

# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING METHOD: REVITALIZING THE LEARNING PROCESS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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## Abstract

Good classroom management is the key to creating active learning in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning. Cooperative learning is an alternative method for teachers to revitalize IRE learning to be more enjoyable and increase student activity. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of the cooperative learning method in increasing student activity in IRE learning in schools, especially at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor. The research method used in this study was a descriptive qualitative approach with observation and interviews with teachers and students as data collection techniques. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify core themes related to student activity in IRE learning. The results showed that the application of the cooperative learning method succeeded in increasing student activity in IRE learning in schools. By creating a fun learning environment, students become active participants in learning so that it has an impact on students in understanding the material more easily. From this study, the author recommends that teachers consistently apply the cooperative learning method in IRE learning to continue to increase student activity and understanding of the material being taught.

**Keywords:** Student Engagement, Student Activeness, Cooperative Learning

## Abstrak

Pengelolaan kelas yang baik menjadi kunci untuk menciptakan pembelajaran yang aktif dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI). Cooperative learning menjadi alternatif metode bagi guru untuk merevitalisasi pembelajaran PAI menjadi lebih menyenangkan dan meningkatkan keaktifan siswa. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengevaluasi dampak metode pembelajaran cooperative learning dalam meningkatkan keaktifan siswa dalam Pembelajaran PAI di sekolah, khususnya di SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor. Metode penelitian yang digunakan pada penelitian ini yaitu menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan observasi dan wawancara terhadap guru dan siswa sebagai teknik pengumpulan data. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi tema inti yang terkait dengan keaktifan siswa dalam pembelajaran PAI. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan metode cooperative learning berhasil meningkatkan keaktifan siswa dalam pembelajaran PAI di sekolah. Dengan menciptakan lingkungan pembelajaran yang menyenangkan membuat siswa menjadi aktif berpartisipasi dalam pembelajaran sehingga hal tersebut berdampak pada siswa dalam memahami materi menjadi lebih mudah. Dari penelitian ini penulis merekomendasikan agar guru secara konsisten menerapkan metode cooperative learning dalam pembelajaran PAI untuk terus meningkatkan keaktifan dan pemahaman siswa terhadap materi yang diajarkan.

**Kata Kunci:** Keterlibatan Siswa, Keaktifan Siswa, Pembelajaran Kooperatif

## Introduction

Effective learning requires methods that can create a dynamic, active classroom environment that directly involves students. One such method is cooperative learning, which can enhance student engagement and comprehension<sup>1</sup>. This method emphasizes collaboration among students, encouraging them to share knowledge, work together in groups, and take both individual and collective responsibility for achieving learning goals<sup>2</sup>. In the context of Islamic Education (IRE), fostering student engagement remains a challenge, particularly in an era of rapid societal development. The implementation of cooperative learning has the potential to address this challenge by creating relevant, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences<sup>3</sup>.

This finding aligns with John Dewey's perspective that learning is an active process in which students build understanding through real-world experiences, such as discussions, experiments, and problem-solving. This approach integrates knowledge with real-life applications<sup>4</sup>. Dewey also emphasized the importance of reflection in learning, where students review their experiences to incorporate new knowledge into their existing understanding. In cooperative learning, this process is reinforced through group discussions, which enhance both academic and interpersonal skills<sup>5</sup>. Similarly, Vygotsky's social

constructivist theory posits that complex thinking processes are deeply influenced by children's social interactions<sup>6</sup>.

The theoretical foundation for cooperative learning suggests that it can enhance students' motivation and social skills. This is supported by numerous studies. For instance, research has demonstrated that collaboration-based learning improves students' academic abilities, social skills, and motivation<sup>7</sup>. Other studies highlight that implementing cooperative learning encourages students to share information and ideas, fostering critical thinking and social skills. This is especially relevant to IRE, which focuses not only on cognitive knowledge transfer but also on affective and psychomotor aspects<sup>8</sup>.

