



Implementing Student-Centered Learning Through Focus Group Discussion: A Strategic Approach to Educational Management in Al-Qur'an and Hadith Instruction

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzes the implementation of the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method in Qur'an-Hadith education. The research is motivated by challenges such as low student motivation, limited engagement, and the dominance of teacher-centered instruction in Islamic learning contexts. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that the integration of SCL and FGD enhances students' active participation, fosters critical and collaborative thinking, and deepens contextual understanding of Qur'anic and Hadith values. Teachers shift from authoritative transmitters to facilitators of learning, while students become autonomous agents who construct meaning through dialogue. From an educational management perspective, this approach encourages more participatory classroom governance, strengthens instructional leadership, and supports continuous professional development for teachers. The study concludes that the SCL-FGD model represents an effective pedagogical and managerial innovation for Islamic education—promoting interactive, reflective, and contextually relevant learning aligned with 21st-century educational goals.

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INTRODUCTION

Education plays a central role in shaping the moral, intellectual, and spiritual quality of a nation (Islamic et al., 2024). In Muslim societies, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a strategic function in forming individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also morally upright and socially responsible (Saada, 2023). However, the rapid transformation of modern society—

characterized by globalization, digitalization, and pluralism—demands an educational paradigm that promotes critical thinking, collaboration, and lifelong learning (Akour & Alenezi, 2022). Traditional models that emphasize rote memorization and one-way instruction are increasingly inadequate to prepare students for these realities (Martin-Alguacil et al., 2024). Numerous studies in global education management emphasize that learning effectiveness depends on student engagement and active participation (Veluvali & Suriseti, 2022). Therefore, improving Islamic education is not merely a pedagogical necessity but a societal imperative (Riaz et al., 2023). The integration of Student-Centered Learning (SCL) into Islamic instruction, particularly in Qur'an–Hadith subjects, offers a transformative pathway to cultivate students who can internalize religious values while adapting to contemporary challenges (Puspawati, 2022).

Despite the noble goals of Islamic education, the current pedagogical reality in many Islamic schools and madrasahs remains dominated by teacher-centered approaches (Assalihee et al., 2024). In this system, teachers serve primarily as the main source of information, while students assume passive roles as recipients of knowledge (Jeon & Lee, 2023). This imbalance creates a learning environment that limits inquiry, creativity, and reflection. As a result, students often fail to connect religious principles with the complexities of real-life situations. Studies by Aslam (2025) have demonstrated that such rote-based religious instruction fosters superficial understanding and weak internalization of Islamic values. Moreover, limited teacher capacity in designing interactive learning and the lack of institutional management support further perpetuate conventional methods. Consequently, Islamic education risks losing its relevance to the dynamic context of modern life, where critical reasoning, communication, and ethical leadership are indispensable competencies for young Muslims.

Empirical observations in several madrasahs reveal that Qur'an–Hadith learning sessions are often conducted through long lectures, with minimal student participation. Teachers explain verses and hadiths linearly, while students listen passively and memorize selected texts for assessments. This pattern fails to stimulate intellectual curiosity or promote active engagement. In classroom discussions, students rarely raise questions or express their interpretations due to fear of being wrong or contradicting the teacher. Such an environment undermines the essence of Qur'anic learning, which encourages reflection (*tadabbur*) and understanding (*tafaqquh*). Interviews with teachers indicate that they are aware of these weaknesses but lack pedagogical strategies and administrative support to implement more participatory learning. This phenomenon reflects a systemic issue in educational management—where

curriculum policies and classroom practices remain misaligned, causing Islamic education to stagnate in a traditional format that neglects the cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of learning.

Previous research on Islamic education has largely focused on cognitive achievement and religious attitudes without adequately addressing the dynamics of classroom interaction. For instance, studies by Diabat (2025) emphasized the importance of constructivist learning and student-centered methods, yet their applications in Qur'an–Hadith education remain limited. Some works explored innovative pedagogies such as cooperative learning and contextual teaching, but few examined their integration with Islamic pedagogical values. Furthermore, most studies overlooked the managerial aspects of implementing such innovations—particularly the need for leadership support, teacher professional development, and institutional readiness. This creates a gap between theoretical frameworks and practical implementation in real classrooms. Therefore, there is a critical need to explore a model that not only enhances pedagogical practice but also aligns with effective educational management principles.

