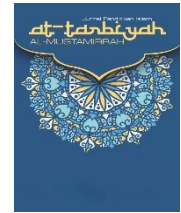




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Article

### Analysis of Islamic Education Learning Innovation Based on Media and Active Methods at IPE Pekanbaru

Rofiatus Sa'adah<sup>1\*</sup>, Wasith Achadi<sup>2</sup>

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia<sup>1-2</sup>

\*Corresponding Author: [25204011023@student.uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:25204011023@student.uin-suka.ac.id)

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#### Abstract

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays an important role in building students' character and strengthening their religious understanding. However, PAI learning practices are still often dominated by conventional approaches that do not sufficiently involve students' active participation, which affects their learning interest and understanding. This study aims to analyze media-based and active-method-based PAI learning innovation at Ingenium Primary Education (IPE) Pekanbaru, with a focus on the forms of innovation, the implementation process, and its impact on students. This study used a qualitative approach with a field research design. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews with the PAI teacher and the vice principal for curriculum affairs, and documentation. The data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was tested through source and technique triangulation. The findings show that PAI learning innovation at IPE Pekanbaru is implemented through the integration of learning media, educational games, and active learning methods, such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery learning. These innovations are supported by learning technology and religious habituation activities, such as murajaah and congregational prayer. The implementation process is carried out through continuous curriculum evaluation and collaborative planning through Lesson Plan Activity (LPA). The findings indicate an increase in students' activeness, motivation, and understanding, as well as the strengthening of religious character and the improvement of teachers' creativity and professionalism. Therefore, the integration of learning media and active methods has the potential to become a relevant strategy for improving the quality of PAI learning in primary schools.

**Keywords:** Islamic Religious Education; Learning Innovation; Learning Media; Active Learning Methods

#### PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a strategic role in shaping students' religious understanding, religious character, and moral behavior from the primary education level (Tuna, 2022). PAI learning does not only function as a process of transferring Islamic

knowledge, but also as a space for internalizing values reflected in students' attitudes, worship habits, and social behavior (Kosasih dkk., 2026). Therefore, the quality of PAI learning determines the school's success in developing students who are intellectually capable, spiritually aware, and able to apply Islamic values in daily life (Fakhrudin dkk., 2025). However, PAI learning practices in primary schools still face several fundamental problems. Learning is often dominated by lecture-based methods, teacher-centered instruction, and limited opportunities for students' active participation. This condition makes students tend to be passive, feel bored quickly, and have difficulty connecting PAI materials with real-life experiences. In addition, the use of learning media has not been fully optimized, so abstract materials are often difficult for students to understand concretely. This problem shows that PAI learning requires a more interactive and contextual approach that is aligned with the characteristics of primary school students (Kusuma & Inayati, 2023).

This issue becomes more important in the context of 21st-century learning. Students today grow up in a dynamic and digital environment that demands a more visual, participatory, and meaningful learning process (Meisel dkk., 2025). Students should no longer be positioned only as recipients of material. They need to be involved as active subjects who can ask questions, explore, discuss, solve problems, and draw conclusions from learning experiences (Sholeh dkk., 2023). Therefore, PAI teachers need to develop learning innovations that combine learning media, active methods, and religious value habituation so that learning is not only interesting, but also has an impact on students' understanding and character formation (Ma & Leung, 2026). The use of innovative learning strategies can also increase students' motivation and engagement during the learning process. Furthermore, meaningful learning experiences enable students to connect Islamic values with real-life situations they encounter in their daily lives (Hopkins, 2021). As a result, learning outcomes are expected to improve not only in the cognitive domain but also in the affective and behavioral dimensions of students.