Furthermore, cooperative learning promotes an inclusive and interactive learning environment that supports students' academic and social development<sup>9</sup>. Studies have also shown that applying cooperative learning methods can create an engaging, enjoyable, and competitive learning atmosphere, encouraging teamwork and shared responsibility. Activities such as games and tournaments boost student enthusiasm, foster a sense of community, and create a conducive learning environment where students feel more motivated and actively engaged. In addition to creating a pleasant atmosphere, cooperative

<sup>1</sup> Kismanto, 'Peningkatan Pemahaman Dan Keaktifan Siswa Melalui Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Tipe TAI (Teams Assisted Individualization) Di SMA Negeri 6 Surakarta', *Teknodika: Jurnal Penelitian Teknologi Pendidikan*, 17.01 (2019), 34–44.

<sup>2</sup> Zuriatun Hasanah and Ahmad Shofiyul Himami, 'Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Dalam Menumbuhkan Keaktifan Belajar Siswa', *Iryaduna: Jurnal Studi Kemahasiswaan*, 1.1 (2021), 1–13

<sup>3</sup> Rizcka Fatya Rahayu and M. Dahlan R, 'Upaya Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Mengembangkan Keaktifan Belajar Peserta Didik Pada Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh', *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Al-Thariqah*, 6.1 (2021), 18–35

<sup>4</sup> Melia Erba Robani and others, 'Metode Learning By Doing Dalam Mengoptimalkan Kualitas Belajar Siswa Smp', *Jurnal Ilmiah Edukasia*, 1.1 (2021), 24–30

<sup>5</sup> Nur Arifin, 'Pemikiran Pendidikan John Dewey', *As-Syar'i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga*, 2.2 (2020), 168–83.

<sup>6</sup> Ajat Sudrajat and others, 'Pengembangan Model Pembelajaran Cooperative Learning Berbasis Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Menghadapi Era Digitalisasi 4.0 Bagi Guru Di Kabupaten Sumedang', *Warta Pengabdian*, 18.1 (2024), 1–14.

<sup>7</sup> Assya Syahnaz, Febri Widiandari, and Nailurrohmah Khoiri, 'Model Pembelajaran Cooperative Learning Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran PAI', *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 8.1 (2023), 5295–5311.

<sup>8</sup> Syahraini Tambak, 'Metode Cooperative Learning Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam', *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Agama Dan Ilmu Pengetahuan*, 14.1 (2017), 1–17

<sup>9</sup> Siti Nurhalijahh Nasution and others, 'Systematic Literature Review: Pengelolaan Kelas Yang Efektif Dengan Menggunakan Cooperative Learning', *Teknik Pengumpulan Data Kuantitatif Dan Kualitatif Pada Metode Penelitian*, 2.6 (2023), 784–808.

learning builds various student skills, including social skills, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication. As a result, this model not only improves students' understanding of subject matter but also strengthens interpersonal skills and individual and group accountability<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore, implementing cooperative learning as part of revitalizing IRE instruction is a relevant strategy for creating more meaningful, effective learning aligned with contemporary demands. This article focuses on how this model can be optimally implemented to achieve these objectives.

Preliminary findings from a study conducted at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor reveal that IRE lessons using cooperative learning successfully create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. By engaging students in group discussions, presentations, and collaborative projects, they better understand religious concepts and moral values being taught. Additionally, this method enhances students' motivation, as they feel more involved and play an active role in the learning process. In implementing this method, teachers serve as central figures, not only delivering material but also designing learning strategies to ensure that the teaching process remains aligned with instructional plans, fostering active student participation. Therefore, selecting the appropriate teaching method is essential to make the learning process more engaging, effective, and participatory<sup>11</sup>.

