



# The Concept of Collaborative Learning Strategies and Their Relevance in Creating an Innovative Learning Environment in Islamic Religious Education Learning

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**Abstract.** The implementation of collaborative learning strategies in Islamic religious education (PAI) subjects aims to create a learning environment that is innovative, interactive, and relevant to the needs of students in the digital era. The purpose of this research is to determine the implementation of collaborative learning strategies in creating an innovative learning environment in PAI subjects, the challenges in implementing collaborative learning strategies in PAI lessons, and to determine the use of technology in collaborative learning strategies to create innovative learning environments in PAI subjects. . The results of this research show that collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) create an innovative and interactive learning environment. Methods such as discussions, case studies, and collaborative projects help students apply Islamic values in real life. The implementation of collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) faces challenges such as classroom management, curriculum adjustments, evaluation, and individual differences between students. And the use of technology in PAI collaborative learning creates an innovative and interactive learning environment. Bold platforms and visual media increase student engagement, understanding and digital skills, while teachers create dynamic learning. Technology supports more effective and relevant PAI learning.

**Keywords:** Implementation, Collaborative, Strategy, Innovation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Collaborative learning has become one of the educational approaches that has received widespread attention in various fields, including Islamic Religious Education. This approach emphasizes social interaction and cooperation between students to achieve common learning goals. Johnson, Johnson, and Smith stated that collaborative learning is a strategy in which students work in small groups to maximize their own learning and that of their peers. By actively involving students, this method is able to increase participation, responsibility, and the quality of interaction between students.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has an important role in shaping the character, morals, and spirituality of students. In the PAI learning process, not only the transfer of knowledge is the focus, but also the internalization of religious values that can be applied in everyday life. However, the challenge currently faced is how to create a learning atmosphere that is not only theoretical, but also able to encourage students to think critically, collaborate, and apply Islamic values innovatively.

Collaborative learning strategies and innovative learning environments are closely related in creating an effective and meaningful learning process. Collaborative learning

emphasizes cooperation between learners in solving problems, sharing knowledge, and achieving common goals. This approach provides space for learners to actively participate, exchange ideas, and learn from each other, which is the essence of an innovative learning environment.

Innovative learning environments support the application of collaborative strategies by providing an atmosphere conducive to interaction, creativity, and exploration. In this environment, learners focus not only on understanding theory, but also on developing critical thinking skills and the ability to communicate effectively. Technology and a variety of learning methods are often used to enrich the collaborative process, such as project-based discussions, simulations, or solving problems relevant to real life.

By combining collaborative learning strategies in an innovative learning environment in Islamic Religious Education subjects, it can affect the quality of an educator when in the classroom. When an educator has more ability in developing a new innovation in learning, the material provided will have a positive impact on students. Conversely, if an educator is lacking in developing learning innovations, students will feel bored and the atmosphere will feel monotonous during the teaching and learning process.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of Collaborative Learning Strategies in Creating an Innovative Learning Environment in Islamic Religious Education Subjects**

Collaborative learning is a learning approach that emphasizes active interaction, cooperation, and student participation in order to achieve shared learning goals. In collaborative learning, students work collectively in groups or teams to build knowledge, share ideas, solve problems, and create deeper understanding through shared interaction and reflection.

Collaborative learning emphasizes interaction and cooperation between students. Students share knowledge, experiences, and understanding through discussions, collaborative problem solving, and group assignments. Students are encouraged to collaborate in solving problems or completing complex tasks. They work together to achieve deeper understanding and better solutions through different perspectives. Students share responsibilities in work groups.

Each group member has an active role and contribution in achieving common learning goals. They support each other and appreciate each other's contributions. In collaborative

learning, students become active subjects in the learning process. They are directly involved in learning, asking questions, seeking information, and participating in discussions. Students share their knowledge, experiences, and ideas with other group members. Through this process, they learn from each other and construct knowledge together.

Collaborative learning helps students develop social skills such as effective communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, and respect for differences of opinion. They learn to listen, respect, and cooperate with others. Students engage in reflection on their learning process and provide feedback to each other.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is built by two essential meanings, namely "education" and "Islamic religion". One of the meanings of education according to Plato is to develop the potential of students, so that their morals and intellectuals develop so that they find the true truth, and teachers occupy an important position in motivating and creating their environment. In Aristotle's ethics, education is interpreted as educating humans to have the right attitude in all actions.

For John Dewey, education is growth, development, and life itself. He views progressively and is principled in an optimistic attitude about the progress of students in their education process. Kihajar Dewantara put forward education as a guide for the growth of students' potential to become individuals and part of a free society so as to achieve safety and happiness.

The implementation of collaborative learning strategies in creating an innovative learning environment in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects aims to change the learning process to be more interactive, dynamic, and relevant to the needs of students. This strategy actively involves students in joint learning activities through discussions, group work, and problem solving. This approach gives them the opportunity to exchange ideas, share knowledge, and work together in completing tasks, thereby increasing their involvement in the learning process.

In addition, it aims to encourage active involvement of students in the learning process, build social skills, and deepen understanding of religious values through meaningful interactions. This strategy involves combining various methods that allow students to work together in groups to complete tasks or solve problems related to religious material.