One relevant strategy to address these problems is the integration of learning media and active methods (Alencar, 2018). Learning media, such as videos, pictures, teaching aids, educational applications, and game-based media, can help students understand materials more concretely (Susanti dkk., 2024). Meanwhile, active methods such as *problem-based learning*, *project-based learning*, *discovery learning*, discussion, practice, and *game-based learning* can encourage student engagement in the learning process (Nasution & Suyadi, 2020). The integration of these two aspects is important because PAI learning should not only be delivered verbally, but also needs to be experienced, practiced, and reflected on by students through enjoyable learning activities (Parnawi, 2023). In addition, the combination of learning media and active methods can create a more interactive and student-centered learning environment (Rayens & Ellis, 2018). This approach helps students develop critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving skills while strengthening their understanding of Islamic teachings in daily life.

Ingenium Primary Education (IPE) Pekanbaru is one of the primary education institutions that implements innovation in PAI learning (Llorens dkk., 2026). PAI learning at IPE includes Al-Islam, Al-Qur'an, Al-Hadith, Qur'an memorization, and Arabic. In its implementation, teachers try to use teaching media in every learning process (Tväråna dkk., 2025). If teaching media are not available, learning is designed through educational games so that students remain active, happy, and not burdened. Innovation is also reflected in religious habituation, such as morning *murajaah*, congregational Zuhr prayer, and Islamic holiday activities (Wajdi dkk., 2026). Thus, PAI innovation at IPE does not only take place in the classroom, but is also integrated into the school culture and students' daily activities. The

urgency of this study lies in the need to understand how PAI learning innovation is designed, implemented, and evaluated in the context of primary schools.

Learning innovation should not only be understood as the use of media or variations in teaching methods. Innovation needs to be viewed as a systemic process involving curriculum evaluation, lesson planning, teacher readiness, the implementation of active methods, the use of media, religious habituation, and students' responses (Kosasih dkk., 2026; Sholeh dkk., 2023; Susanti dkk., 2024). In the context of IPE Pekanbaru, innovation emerged from the evaluation of the previous curriculum, students' tendency to become bored with lecture-based learning, and the school's effort to provide more active and enjoyable PAI learning. Several previous studies have shown that the use of digital media in PAI learning can support a more visual and interactive learning process that suits students' characteristics (Susanti dkk., 2024). Other studies have also shown that *active learning* can increase students' activeness and help them understand materials more deeply (Cibro & Tanjung, 2024). However, previous studies generally discussed learning media and active methods separately. Studies that integrate learning media, active methods, *game-based learning*, religious habituation, curriculum evaluation, and teacher professionalism development in primary school PAI learning are still limited. In addition, studies that specifically examine PAI innovation practices at Ingenium Primary Education Pekanbaru have not been widely found.

Based on this gap, the novelty of this study lies in its analysis of PAI learning innovation as a holistic and systemic process. This study does not only identify the forms of media or learning methods used, but also explains the process through which innovation emerges, planning strategies through Lesson Plan Activity, the implementation of active methods, implementation challenges, solutions taken by the school, and its impact on students' activeness, motivation, understanding, religious character, and teacher professionalism. Therefore, this study contributes to the development of PAI learning studies, especially in the context of media-based and active-method-based learning innovation in primary schools. Based on the explanation above, this study aims to analyze: (1) the forms of media-based and active-method-based PAI learning innovation at Ingenium Primary Education Pekanbaru; (2) the implementation process of media-based and active-method-based PAI learning innovation at Ingenium Primary Education Pekanbaru; and (3) the impact of this innovation on students' activeness, motivation, understanding, religious character, and teacher professionalism.

## METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a field research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). This approach was selected because the study aimed to explore in depth media-based and active-method-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning innovation at Ingenium Primary Education (IPE) Pekanbaru. The focus of this study included the forms of learning innovation, the implementation process, and its impact on students and teachers.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and supporting documentation (Creswell & Poth, 2024). Observation was conducted to examine the PAI learning process, the use of teaching media, the implementation of active methods, student engagement, and religious habituation in the school environment. Interviews were conducted with the PAI teacher and the vice principal for curriculum affairs as informants who were involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of PAI learning. The interviews explored the background of innovation, learning models used, implementation process, challenges, solutions, and the impact of innovation on students and teachers.