This study explores how cooperative learning can be effectively implemented in IRE lessons and its impact on student engagement in the classroom. It also evaluates the extent to which this method improves student outcomes, both cognitively and affectively. Cognitive aspects include students' understanding of the subject matter, while affective

aspects encompass their attitudes and interest in IRE. In line with the evolving challenges of modern education, adopting innovative teaching methods has become increasingly crucial. Cooperative learning provides an approach tailored to the needs of modern education, where collaboration and critical thinking skills are highly valued. Thus, this study is relevant not only to IRE but also to the broader development of education<sup>12</sup>.

As an educational institution, SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor is committed to continually improving the quality of its instruction and supporting the development of effective teaching methods. The adoption of cooperative learning is one effort to achieve this goal, with the hope of creating more meaningful learning experiences for students. The success of implementing this method relies heavily on the support of the school, teachers, and parents.

Moreover, this study examines challenges that may arise in applying cooperative learning, such as time constraints, difficulties in managing groups, and variations in student abilities. By understanding these challenges, appropriate solutions can be identified to optimize the application of cooperative learning in IRE instruction.

Ultimately, the implementation of cooperative learning is expected to not only enhance student engagement and learning outcomes but also foster better character development aligned with Islamic values. Thus, this method can significantly contribute to shaping a generation with strong moral character and competitive capabilities<sup>13</sup>. As a practical step, the findings of this study can be applied through workshops for teachers to strengthen their understanding and skills in

<sup>10</sup> Almira Rachma Thalita, Andin Dyas Fitriyani, and Pupun Nuryani, 'Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Tgt Untuk Meningkatkan Keaktifan Belajar Siswa Kelas IV', *Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 4.2 (2019), 147–56.

<sup>11</sup> Muhamad Hadi Santoso and Soeryanto, 'Analisis Metode Pembelajaran Kooperatif Jigsaw Untuk Meningkatkan Keaktifan Dan Hasil Belajar Siswa', *JPTM: Jurnal Pendidikan Teknik Mesin*, 11.1 (2021), 1–10.

<sup>12</sup> Yuni Noer Syamsiyah, 'Penerapan Model Kooperatif Tipe Inquiri Pada Pembelajaran Ikatan Kimia

Untuk Meningkatkan Aktivitas Dan Hasil Belajar', *SCIENCE : Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Matematika Dan IPA*, 2.2 (2022), 144–51.

<sup>13</sup> Roin Rovita, 'Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi Melalui Cooperative Learning Teknik Demonstrasi Untuk Peningkatan Keaktifan Siswa Kelas 1 SDN Songgokerto 02 Batu', *Jurnal Pendidikan Taman Widya Humaniora (JPTWH)*, 2.2 (2023), 854–76.

effectively implementing cooperative learning strategies. This initiative aims to improve the quality of teaching across various subjects, particularly Islamic Education.

### Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to explore the implementation of Cooperative Learning in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) classes at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor. A qualitative approach was chosen because the study aims to delve into the experiences, perceptions, and participation of students and teachers in the learning process using the Cooperative Learning method. This approach provides richer and more in-depth data, offering a comprehensive view of the effectiveness of this method in fostering active learning<sup>14</sup>.

The research subjects are students and teachers of IRE at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor. These subjects were selected based on their relevance to the implementation of the Cooperative Learning method. The student participants are those involved in IRE classes where this method is applied, while the IRE teachers were chosen due to their critical role in organizing and facilitating Cooperative Learning in the classroom. By engaging directly with these subjects, the study seeks to capture the dynamics of the learning process.

Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly examine the implementation of Cooperative Learning in IRE classes, including student interactions, teacher facilitation strategies, and student responses to the method. Interviews were conducted with 16 students from various classes and two IRE teachers at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor. The student interviews aimed to explore their perceptions of the Cooperative Learning method applied in IRE lessons. The interview questions covered topics such as the ease of understanding religious material