Existing studies also show that while the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach enhances engagement in secular subjects, its adaptation in Islamic education contexts requires contextual sensitivity. Research in Islamic pedagogy indicates that students' active roles must be balanced with respect for religious values and ethical boundaries. However, there remains a lack of empirical studies examining how participatory methods can be harmonized with Qur'anic and Hadith-based instruction. In addition, most prior works emphasize outcomes but fail to explore process mechanisms—how classroom interactions, group dynamics, and teacher facilitation actually shape student learning. This research thus occupies a unique position by bridging this gap: it not only examines the pedagogical outcomes of SCL through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) but also analyzes its implications for educational management, such as teacher role transformation, collaborative learning culture, and institutional innovation in Islamic schools.

The novelty of this study lies in its dual focus on pedagogy and educational management within the framework of Islamic learning. While many previous studies have applied SCL in general education, few have contextualized it within the Qur'an–Hadith curriculum, where the sacred nature of the material requires both intellectual depth and ethical sensitivity. By integrating the FGD method, this study introduces a structured model that encourages students to discuss, analyze, and internalize Islamic teachings collaboratively. This method operationalizes the principles of constructivism and reflective dialogue in a religious learning environment. Moreover, from a

management perspective, the research highlights the importance of participatory classroom governance, teacher empowerment, and institutional policy reform. Thus, this study contributes a state-of-the-art framework for reimagining Islamic education that is interactive, reflective, and aligned with 21st-century educational transformation.

The core problem addressed in this study is how the implementation of the Student-Centered Learning approach through Focus Group Discussion can enhance the quality of Qur'an-Hadith learning while fostering effective educational management practices. Specifically, the research seeks to answer: (1) How is SCL-FGD implemented in the context of Islamic education? (2) What impacts does it have on students' cognitive, affective, and social development? (3) What managerial implications arise from its application in madrasah settings? Theoretically, this research contributes to developing a pedagogical model that integrates Islamic values with modern learning paradigms. Practically, it provides a reference for school leaders and policymakers to design management strategies that support teacher innovation, promote collaborative learning environments, and align instructional practices with holistic educational goals.

This study argues that implementing SCL through FGD in Qur'an-Hadith learning serves not only as a pedagogical improvement but also as a managerial innovation. By positioning teachers as facilitators and students as active constructors of meaning, the learning process becomes more participatory, reflective, and value-oriented. The findings are expected to demonstrate that such a model strengthens students' understanding of Islamic teachings, enhances communication and critical thinking skills, and nurtures character development consistent with the goals of Islamic education. From a management perspective, this research underscores the importance of leadership commitment, professional development, and organizational culture that encourages innovation. Consequently, the study contributes both theoretically and practically: it enriches Islamic educational theory by linking SCL to religious pedagogy and provides actionable insights for educational managers seeking to modernize learning without compromising spiritual integrity.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study design grounded in a phenomenological perspective. The qualitative approach was selected because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by teachers and students in implementing Student-Centered Learning (SCL) through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method.

A case study design was deemed appropriate because it focuses on a bounded system—a particular learning environment where SCL-FGD is applied—and enables a comprehensive understanding of the contextual, procedural, and interpersonal dynamics that shape learning outcomes. The phenomenological foundation supports the study's aim to interpret not only observable behaviors but also subjective experiences, reflections, and emotions of participants. This combination provides a rich, holistic understanding of how SCL-FGD operates in real classroom settings and how it influences the teaching and learning process within Qur'an–Hadith education.