Supporting documentation was used to complement the observation and interview data, especially data related to learning activities, the use of teaching media, and religious activities at school. The data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model, which included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2018). Data validity was tested through source triangulation and technique triangulation by comparing data from the PAI teacher, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, observation results, interviews, and supporting documentation (Creswell & Poth, 2024).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Forms of PAI Learning Innovation Based on Media and Active Methods*

The findings show that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning innovation at Ingenium Primary Education (IPE) Pekanbaru is implemented through the integration of learning media, active methods, educational games, and religious habituation (Amalia dkk., 2023). These innovations are applied in five areas of PAI learning, namely Al-Islam, Al-Qur'an, Al-Hadith, Qur'an memorization, and Arabic (Septiani Selly Susanti dkk., 2024). Based on the interview findings, teachers seek to provide teaching media in every learning process. When teaching media are not available, teachers design learning activities in the form of games so that students remain actively involved and do not feel burdened during the learning process. This approach has contributed to increasing students' enthusiasm and participation during PAI lessons (Halik, 2025). Furthermore, the integration of learning media, games, and religious habituation helps students understand Islamic values more effectively and apply them in their daily lives.

This finding indicates that PAI learning innovation at IPE is not limited to the use of teaching aids (Salsabila dkk., t.t.). It also reflects a shift in how teachers design learning experiences. Learning is no longer centered only on teacher explanation, but is directed toward student engagement through visual activities, practice, discussion, games, and exploration (Fitria, 2023). This pattern shows a shift from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning. From a constructivist perspective, students can build stronger understanding when they are directly involved in learning experiences rather than passively receiving information (Do dkk., 2023). As a result, students have greater opportunities to develop critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills during the learning process. This finding confirms that innovative and student-centered PAI learning can create a more meaningful learning experience while supporting the holistic development of students.

The most prominent form of innovation is the use of teaching media and educational games, especially in lower grades (Zahara dkk., 2025). The teacher explained that students in grades 1 to 3 need enjoyable learning experiences because they easily feel bored when learning only relies on lectures. Therefore, media and games are used to maintain students' attention, increase their interest, and help them understand PAI materials more concretely (Sabirin dkk., 2025). In this context, learning media function as a bridge between abstract religious concepts and learning experiences that are easier for primary school students to understand (Hamdi dkk., 2024; Safitri dkk., 2025). Educational games also provide opportunities for students to learn through interaction, participation, and direct experience

rather than through memorization alone. Consequently, students become more motivated to engage in learning activities and are able to retain the material more effectively.

One example of innovation found in this study is the use of *mystery egg* media in Al-Islam learning on commendable behavior. In this activity, students learn in groups to find eggs containing pictures of good and bad behavior (Purba dkk., 2024). After that, they classify the pictures, submit their work to the teacher, present their results, and draw conclusions about the differences between commendable and inappropriate behavior (Pratama, 2025). This example shows that *discovery learning* not only encourages students to move actively and discuss, but also trains them to observe, classify, express opinions, and conclude the meaning of the learning material (Afifah dkk., 2023). The practical impact of this innovation can be seen in the increase in student engagement during learning (De Bruijn-Smolters & Prinsen, 2024a). When students are given opportunities to discover, classify, and present their learning results, they do not merely memorize the material. They also understand the values contained in it. This is important in PAI learning because its objectives are not limited to the cognitive aspect, but also include attitude and behavior formation (Badri & Malik, 2024). Therefore, learning media and active methods help students understand Islamic teachings through activities that are closer to their lived experiences.