during group learning, the benefits of learning through Cooperative Learning, students' opinions on task division within groups and active roles of each member, and suggestions for improving Cooperative Learning-based instruction. Interviews with IRE teachers aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the teaching strategies employed. Documentation collected included lesson plans, teaching notes, and student work, which served to support data from observations and interviews.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques, involving data coding, identification of main themes, and interpretation of data based on emerging themes. Inductive coding was employed, wherein initial codes were developed directly from raw data to ensure that the resulting themes genuinely reflect the participants' experiences and perspectives. To enhance the validity of findings, member checking was carried out, where the analysis results were confirmed with the research participants to ensure the researchers' interpretations aligned with their understanding. Data from observations, interviews, and documentation were analyzed comprehensively to identify patterns that indicate the effectiveness and challenges of implementing Cooperative Learning. This approach enabled the researchers to identify factors influencing student engagement in IRE lessons and develop insights into optimizing this method.

The research began with a preparatory phase, including planning and preparing research instruments such as interview guides and observation sheets. Data collection followed, involving classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and the collection of related documents. Throughout the process, the researchers ensured adherence to research ethics by obtaining school permission and explaining the study's objectives to the participants involved. After data collection, the researchers analyzed the data and compiled the research report. To ensure

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<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Rijal Fadli, 'Memahami Desain Metode Penelitian Kualitatif', *Humanika: Kajian Ilmiah Mata Kuliah Umum*, 21.1 (2021), 33–54.

data validity, the study employed data triangulation by comparing information from multiple sources observation, interviews, and documentation. This technique helped verify data accuracy and strengthen the conclusions drawn. Additionally, member checking was conducted by confirming findings with teachers and several participating students to ensure that the data interpretation reflected their experiences and views accurately<sup>15</sup>.

This study has several limitations that must be considered. First, it was conducted in only one school, SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor, so the findings may not be generalizable to other school contexts. Second, the data rely on the honesty and openness of respondents during interviews. However, efforts were made to minimize bias through triangulation and member checking techniques.

## Finding and Discussion

### Finding

#### Student Engagement

Interviews with several students revealed various perceptions regarding the application of the cooperative learning method in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) lessons, including the enjoyment of learning and the ease of understanding the material. Student 1 stated, "Yes, because it's more fun and makes it easier to understand the material through discussions with friends." Student 2 added, "Yes, because we get to learn about Asmaul Husna and their meanings." A similar sentiment was expressed by Student 3, who explained, "Yes, because it's easier to understand the material through discussions."

#### Group Learning

Regarding group learning and task division, students felt that group work made assignments easier and encouraged all members to actively participate. Student 4 said, "It's easier and doesn't feel like such a burden because we work on it together with friends." Student 5 added, "Everyone helps, and the division of tasks is fair." This was echoed by Student 6, who said, "The division of

tasks is very fair, and everyone in the group plays an active role."

### Challenges and Suggestions

In its implementation, this method is not without challenges. One of the issues is time management during group discussions, which Student 7 suggested needs to be optimized so that every student has the opportunity to respond to questions. Additionally, differences in students' abilities sometimes pose challenges in maintaining productive group dynamics. Student 8 proposed, "Perhaps including some storytelling, games, or quizzes would make it more interesting and fun."

### Student Activeness

Aligned with the interview findings that explored students' perceptions of the application of cooperative learning in IRE lessons, the research results also showed significant improvements in students' engagement, particularly in understanding the material "Emulating Allah's Names and Attributes for a Better Life." This method successfully transformed the classroom atmosphere from being teacher-centered to more student-centered. Students were encouraged to actively participate in group discussions, exchange ideas, and share knowledge. Observational data indicated that students became more actively involved in learning activities.

Among the active participation shown by students was their ability to collaboratively create concepts regarding the meanings and applications of Allah's names and attributes in daily life. In cooperative learning, students were divided into small groups of 4-5 members. Each group was assigned to discuss Allah's names, such as As-Sami' (The All-Hearing), Al-Basir (The All-Seeing), Al-'Alim (The All-Knowing), and Al-Khabir (The All-Aware), and how these attributes could be implemented in daily behavior. Data from these group discussions showed improved student understanding of the practical application of Allah's attributes in their lives.