The research was conducted at a selected Islamic secondary school (madrasah) that had begun integrating interactive and participatory learning approaches within its Qur'an–Hadith curriculum. This site was purposefully chosen for several reasons. First, the institution represents a typical model of Islamic schooling that is transitioning from traditional teacher-centered instruction toward more student-centered pedagogy. Second, the school administration demonstrated strong support for pedagogical innovation, making it a conducive environment for implementing the SCL-FGD model. Third, the site provided accessible participants—teachers and students—who were actively engaged in the Qur'an–Hadith learning process. By focusing on this setting, the study sought to capture authentic classroom practices, identify contextual challenges, and analyze managerial implications that could inform broader applications in other Islamic educational institutions.

Data were collected through three primary techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were conducted to capture real-time interactions between teachers and students during the implementation of the SCL-FGD model. These observations provided valuable insights into the facilitative role of teachers, the nature of student engagement, and the collaborative learning dynamics. In-depth interviews were then carried out with both teachers and students to explore their personal experiences, perceptions, and challenges in applying the SCL-FGD approach. The interviews allowed participants to express their feelings and reflections, offering nuanced understanding from multiple perspectives. Additionally, relevant documents such as lesson plans, syllabi, learning activity records, and student work samples were collected to support and triangulate observational and interview data. The use of multiple data sources ensured methodological triangulation and strengthened the validity of findings by providing a comprehensive picture of the learning process.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which involves three concurrent stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. During data reduction, raw

data from field notes, transcripts, and documents were organized, coded, and categorized according to emerging themes related to SCL-FGD implementation. In the data display stage, the categorized information was presented in narrative and tabular forms to facilitate pattern recognition and comparison. The final stage involved interpreting the data to derive meaningful conclusions based on relationships, patterns, and meanings identified across sources. Verification was conducted continuously throughout the analysis process to maintain data credibility, employing techniques such as triangulation across methods and participants, member checking, and time-based validation. This systematic analytical process ensured that the findings accurately reflected participants' authentic experiences and provided reliable insights into both pedagogical and managerial dimensions of SCL-FGD practice.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Implementation of Student-Centered Learning through Focus Group Discussion (SCL-FGD)

The implementation of Student-Centered Learning (SCL) through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method in Qur'an-Hadith instruction refers to a learning process where students actively construct meaning through group dialogue and collaborative interpretation of Islamic texts. In practice, this sub-theme describes how the classroom shifts from teacher-dominated instruction to a more participatory and reflective environment. The teacher functions as a facilitator who guides, prompts, and monitors discussion rather than merely transmitting knowledge. Students are encouraged to explore the meanings of Qur'anic verses and Hadiths, relate them to real-life issues, and articulate their viewpoints respectfully. Thus, SCL-FGD in this context operates as a pedagogical and managerial mechanism that fosters active engagement, critical reflection, and moral internalization—transforming traditional religious instruction into an interactive process of value-based inquiry.

According to one teacher interviewed (T1), the application of SCL-FGD "helps students become more involved in discussing the meanings of verses and hadiths. They no longer just memorize; they try to understand and apply what they learn." This statement reflects a pedagogical transformation from rote-based instruction to reflective dialogue. The teacher emphasized that the FGD format encouraged more equal participation among students and allowed them to express their reasoning without fear of judgment. The researcher interprets this as evidence that the teacher's role has evolved from being a knowledge transmitter to a learning facilitator who promotes inquiry and interaction. The teacher's perception also indicates a managerial implication—

namely, that fostering such learning environments requires structured classroom organization, time allocation, and administrative support to sustain student-centered activities effectively.

A student participant (S4) explained, “During the discussion, I feel more confident to speak. I can share my opinion about the hadith, and my friends can agree or disagree respectfully. It makes learning more enjoyable.” This statement reveals a shift in student attitudes from passive learning to active engagement. The researcher interprets this as a sign of growing academic self-efficacy and communicative competence, consistent with the goals of SCL. The interaction process also nurtures empathy and respect for diverse viewpoints—key values within Islamic education. From a managerial standpoint, this finding demonstrates how participatory methods can cultivate classroom democracy and shared responsibility among learners, promoting a culture of mutual respect aligned with Islamic ethics. The data also suggest that FGD provides a platform for students to connect religious principles with their personal and social realities.