In the context of Islamic Religious Education, collaborative learning strategies can be applied through various methods, such as group discussions on Islamic values, case studies on moral and ethical issues, or collaborative projects related to everyday life. Through this

approach, students not only understand religious concepts theoretically but also learn to apply these values in real life.

An innovative learning environment is created when collaborative learning is supported by an open atmosphere, where students feel comfortable to express their opinions and explore. Technology is also often used to enrich this process, for example by utilizing digital platforms for online discussions or interactive learning resources. The teacher acts as a facilitator who guides discussions, provides feedback, and creates challenges that encourage students to think critically and creatively.

With the implementation of this strategy, Islamic Religious Education learning becomes more interesting and meaningful, increasing students' motivation to learn and strengthening social skills, such as cooperation and communication. It also contributes to the formation of their characters in line with Islamic values, making them more prepared to face social and moral challenges in the future.

### **Challenges in Implementing Collaborative Learning Strategies in Islamic Religious Education Learning**

The implementation of collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education also faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is classroom management. According to Arends, teachers need to have good skills in managing group dynamics and facilitating interactions between students. Teachers must ensure that every student plays an active role in collaborative activities, not just a few students who dominate the discussion. This requires sensitivity from the teacher to ensure that all students feel comfortable contributing and that no one is left behind in the learning process.

Another challenge is the adjustment of the curriculum and teaching materials. The Islamic Religious Education curriculum is usually designed for more traditional learning, where the teacher acts as the main source of knowledge. In collaborative learning, the role of the teacher shifts to being a facilitator who supports the student's learning process. This means that teaching materials and teaching methods must be adjusted to support group interaction and collaboration. Teachers need to prepare materials that can trigger discussion and collaborative problem solving, and provide sufficient time for students to interact.

Evaluation methods also need to be updated in collaborative learning. Arends argues that evaluation should not only assess students' cognitive understanding, but also the social skills they develop during the learning process. Evaluation should include students' abilities in communicating, resolving conflicts, and collaborating with others. This requires teachers

to use more comprehensive assessment methods, such as observation, self-assessment, and peer assessment. These assessments allow teachers to get a more holistic picture of students' development, not only in terms of knowledge but also social skills.

In addition, challenges in implementing collaborative learning also include individual differences among students. Each student has a different learning style, and some may feel less comfortable or unfamiliar with group-based learning. Teachers need to be sensitive to these differences and provide additional guidance and support for students who may have difficulty adapting to collaborative methods. According to Johnson and Johnson, the success of collaborative learning depends heavily on the teacher's ability to create an inclusive environment, where all students feel valued and supported in the learning process.

Despite facing various challenges, the implementation of collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education can be an effective strategy to build better student character. With proper classroom management, curriculum adjustments, and comprehensive evaluation methods, collaborative learning can help students develop social skills needed in everyday life. The implementation of this method is also in line with the goal of Islamic Religious Education to create individuals who are able to work together, appreciate differences, and contribute to their community.

The implementation of collaborative learning does not always run smoothly and can face several challenges. However, with the right development efforts, these challenges can be overcome. One of the challenges in collaborative learning is forming effective working groups. Development efforts that can be made include providing clear guidance and defined roles for each group member, helping students develop effective collaboration and communication skills, and holding group coaching activities to build trust and get to know each other among group members.

In work groups, it is likely that some students will be more dominant than others. Development efforts can be made by encouraging the active participation of all group members by providing space for all members' voices, assigning rotational roles or specific responsibilities to each group member, and providing feedback and encouragement to less active students to contribute more deeply.

Conflicts between group members can occur in collaborative learning, helping students develop conflict resolution skills, such as listening with empathy and finding solutions together, holding group discussions about the importance of respecting differences of opinion and working together to achieve common goals, involving teachers as mediators to

help resolve conflicts and facilitate effective communication is expected to prevent conflicts between group members in this collaborative learning.

One of the challenges in collaborative learning is assessing individual contributions in a group context. Development efforts can be made by developing clear and objective assessment criteria to evaluate individual and group performance, using assessment rubrics that distinguish between individual contributions and group outcomes, and involving students in the assessment process and providing opportunities for them to provide feedback on group and individual performance. Teachers play a key role in the implementation of collaborative learning.

Conducting training and professional development for teachers in collaborative learning strategies and approaches, encouraging collaboration between teachers in sharing experiences and best practices, and providing the necessary support and resources to teachers to implement collaborative learning effectively are expected to enhance teacher skills so that the quality of learning is continuously improved. By recognizing these challenges and implementing appropriate development efforts, collaborative learning can continue to evolve and become more effective in facilitating student collaboration and active learning.

### **The Use of Technology in Collaborative Learning Strategies to Create an Innovative Learning Environment in Islamic Religious Education Subjects**

The application of technology has an important role and benefits for the world of education, one of which is to train educators' readiness in facing the digital world which is required to be able to use technology, so in this case an educator needs to understand the basics of using technology in order to implement it properly in learning. Therefore, an educator must reconstruct conventional learning models into the latest learning models that influence the development of students so that they have a good understanding of the material being taught.