<sup>15</sup> Yuli Asmi Rozali, 'Penggunaan Analisis Konten Dan Analisis Tematik', *Forum Ilmiah*, 19.1 (2022), 68–76.

Students' activeness in the cooperative learning method was also evident in their participation in more interactive class discussions and Q&A sessions. Before using this method, students tended to be passive and merely listened to the teacher's explanations. However, after the implementation of cooperative learning, students became more motivated to ask questions and express their opinions on how Allah's attributes could guide their actions in daily life. This increased engagement was attributed to the learning environment, which fostered discussion and critical thinking as students shared knowledge and experiences with one another<sup>16</sup>.

The interviews also revealed that most students felt more comfortable participating in group discussions compared to more formal lecture-based activities.

In addition to enhancing activeness in discussions, cooperative learning also encouraged students to work collaboratively in completing assignments. One such task involved creating group presentations on how they could emulate the attribute of Al-Khabir in their social interactions, both at school and at home. Each group was tasked with providing concrete examples from daily life and explaining how these attributes could be applied. Observational data indicated that students were more enthusiastic about completing this group task, and the results showed a deeper understanding of IRE material.

This method also created a more interactive learning environment, where every student felt they had an essential role in their group. Active IRE learning not only improved students' cognitive understanding but also helped them develop social skills such as communication, collaboration, and mutual respect. During reflection sessions, many students expressed that they felt more engaged and challenged to understand the IRE material because they had to

explain concepts to their group members. This indicates that the cooperative learning method has created a more in-depth and meaningful learning experience.

Furthermore, the implementation of cooperative learning in IRE lessons also helped students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning. Students felt motivated to learn not only for grades but also for a better understanding of how Allah's attributes could guide them in their daily lives<sup>17</sup>.

### **The Role of Teachers in Cooperative Learning**

This research found that cooperative learning encouraged students to be more proactive in seeking additional information about the material being taught, whether from books, the internet, or discussions with peers outside the classroom. Teachers also played an essential role in ensuring that active learning continued to run smoothly.

In the context of IRE lessons using the cooperative learning method, teachers acted as facilitators who provided guidance, while the learning process focused on students. Teachers only gave initial directions and allowed students to explore the material independently within their groups. Observations showed that with this more flexible role, teachers could focus on providing constructive feedback to students and helping them solve problems encountered during discussions.

Overall, the cooperative learning method successfully increased student engagement in IRE lessons at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor. The research findings indicate that cooperative learning not only enhanced student participation but also deepened their understanding of Islamic values, especially in emulating Allah's names and attributes for a better life. Challenges such as group dynamics and time management remain key points for future research.

<sup>16</sup> Muhamad Parhan and Bambang Sutedja, 'Penerapan Pendekatan Pembelajaran Kontekstual Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia', *TARBAWY: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education*, 6.2 (2019), 114–26.

<sup>17</sup> Musdalifah, 'Implementasi Pembelajaran Kooperatif Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Di Madrasah', *Al-Miskawaih: Journal of Science Education*, 2.1 (2023), 47–66.

## Discussion

### Revitalizing Cooperative Learning Methods to Enhance Student Engagement in Islamic Religious Education

Revitalization is a process of reinvigorating something so that its value becomes significantly important<sup>18</sup>. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (IRE), revitalization is essential to reenergize the learning process, fostering the cognitive and affective development of students<sup>19</sup>. Revitalizing cooperative learning methods in IRE aims to increase student engagement during lessons, creating a dynamic and vibrant IRE learning environment.

Active learning in the classroom ideally involves direct student participation. Students are not only listeners but also actively engage in discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and independent exploration. Meanwhile, teachers are not merely content deliverers but facilitators who provide students with the space and guidance to explore their own ideas. As such, active learning is often referred to as student-centered learning. In this approach, students take on a larger role in directing their learning journey, requiring them to be active and independent<sup>20</sup>.