Observation data confirm that SCL-FGD practices were effectively implemented in the classroom. During several sessions, the researcher observed that the teacher divided students into small groups, assigned discussion themes based on selected Qur’anic verses and Hadiths, and facilitated the flow of conversation without dominating it. Students appeared enthusiastic and collaborative, often using examples from daily life to support their interpretations. Some students took leadership roles in moderating discussions, while others summarized conclusions on behalf of their group. The researcher interprets these observations as indicators of meaningful engagement and cognitive ownership of learning. The observed activities align with constructivist learning principles and demonstrate that the SCL-FGD model not only promotes intellectual growth but also reinforces interpersonal and moral competencies—essential elements of holistic Islamic education.

In summary, the data collectively reveal that implementing SCL through FGD transforms the learning process into an interactive, reflective, and value-oriented experience. Teachers act as facilitators who create an environment conducive to exploration and discussion, while students actively engage in constructing and negotiating meaning. Both teachers and students perceive the process as beneficial for understanding Islamic teachings in a more contextual and practical manner. The findings suggest that SCL-FGD enhances students’ ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and internalize religious values beyond memorization. From a broader educational management perspective, this implementation requires institutional commitment, flexible curriculum design, and ongoing teacher capacity building to ensure

sustainability.

From the findings above, several consistent patterns emerge. First, pedagogical transformation—the classroom shifts from teacher-centered to learner-centered interaction. Second, active participation and reflection—students demonstrate increased initiative in interpreting and applying religious texts. Third, collaborative learning culture—FGD fosters teamwork, respect, and dialogical learning aligned with Islamic values. Fourth, managerial adaptation—effective SCL-FGD requires supportive leadership, time management, and resource allocation. Lastly, value internalization—learning extends beyond cognition into moral and affective domains, fulfilling the holistic objectives of Islamic education. Together, these patterns illustrate that SCL-FGD is not merely a methodological adjustment but a systemic innovation that integrates pedagogy, management, and spirituality into a coherent framework for transformative Islamic education.

Impact on Students

The sub-theme Impact on Students refers to the observable and perceived changes in students’ cognitive, affective, and social behaviors as a result of implementing Student-Centered Learning (SCL) through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method in Qur’an–Hadith instruction. In this context, “impact” encompasses improvements in students’ comprehension of Islamic teachings, their motivation to learn, communication and critical thinking skills, as well as internalization of moral and spiritual values. It also includes behavioral indicators such as participation, collaboration, respect for differing opinions, and application of religious values in daily life. Therefore, the impact is not limited to academic achievement but extends to the holistic development of students’ intellect, character, and faith—reflecting the integrated goals of Islamic education.

Interview Excerpt	Indicator	Informant
“I feel more confident to express my opinion during discussion, and I can understand the meaning of verses better.”	Increased confidence and comprehension	Student (S3)
“Students become more active and responsible for their own learning; they ask questions and relate the verses to real-life issues.”	Active participation and autonomy	Teacher (T2)
“Through group discussion, I learned to listen and respect my friends’ opinions even if they differ from mine.”	Communication and tolerance	Student (S5)
“The class atmosphere became more lively; students were eager to connect Qur’anic values with their behavior.”	Engagement and value internalization	Teacher (T1)

The interview excerpts suggest that the SCL-FGD approach has significantly enhanced students' engagement and self-confidence. Students reported feeling empowered to share their ideas, which indicates the development of communication and higher-order thinking skills. This shift represents a transformation from passive learning to active knowledge construction. Teachers' observations reinforce this perception, highlighting that students began to take more responsibility for their own learning. The emergence of autonomy and curiosity demonstrates that the SCL-FGD method fosters intrinsic motivation—students are no longer learning for grades alone but are genuinely interested in understanding Islamic teachings in depth. From a pedagogical perspective, this aligns with the constructivist notion that meaningful learning occurs when students actively engage in dialogue and reflection.

