students also show increased enthusiasm in the learning process. Thus, this mentoring effort has proven to be effective as a strategy for empowering teachers in facing current educational challenges, as well as creating a more meaningful and enjoyable PAI learning atmosphere.

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