To achieve active learning, strategies are needed that stimulate students' critical thinking and encourage their active participation in learning activities. For example, teachers can integrate cooperative learning methods through group discussions or problem-based projects to encourage students to think critically and creatively. Teachers must ensure that all students are actively involved in the learning process, creating a conducive classroom environment. Active learning should be free from fear or anxiety, where every student feels valued. This approach

fosters an interactive, collaborative, and student-centered learning environment, enabling learning to occur not only cognitively but also in the development of character and social skills<sup>21</sup>.

Interviews with students reveal their perceptions of cooperative learning methods. According to the students, cooperative learning involves a group-based system that helps strengthen social relationships among peers, facilitating more intensive interactions within groups, whether in completing tasks or understanding religious material.

Students expressed that learning in groups made it easier for them to grasp the material. By discussing with peers, they could deepen their understanding of concepts such as *Asmaul Husna* and other topics. Additionally, students stated that group work made tasks more manageable because responsibilities were divided among group members. This approach made the work feel lighter and more efficient, while also creating a more interactive environment, thereby encouraging greater engagement in the learning process.

Aligned with this, cooperative learning is a learning method based on the concept of "learning by doing," where students are not merely passive but also actively participate in learning, whether in discussions or problem-solving activities. This approach resonates with John Dewey's theory of "learning by doing," which emphasizes that students learn through direct experiences and interactions with their environment. According to Dewey, learning is not a passive process where students simply receive information; instead, it is an active process where they build understanding through actions and real-life experiences. Students acquire knowledge by actively participating in

<sup>18</sup> Nirena Ade Christy, 'Revitalisasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia Selama Masa Pandemi Covid-19', *ENGGANG: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Budaya*, 1.1 (2020), 1–15.

<sup>19</sup> Hasan Baharun and Zulfaizah, 'Revitalisasi Pendidikan Agama Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik Di Madrasah', *Elementary: Islamic Teacher Journal*, 6.1 (2018), 43–62.

<sup>20</sup> Ija Srirahmawati, 'Peran Guru Sebagai Fasilitator Dalam Mengasah Penalaran Matematika Siswa SDN 29 Dompu Tahun Pembelajaran 2020/2021', *Ainara Journal (Jurnal Penelitian Dan PKM Bidang Ilmu Pendidikan)*, 2.2 (2021), 114–23.

<sup>21</sup> Tuti Sapmawati, 'Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Learning Untuk Meningkatkan Keaktifan Siswa SMA', *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Dan Komputer*, 1.01 (2021), 42–45.

activities such as discussions, experiments, or problem-solving. Through these experiences, students not only learn academically but also develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, allowing them to reflect on what they have learned in relation to the real world<sup>22</sup>.

Dewey also stated that education should focus on the holistic development of students, not only on academic aspects but also on their social and emotional growth. In the context of cooperative learning, the learning that occurs not only helps students understand the subject matter but also enhances their ability to collaborate, communicate, and interact with others. Dewey believed that collaborative learning allows students not only to learn to appreciate the roles and contributions of each group member but also to create an environment that fosters the development of social skills such as tolerance, empathy, and shared responsibility. This approach prepares students to face real-life challenges, where collaboration is essential<sup>23</sup>.

Additionally, Dewey emphasized the importance of reflection in the learning process. After engaging in an activity or experience, students need to reflect on what they have learned from it. This reflection helps them integrate new knowledge into their existing mental frameworks and identify ways to improve their understanding in the future. In cooperative learning, reflection can take place through group discussions, where each member shares their experiences and insights. This reflective process not only deepens academic understanding but also enhances students' comprehension of group dynamics and interpersonal skills. Dewey's educational philosophy advocates for a humanistic approach to education, recognizing humans as social beings with the potential for natural development<sup>24</sup>.