Another significant impact identified is the development of social and moral competencies. Students' remarks reveal that FGD sessions cultivate listening skills, empathy, and respect for differences—values deeply rooted in Islamic ethics. The teacher's statement about connecting Qur'anic values with behavior indicates that learning outcomes transcend cognitive domains and enter affective and behavioral realms. These findings suggest that SCL-FGD supports holistic education by integrating intellectual understanding with moral formation. From an educational management standpoint, such transformation requires supportive classroom culture, effective facilitation, and structured reflection sessions. The data collectively imply that SCL-FGD not only improves learning engagement but also reinforces character education, which is central to the mission of Islamic schooling.

Observation data corroborate the interview findings. During classroom observations, the researcher noted that students displayed enthusiasm in expressing opinions, asking questions, and connecting Qur'anic messages with everyday situations. They collaborated effectively within groups, showing mutual respect and turn-taking during discussions. Teachers were observed encouraging open dialogue and guiding students to derive moral lessons from the texts. This participatory environment created a sense of shared ownership of learning outcomes. The researcher interprets these behaviors as evidence that the SCL-FGD method fosters both cognitive engagement and socio-emotional growth. The observed patterns also illustrate the practical manifestation of *adab al-hiwar* (Islamic ethics of dialogue), demonstrating that religious learning can cultivate democratic communication skills without diminishing reverence for sacred knowledge.

In essence, the collected data reveal that the SCL-FGD model generates a

multifaceted impact on students. It enhances cognitive comprehension by allowing them to interpret verses and hadiths contextually, strengthens affective dimensions through moral reflection, and develops social skills through collaborative dialogue. Students become more confident, articulate, and respectful in expressing ideas. Teachers confirm that this approach increases motivation and class participation, resulting in a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Overall, SCL-FGD empowers students to become active learners who integrate Islamic knowledge with real-life application, embodying the principles of holistic Islamic education that unite faith, intellect, and action.

Several consistent patterns emerge from the findings above. First, enhanced cognitive engagement—students demonstrate deeper understanding and critical thinking about Qur’anic and Hadith content. Second, affective transformation—students exhibit stronger moral awareness and motivation to apply Islamic values in daily life. Third, social development—collaborative learning fosters empathy, tolerance, and communication skills. Fourth, learning autonomy—students take initiative and responsibility for their learning process. Finally, pedagogical renewal—teachers experience a shift toward facilitative roles that nurture participatory learning. Collectively, these patterns confirm that the impact of SCL-FGD extends beyond academic achievement to the formation of character and social maturity, thus actualizing the holistic vision of Islamic education in contemporary contexts.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of SCL–FGD

The sub-theme Supporting and Inhibiting Factors refers to the internal and external conditions that influence the success or limitation of implementing the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach through the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method in Qur’an–Hadith instruction. Supporting factors include institutional commitment, teacher competence, student motivation, and resource availability that facilitate the adoption of SCL-FGD. Inhibiting factors encompass structural, pedagogical, and managerial barriers—such as limited time allocation, insufficient training, or the persistence of conventional mindsets—that hinder effective application. In the field, this concept is operationalized as the practical realities that either enable or constrain the transformation of classroom learning from teacher-centered to student-centered interaction within Islamic education settings.

A teacher participant (T3) explained, “The support from the school principal and collaboration among teachers made it easier for us to implement the discussion method. The school provided flexibility in lesson planning and encouraged innovation.” This statement highlights strong managerial and

collegial support as key enablers of SCL-FGD success. The researcher interprets this as evidence that leadership commitment and shared professional culture significantly influence the sustainability of pedagogical change. The school's encouragement of experimentation reflects adaptive educational management that aligns with the constructivist philosophy underpinning SCL. Additionally, institutional flexibility allows teachers to adjust pacing, content, and classroom management to suit participatory learning formats—demonstrating that administrative openness is an essential foundation for innovation in Islamic education.