In addition to classroom innovation, PAI learning at IPE is also strengthened through religious habituation. These activities include morning *murajaah*, congregational Zuhur prayer, and Islamic holiday commemorations such as Mawlid al-Nabi and Isra Mi'raj. This habituation shows that PAI learning does not stop at classroom instruction. Religious values are also developed through school routines. Through these activities, students have opportunities to practice Islamic values repeatedly and contextually. This is in line with the concept of Islamic education, which emphasizes the balance of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in shaping students' religious character (Mahbubi & Hasanah, 2024). Thus, the form of PAI learning innovation at IPE Pekanbaru is holistic. Innovation is not only realized through learning media and active methods, but also through religious habituation and school culture. This integration makes PAI learning more concrete, enjoyable, and meaningful for students. At the same time, this innovation strengthens students' religious character because the materials they learn are not only discussed theoretically, but also practiced in daily school activities.

### ***Process of Implementing PAI Learning Innovation***

The implementation process of PAI learning innovation at IPE Pekanbaru originated from curriculum evaluation and students' learning needs. Based on interview findings, innovation emerged as a response to changing times, the development of children's characteristics, and the limitations of the previous curriculum. Teachers explained that students today tend to be more critical and quickly become bored when learning only relies on lecture-based methods. This condition encouraged the school to adjust its learning strategies so that PAI materials could be delivered in a more engaging and relevant way. This finding indicates that learning innovation at IPE is not a spontaneous change, but rather the result of a process of reflection and evaluation. In the context of educational management, this process reflects the principle of continuous improvement. Evaluation of the previous curriculum

became the basis for designing learning activities that are more aligned with students' needs. Thus, innovation is not merely understood as teacher creativity in the classroom, but also as an institutional response to changes in student characteristics and the demands of 21st-century learning (Budirahayu & Saud, 2023).

PAI teachers play an important role in the emergence of innovation. Based on interview findings, teachers act as the initiators of innovation because they directly interact with students in the classroom. Teachers function as planners, implementers, and evaluators of learning. This finding suggests that learning innovation requires teachers to take an active role as agents of change. Teachers are not only responsible for implementing the curriculum, but also for adapting learning strategies to real classroom conditions. Teacher professional development also contributes to changes in teaching practices, increases teachers' confidence, and positively affects student engagement and learning outcomes (Rahmi & Rasanjani, 2025). The implementation process is also supported by a collaborative planning mechanism through Lesson Plan Activity (LPA). In this activity, teachers present lesson plans for the following two weeks to the school principal or curriculum division. These plans are then reviewed and refined collaboratively before being implemented in the classroom. This practice indicates that lesson planning is not conducted individually, but through discussion and academic supervision. In this way, the innovations implemented by teachers remain aligned with the school's learning objectives.

During the implementation stage, teachers use various active methods, such as *problem-based learning*, *project-based learning*, *discovery learning*, discussion, practice, and learning through play. These methods are integrated with learning media and technology, such as instructional videos and educational applications. This implementation indicates that PAI learning innovation does not rely on a single method, but instead employs multiple approaches that are adjusted to the material, students' age levels, and learning objectives (Amiruddin dkk., 2023). The implementation of innovation is also connected to the learning evaluation system. Based on interview findings, evaluation is conducted through formative, summative, and authentic assessments. Assessment is not limited to written tests, but also includes attitude observation and practical assessments, such as prayer performance, Qur'anic recitation, and memorization. This evaluation pattern is relevant to the characteristics of PAI learning, which emphasizes not only conceptual understanding but also worship practices and character formation. Therefore, evaluation functions as a means of assessing learning achievement in a more comprehensive manner (Baroroh & Hamani, 2022).

However, the implementation of innovation also faces several challenges. The main obstacles identified include time management and limited human resources. As a developing school, IPE is still undergoing a process of adjustment through trials, evaluation, and continuous improvement. When a program does not run as expected, the school reevaluates it and prioritizes the most essential activities to ensure that learning objectives can still be achieved. In addition, the school continuously seeks to improve teacher competence through training and professional development programs. This adaptive approach demonstrates the school's commitment to sustaining educational innovation while responding to practical challenges in the implementation process.