Another foundational theory for cooperative learning is Vygotsky's theory, which argues that learning occurs most efficiently and effectively when children learn cooperatively with others in a supportive environment under the guidance of a more capable individual, such as a teacher<sup>25</sup>. In cooperative learning, each group member has the responsibility to help others understand the material. Therefore, the success of group learning depends heavily on the presence of positive synergy, where all group members feel interdependent in achieving good outcomes. Ultimately, the development not only involves cognitive aspects but also social skills such as communication, conflict management, and leadership. In this way, cooperative learning not only encourages academic understanding but also strengthens students' social and interpersonal abilities<sup>26</sup>.

### **Challenges in Implementing Cooperative Learning Method in Islamic Education Learning**

In practice, implementing the cooperative learning method has its own challenges. Some of these challenges include time constraints, ineffective group management, differences in student abilities, difficulties in creating positive interactions, varying student motivation, dependency on other group members, and issues related to group performance assessment. Limited time often becomes an obstacle for teachers. The process of learning in groups, when implemented in formal school hours, naturally takes longer compared to lecture or direct presentation methods. Teachers must allocate sufficient time for each group to discuss, complete tasks, and present their results. Often, the available time is only enough for introducing the material without allowing ample time for in-depth discussions

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<sup>22</sup> Arifin.

<sup>23</sup> Arifin.

<sup>24</sup> Fitry Wahyuni, 'Penerapan Problem-Based Learning: Studi Pada Kemampuan Berpikir Reflektif Siswa', *Journal of Didactic Mathematics*, 1.2 (2020), 104–10.

<sup>25</sup> Begjo Tohari and Ainur Rahman, 'Konstruktivisme Lev Semonovich Vygotsky Dan Jerome: Model Pembelajaran Aktif Dalam Pengembangan Kognitif Anak', *Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 4.1 (2024), 209–28.

<sup>26</sup> Sudrajat and others.



within groups. This can prevent students from fully utilizing the benefits of this teaching method<sup>27</sup>.

Next, group management becomes another challenge in cooperative learning. Not all students have strong social skills to work effectively in groups, so some students may struggle with collaboration. Teachers need to ensure that each group functions effectively, but there is often an imbalance in participation. Some students may dominate, while others become passive and contribute little. This imbalance can hinder the learning process within the group and cause some students to feel ignored. Effective group management requires continuous monitoring from the teacher, which in turn requires additional time and energy. Without proper intervention, group work can become unproductive<sup>28</sup>.

In addition to group management, social skills also present a challenge in group learning. Some students may struggle with communication or expressing their opinions effectively. Skills like listening, sharing thoughts, or negotiating are often underdeveloped among some students. Without adequate social skills, group interactions may become unproductive or even lead to conflicts. Teachers need to train students to work together by providing clear instructions on how to communicate and resolve disagreements. Building students' social skills takes time and the right approach, such as through role-playing or simulations. Therefore, this challenge is not only related to teaching academic content but also to developing interpersonal skills that support group work<sup>29</sup>.

Another challenge is related to students who are not actively involved in group learning. Some students prefer to be passive observers rather than participate in discussions or task-solving. This can happen because they lack self-confidence or feel more comfortable letting others take charge. If not

addressed properly, this situation can diminish the group's dynamics and lower learning outcomes. Teachers need to establish mechanisms to ensure that every student plays an active role in group activities<sup>30</sup>.

Additionally, a challenge in cooperative learning is the varying levels of students' understanding. It is undeniable that each student has a different level of comprehension of the material, and when they are placed in groups, these differences can affect the overall performance of the group. More capable students often take over group tasks, while less capable students become more passive or even marginalized. This results in these students not learning independently and not developing critical thinking skills. In the long term, this dependency can hinder their cognitive development. Furthermore, it can lower the motivation of less confident students, making them feel they are contributing less<sup>31</sup>. On the other hand, more capable students may feel burdened by the need to help their peers understand the material. Teachers need to be careful in arranging groups to prevent significant imbalances in ability. Proper group division will help maintain balanced participation and ensure that every student has equal learning opportunities. However, these adjustments require careful planning and a good understanding of each student's abilities.