The form of contribution from the application of technology that can be further developed by teachers for Islamic Religious Education subjects includes providing educational-based games, playing online quizzes during learning breaks, providing ice breaking to foster students' readiness to learn so that they are more ready to receive learning materials, and providing video-based learning evaluations to provide stimulus to students. This is carried out in the learning process to maximize learning and teaching activities comprehensively, effectively, and efficiently which aims to improve students' understanding

of the material presented by educators. In addition, educators also indirectly learn autodidactically to know technology to contribute to educational institutions in order to improve the quality of educators themselves and institutional systems.

The use of technology in collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects aims to create a more innovative, interactive, and relevant learning environment for students in the digital era. Technology can be a bridge that connects religious concepts with real life through various digital platforms and media, so that learning becomes more interesting and effective.

One form of technology implementation is the use of online learning platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, or Moodle, which allow students to collaborate virtually. Through this platform, students can discuss, share documents, and work together on group projects without having to meet physically. This is especially useful in situations where face-to-face meetings are limited, such as during a pandemic or in schools that have limited physical space.

Technology also allows for the integration of visual and interactive media such as videos, animations, or infographics that illustrate religious concepts more clearly and engagingly. For example, students can create short videos about Islamic values such as honesty or social care and share them in class. Such projects not only encourage collaboration but also strengthen their understanding of Islamic teachings in the context of everyday life.

In addition, the use of interactive quiz applications such as Kahoot or Quizizz can increase student participation in the learning process. Students can work in groups to answer questions related to Islamic Religious Education material, creating a healthy competitive atmosphere and encouraging them to think critically and discuss answers together. Technology also supports the development of multimedia-based projects, such as creating interactive presentations or e-books that contain explanations of religious material. This project allows students to work together in collecting information, designing content, and presenting it in an attractive digital format. In addition to improving their understanding of the material, this activity also strengthens communication skills, creativity, and digital literacy.

The use of technology in Islamic religious learning has a positive impact on student engagement and their understanding of religious teachings. The following are the main findings of this study:

1. Increasing Student Engagement

- a. There was a significant increase in the level of student engagement during Islamic Religious Education learning sessions using technology.
- b. Students show greater interest and enthusiasm in participating in learning supported by technological elements such as interactive applications, simulations, and online platforms.

2. Interactive and Fun

- a. Learning methods integrated with technology create a more interactive and enjoyable learning experience for students.
- b. The use of multimedia, animation, and educational games supports the understanding of Islamic religious concepts in a more engaging way.

3. Accessibility of Materials

Students experience increased accessibility to Islamic Religious Education materials through online platforms. They can access materials, discussions, and study materials anytime and anywhere, increasing learning flexibility.

4. Improving Understanding of Religious Teachings

- a. The level of students' understanding of Islamic teachings increased significantly after following a learning method integrated with technology.
- b. Students reported a better understanding of Islamic values, history, and practices through an engaging learning approach.

5. Collaboration and Discussion

- a. The online platform facilitates collaboration between students and teachers through discussion forums and group-based activities.
- b. There is a more intensive exchange of ideas and understanding, strengthening bonds between students and increasing teacher-student interaction.

6. Motivation to learn

Students reported increased motivation to learn Islamic Religious Education due to the use of technology, feeling more connected to the learning material and feeling more motivated to explore further.

7. Positive Reception from Teachers

Teachers reported that technology-integrated learning methods facilitated the teaching process, helping them create a dynamic and responsive learning environment. Technology-integrated Islamic Education learning methods effectively increased student engagement and their understanding of religious teachings. The application of



technology in the context of Islamic religious education is able to create an interesting, interactive, and in-depth learning environment, bringing positive impacts in preparing the younger generation to better understand and live religious values in the digital era.

### **3. CLOSING**

The implementation of collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects creates an innovative and interactive learning environment. Through methods such as group discussions, case studies, and collaborative projects, students not only understand religious concepts theoretically, but also apply Islamic values in everyday life. An open learning atmosphere, supported by the use of technology, enriches the learning process, while the role of teachers as facilitators encourages students to think critically and creatively. This approach increases learning motivation, strengthens social skills, and helps shape students' characters in accordance with Islamic values, preparing them to face social and moral challenges in the future.

The implementation of collaborative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) faces challenges such as classroom management, curriculum adjustment, evaluation, and individual differences between students. Teachers need to manage group dynamics, adjust teaching materials, and use comprehensive evaluation methods. Challenges such as group dominance, conflict, and individual assessment can be overcome with clear guidance, rotational roles, and teacher support. Teacher training is also important for effective learning. With the right efforts, collaborative learning can help students develop social skills and strengthen their understanding of religious values.

The use of technology in collaborative learning in Islamic Religious Education subjects creates an innovative and interactive learning environment. Technology allows students to collaborate online, using platforms such as Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams, and utilizing visual media and quizzes to deepen their understanding of religious teachings. This increases student engagement, motivation, and understanding of the material, as well as strengthening communication skills and digital literacy. Teachers also feel the benefits in creating dynamic learning. Overall, technology supports more effective and relevant Islamic Religious Education learning.

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