These challenges indicate that the success of learning innovation is not only determined by attractive instructional designs, but also by the readiness of supporting systems. Time availability, the number of teachers, teacher competence, and institutional policy support are important factors in sustaining innovation. Therefore, the innovation process at IPE can be understood as an adaptive process. The school not only implements new strategies, but also evaluates their effectiveness, improves shortcomings, and adjusts programs to actual field conditions. Thus, the implementation process of PAI learning innovation at IPE Pekanbaru reflects a systematic transformation of learning. Innovation emerges from curriculum evaluation, is designed through collaborative planning, implemented through learning media and active methods, evaluated through diverse assessment approaches, and continuously improved based on identified challenges. This process shows that PAI learning innovation does not only occur in the classroom, but also involves school policies, teacher work culture, and school evaluation systems.

### ***Impact of Innovation Implementation on Students' Engagement and Understanding***

The implementation of PAI learning innovation at Ingenium Primary Education (IPE) Pekanbaru shows a positive impact on students' engagement, motivation, and understanding. Based on interview findings, students responded positively to learning activities that used media, games, direct activities, and outdoor learning (Wedi dkk., 2025). This finding indicates that interactively designed learning can shift students' position from passive recipients of material to active participants in the learning process (De Bruijn-Smolders & Prinsen, 2024b). Students become more enthusiastic about participating in classroom activities when learning is presented in an enjoyable and meaningful manner. Furthermore, active involvement in the learning process helps students develop a deeper understanding of Islamic concepts and values. These findings suggest that innovative PAI learning can create a more engaging learning environment that supports both academic achievement and character development.

The first impact can be seen in the increase in students' active participation during learning. The use of learning media, educational games, and active methods provides students with opportunities to engage directly through observing, discussing, collaborating, practicing, and presenting their learning outcomes (Minhaji dkk., 2022). In activity-based learning, students do not only listen to the teacher's explanation, but also experience the learning process directly. This engagement is in line with the principle of *active learning*, which emphasizes that learning becomes more effective when students are directly involved in acquiring and processing information (Blinkoff dkk., 2023). As a result, students become more confident in expressing their ideas and opinions during classroom activities. This condition contributes to the development of communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills that are essential for 21st-century learning.

The second impact can be seen in students' understanding. Learning media help students understand PAI materials more concretely because abstract concepts can be presented through pictures, videos, games, practice, and direct experience (Khadavi dkk., 2023). For example, in Al-Islam learning about commendable behavior, students do not only receive verbal explanations, but are also invited to observe examples of good and bad behavior through group activities (Agustiar dkk., 2024). This process helps students

understand the material through more concrete learning experiences. From a constructivist perspective, understanding becomes stronger when students construct meaning through experience and interaction with the learning environment (Haleem dkk., 2022).

The third impact can be seen in students' learning motivation. The interview findings show that learning activities using media and direct experiences make students more enthusiastic and help them feel less burdened (Acosta-Gonzaga, 2023). This is especially important for lower-grade students, who easily become bored when learning only relies on lectures. When learning is designed to be enjoyable, students can maintain their attention more easily, follow instructions, and show interest in the material (Zheng dkk., 2024). Thus, PAI learning innovation does not only function as a variation in teaching methods, but also as a strategy for maintaining a positive learning atmosphere.

In addition to its impact on engagement, understanding, and motivation, PAI learning innovation at IPE Pekanbaru is also supported by the school's religious culture (Anggraeni dkk., 2024). Activities such as morning *murajaah*, congregational Zuhur prayer, and Islamic holiday commemorations become part of the learning environment that helps students habituate Islamic values in daily life. Based on interview findings, the implementation of the PAI curriculum is assessed not only from students' academic achievement, but also from their enthusiasm, parents' positive responses, and students' character formation (Liu dkk., 2024). Therefore, PAI learning at IPE is not only directed toward conceptual understanding, but also toward the habituation of religious values through sustainable school activities (Solihah dkk., 2024).