Differences in student motivation to engage in cooperative learning also vary, and this can be a challenge on its own. Some students are highly motivated to work in groups and enjoy the collaborative learning process, while others are less interested or even feel burdened. Students with low motivation may not participate actively in the group, which can ultimately reduce the

<sup>27</sup> Ucik Fitri Handayani, 'Analisis Hambatan Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Pada Pelajaran Matematika', *Jurnal Pusaka*, 9.2 (2020), 22–36.

<sup>28</sup> Defi Antika and others, 'Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Dalam Menumbuhkan Keaktifan Siswa Terhadap Pembelajaran IPS', *El-Mujtama: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 4.3 (2024), 142–47.

<sup>29</sup> Wahyuni.

<sup>30</sup> Yeni Puji Astuti, Agus Wahdian, and Jamilah Jamilah, 'Penerapan Model Cooperative Learning Dengan Teknik Two Stay Two Stray Dalam Pembelajaran Ips Di Sekolah Dasar', *Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 1.3 (2024), 8.

<sup>31</sup> Handayani.

effectiveness of the learning process<sup>32</sup>. Low motivation can also be caused by a lack of self-confidence or confusion about their role in the group. When there are group members who do not contribute, the overall learning outcome can be disrupted. Teachers need to provide adequate encouragement for less motivated students to get them more involved. One way to increase motivation is by offering rewards or recognition for each group member's contribution. Additionally, teachers can design tasks that are both challenging and enjoyable to enhance student engagement<sup>33</sup>.

Finally, assessing student performance in cooperative learning can also be a complex challenge. Teachers must ensure that the assessment focuses not only on the group's final outcome but also on the individual contributions of each group member<sup>34</sup>. It is sometimes difficult to measure individual contributions accurately, especially if one student is more dominant in the group. An unfair assessment system can lead to dissatisfaction among students and reduce their motivation to collaborate. Teachers need to develop assessment rubrics that include aspects such as participation, initiative, and cooperation. Additionally, it is important to provide specific feedback to each student so they know how to improve their contributions in the future. Transparent and comprehensive assessments will help maintain the collaborative spirit within the group<sup>35</sup>.

## Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the cooperative learning method in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SMP Putra Pakuan Bogor created a more interactive and collaborative learning environment. Students became more involved in group discussions and collaborative tasks, which helped

them better understand the material. This learning process also encouraged students to develop social skills and a sense of responsibility for their learning. The teacher acted as a facilitator, helping students independently explore the material, providing initial guidance, and creating a supportive learning environment.

However, the implementation of this method also faced various challenges, such as time constraints, effective group management, differences in student abilities, and varying motivation levels. These challenges require the teacher's attention in organizing groups, training students' social skills, and designing fair assessments to ensure that all group members contribute to the fullest. Despite these obstacles, cooperative learning can create a more meaningful and in-depth learning experience, as long as it is balanced with proper management strategies.

For future research, it is recommended to focus on exploring the impact of mixed-ability group compositions compared to homogeneous groups on learning outcomes. This study could help identify the optimal group structure to balance skill levels and enhance student motivation in diverse classrooms. Additionally, it is important to evaluate the influence of training students' social skills on group dynamics and the effectiveness of collaboration. By considering these factors, future research could provide deeper insights into the implementation of the cooperative learning method in IRE education as well as in other academic disciplines.

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<sup>32</sup> Muhammad Ridha, 'Teori Motivasi McClelland Dan Implikasinya Dalam Pembelajaran PAP', *Palapa*, 8.1 (2020), 1–16.

<sup>33</sup> Syahnaz, Widiandari, and Khoiri.

<sup>34</sup> Arbain Arbain and others, 'Meningkatkan Keaktifan, Komunikasi, Kolaborasi, Dan Hasil Belajar

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