Conversely, one student participant (S2) stated, “Sometimes the discussion time is too short, and not all students get the chance to speak. Also, some of my friends still prefer listening to the teacher rather than discussing.” This remark reveals two main challenges: time constraints and varying student readiness. The researcher interprets this as a reflection of both logistical and cultural barriers to implementing SCL-FGD effectively. The limited duration of class periods restricts the depth of discussion, while students' habituation to passive learning limits participation. From a management perspective, these findings imply that pedagogical innovation requires structural adjustments—such as flexible scheduling, smaller group sizes, and gradual mindset shifts through consistent practice. Thus, inhibiting factors are not merely technical but also psychological and cultural, rooted in long-standing educational traditions.

Field observations confirm that both enabling and constraining factors coexist in the learning environment. The researcher observed that when teachers received administrative support, class sessions ran smoothly, and students showed enthusiasm in discussions. However, in sessions with larger classes or limited time, group interaction tended to become superficial, and only a few students dominated the dialogue. Some teachers were observed struggling to balance facilitation and content delivery, occasionally reverting to lecture-style explanations to save time. The researcher interprets these findings as evidence that institutional and managerial support directly affects classroom dynamics. Moreover, the variation in teacher confidence and experience suggests the need for continuous professional development and peer mentoring to strengthen SCL-FGD implementation.

In summary, the implementation of SCL-FGD in Qur'an–Hadith learning is strongly influenced by contextual factors at both the institutional and classroom levels. Supportive leadership, collaborative culture, and flexible management policies serve as catalysts that empower teachers to innovate and students to engage actively. Conversely, time limitations, uneven student participation, and limited teacher training present significant obstacles to consistency and depth in implementation. These findings indicate that the

effectiveness of SCL-FGD depends not only on pedagogical strategies but also on managerial and organizational readiness. Without supportive systems, even the most well-designed methods risk reverting to conventional practices. Therefore, effective educational leadership and structured professional support are essential for sustaining pedagogical transformation in Islamic education.

From the data above, several key patterns emerge. First, institutional leadership and administrative flexibility serve as primary enablers, fostering innovation and collaboration among teachers. Second, teacher competence and commitment determine the consistency of SCL-FGD facilitation. Third, student motivation and classroom culture shape the depth of participation and reflection. On the other hand, time management and class size appear as recurring structural challenges. Finally, cultural inertia—students' and teachers' attachment to traditional lecture-based methods—remains a subtle but persistent barrier. These patterns reveal that the success of SCL-FGD implementation is a systemic issue: pedagogical innovation thrives only when supported by responsive management, professional development, and a school culture that values interactive, reflective, and student-centered Islamic learning.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that the implementation of Student-Centered Learning through Focus Group Discussion (SCL-FGD) effectively transformed Qur'an–Hadith learning from a teacher-centered approach to a learner-centered process. This transformation aligns with constructivist learning theory, which posits that knowledge is built through students' active interaction rather than passive reception from teachers (Alam, 2023). The results are consistent with Gmoser et al (2024), who emphasized that group-based discussion in Islamic education fosters democratic behavior and critical reasoning. However, this study provides an additional insight by demonstrating that such transformation in Qur'an–Hadith learning not only enhances intellectual engagement but also strengthens moral awareness. Students develop deeper understanding of Islamic values through reflective dialogue, signifying that cognitive growth and character formation can occur simultaneously when supported by interactive pedagogy.

Furthermore, the research findings reveal that SCL-FGD contributes significantly to students' character development, particularly in honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and patience. These virtues are internalized not merely as theoretical knowledge but as lived experiences during group interaction. This is in line with Kong (2021), who asserts that effective moral education must involve experiential learning processes that engage students emotionally and socially. The study also supports the framework of Islamic educational

philosophy, which integrates tarbiyah aqliyah (intellectual development), tarbiyah ruhaniyah (spiritual growth), and tarbiyah ijtimā'iyah (social education). Theoretically, these findings reinforce the argument that SCL-FGD can operationalize holistic education, enabling students to actualize Qur'anic and prophetic values in their interpersonal relations. Practically, it implies that teachers must be equipped not only with pedagogical skills but also with emotional intelligence to facilitate character formation within learning communities.