Learning innovation also has an impact on teacher quality. The demand to design active, interesting, and student-appropriate learning encourages teachers to be more creative in selecting media, methods, and learning activities (Daniel dkk., 2024). Teaching creativity has an important relationship with teachers' professional performance, especially when teachers develop digital literacy, instructional quality, and learning strategies that are relevant to classroom needs (Damanik & Widodo, 2024). Teachers do not only act as material deliverers, but also as designers of learning experiences. Thus, learning innovation has a dual impact: improving the quality of students' learning experiences and encouraging the development of teachers' creativity and professionalism (Held & Meje, 2024).

Overall, the implementation of media-based and active-method-based PAI learning innovation at IPE Pekanbaru has practical impacts on the quality of learning. Students become more active, more enthusiastic, and better able to understand the material because learning is carried out through direct experiences. On the other hand, the school's religious culture strengthens the context of PAI learning so that Islamic values are not only understood cognitively, but also introduced through daily habits. However, these impacts should be understood as qualitative findings based on interviews and observations, not as quantitative measurements of improved learning outcomes.

### ***Implications of the Findings and Research Limitations***

Based on these findings, media-based and active-method-based PAI learning innovation has several implications for the development of learning in primary schools (Nun dkk., 2025). First, PAI teachers need to design learning activities that are more visual,

participatory, and experience-based so that students can not only understand the material conceptually, but also connect it with daily life (Khoiri & Abdul Rasyid M. Akib, 2025). Second, schools need to support innovation through the provision of teaching media, teacher training, and collaborative planning spaces such as Lesson Plan Activity. This support is important because learning innovation cannot depend only on individual teacher creativity (Samsuddin & Siregar, 2024). It also requires a school system that encourages continuous evaluation and improvement. Third, PAI learning needs to be developed as a process that integrates material understanding, worship practices, religious habituation, and student character formation (Muh Ibnu Sholeh dkk., 2024).

However, this study has several limitations. First, the study was conducted only at Ingenium Primary Education Pekanbaru, so the findings cannot be generalized to all primary schools. Second, the informants were limited to the PAI teacher and the vice principal for curriculum affairs, so the perspectives of students and parents were not directly explored. Third, this study used a qualitative approach, so the impact of innovation on learning outcomes was not measured through quantitative data such as pre-test and post-test scores. Therefore, future studies can involve more informants, including students and parents, and use a mixed-methods approach so that the impact of PAI learning innovation can be analyzed more comprehensively.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that innovation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at Ingenium Primary Education (IPE) Pekanbaru represents a form of educational transformation that integrates learning media and active methods in a holistic and sustainable manner. This innovation is not only oriented toward the delivery of materials, but also toward creating meaningful learning experiences through students' active involvement in every stage of the learning process. The implementation of this innovation has contributed to improving students' engagement, motivation, and understanding of Islamic teachings. In addition, the integration of learning media, educational games, and religious habituation supports the development of students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies.

Although several challenges remain, particularly in terms of time management and human resources, the school continues to make improvements through evaluation and professional development programs. Therefore, this model of PAI learning innovation can serve as a valuable reference for other educational institutions seeking to create more meaningful, student-centered, and effective learning environments. The implementation of innovation is carried out through systematic planning, student-centered instruction, and continuous evaluation, enabling it to address the challenges of 21st-century learning. The resulting impacts are reflected not only in increased student engagement, motivation, and understanding, but also in the strengthening of religious character and the improvement of teacher professionalism.

Thus, media-based and active-method-based learning innovation has proven to have a strong relationship with efforts to improve the overall quality of PAI learning. Therefore, this

approach can be utilized as an alternative model for developing PAI learning in various educational institutions in order to create a more effective, contextual, and student-oriented learning process.

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