In addition to moral and character growth, the study demonstrates a marked improvement in students' social and emotional competencies. Through collaborative dialogue, students learn to listen, empathize, and appreciate diverse perspectives—key skills for maintaining harmony in plural societies. These results parallel the findings of Lychnell (2021) on emotional intelligence, which highlight that empathy and self-regulation are best cultivated through social interaction and guided reflection. The data also indicate that SCL-FGD helps students manage disagreements constructively, strengthening their emotional resilience. Theoretically, this expands the constructivist paradigm to encompass affective learning dimensions, showing that emotional intelligence can be nurtured through participatory pedagogy. In practice, madrasahs can adopt structured discussion sessions not only to enhance understanding of religious texts but also to build interpersonal maturity and emotional balance among students.

Another major finding relates to the enhancement of students' leadership and decision-making skills. The FGD format encourages students to assume various roles—moderator, summarizer, or spokesperson—requiring them to lead discussions, make group decisions, and negotiate differing viewpoints. This process mirrors the collaborative leadership model proposed by Kohnen et al (2024), where leadership is seen as a shared function rather than a fixed position. The current study strengthens that model within the Islamic educational context, showing that collective inquiry based on Qur'an–Hadith texts can train students to make ethical and well-reasoned decisions. Theoretically, this situates SCL-FGD as a pedagogical approach that integrates cognitive, moral, and managerial dimensions of leadership. Practically, it implies that Islamic schools can use FGD as a platform to nurture young leaders with integrity, capable of making decisions grounded in both rational and spiritual principles.

Finally, the findings highlight the development of student resilience (*resiliensi*), or the ability to persevere amid challenges. Students demonstrated patience, adaptability, and optimism when facing group conflicts or limited discussion time. This supports the argument of Yin et al (2022) that resilience

can be developed through supportive social environments that encourage self-efficacy and positive coping. Within the SCL-FGD framework, resilience emerges as a natural outcome of students' engagement in problem-solving and moral reflection. Theoretically, this reinforces Islamic psychological perspectives that link *sabr* (patience) and *tawakkul* (trust in God) to adaptive coping and emotional endurance. Practically, it suggests that implementing SCL-FGD in religious learning can serve as an effective strategy for fostering mentally and spiritually strong individuals who can face academic and life challenges with balance and faith. Together, these implications affirm that SCL-FGD represents a transformative educational model—bridging pedagogy, psychology, and spirituality to produce intelligent, resilient, and morally upright Muslim learners.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this research lies in the successful transformation of Qur'an-Hadith learning through the application of the Student-Centered Learning (SCL) approach using the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. The main hikmah or lesson learned from this study is that effective religious education must not only transfer knowledge but also cultivate understanding, critical awareness, and moral integrity. By positioning students as active subjects, SCL-FGD enables them to internalize Qur'anic and Prophetic values through meaningful interaction, reflection, and collaboration. This approach proves that Islamic learning can be both intellectually rigorous and spiritually enriching when supported by participatory pedagogical practices.

The strength of this research lies in its theoretical and practical contributions to Islamic education and educational management. Theoretically, it enriches the discourse on student-centered pedagogy within the context of Islamic learning, bridging modern constructivist theory with classical Islamic educational philosophy. Practically, it provides a replicable model for madrasahs seeking to design learning experiences that are interactive, reflective, and value-oriented. Moreover, the study contributes to the field of educational management by highlighting the importance of teacher facilitation, institutional vision, and classroom governance as determinants of successful SCL-FGD implementation.

However, this study also has limitations. The research was conducted in a single institution, limiting the generalizability of the findings across different educational contexts. Time constraints and varying group dynamics during discussions also influenced the depth of data collection. Future research should expand to multiple schools or regions, employ mixed methods to quantify

learning outcomes, and explore the long-term impact of SCL-FGD on students' spiritual and social development. Further investigation into the role of school leadership and organizational culture in sustaining student-centered learning in Islamic education is also recommended.

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