



## The Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Demonstrative Instruction: A Case Study of Students' Learning Interest

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in implementing demonstrative learning and its contribution to enhancing students' learning interest at the elementary school level. Employing a qualitative approach with a case study design, the research was conducted at an Indonesian public elementary school. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving the school principal, an Islamic Religious Education teacher, and third-grade students. The findings reveal that teachers play a crucial role as planners, facilitators, mentors, and motivators in demonstrative learning activities. The implementation of demonstrative learning enables students to engage directly in learning experiences, resulting in increased attention, participation, and enthusiasm during the learning process. Supporting factors include teachers' pedagogical competence, school support, and students' active involvement, while inhibiting factors consist of students' lack of confidence and limited instructional time. These obstacles were addressed through adaptive teaching strategies and supportive classroom environments. The study concludes that demonstrative learning is an effective pedagogical approach for enhancing students' learning interest in Islamic Religious Education when supported by teachers' professional roles and contextual classroom management.

### INTRODUCTION

In responding to the dynamics of 21st-century education, learning in elementary schools is required not only to focus on mastery of subject matter but also to foster students' affective and psychomotor development. Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in shaping students' character, religious attitudes, and moral values from an early age. Therefore, the quality of IRE learning is highly determined by the role of teachers in managing meaningful, contextual learning processes that are capable of fostering students' learning interest (Firdaus, 2022; Sururiyah, 2020; Suryatini et al., 2019).

Learning interest is one of the internal factors that significantly influences the success of the learning process. Students with a high level of learning interest tend to be more active, enthusiastic, and able to understand learning materials more deeply (Arif et al., 2025; Hanif, 2025; Iliza & Hanif, 2025). Conversely, low learning interest often results in student passivity, lack of focus, and low



learning outcomes (Slameto, 2003; Uno, 2011). In the context of Islamic Religious Education, students' learning interest presents a particular challenge, as normative and conceptual materials are frequently delivered through monotonous lecture-based methods, which limit active student engagement.

Teachers, as the main actors in the learning process, bear pedagogical responsibility for selecting and implementing instructional methods that align with the characteristics of elementary school students (Agung et al., 2021; Ruswadi & Firdaus, 2025). One instructional method considered effective in increasing student engagement and learning interest is the demonstration method. This method allows students to learn through direct observation, practice, and concrete experiences, making learning more meaningful and easier to understand (D. Sudjana, 2001). In IRE learning, the demonstration method is particularly relevant, especially for topics related to worship practices, moral behavior (akhlaq), and religious rituals.

However, in practice, the implementation of the demonstration method in IRE learning has not been fully optimized. Several studies indicate that teachers still face various obstacles, such as limited instructional time, insufficient student readiness, and a lack of variation in learning strategies (Ahmad et al., 2025; Asalihin, 2021; Putriani, 2022). As a result, IRE learning tends to remain teacher-centered and has not maximally stimulated students' learning interest.

Previous studies have shown that the use of active learning methods, including demonstration-based instruction, has a positive impact on students' learning interest and motivation. Research conducted by (Adhikari, 2024; Islam et al., 2024; Joni, 2019) found that the demonstration method enhanced student participation and understanding in IRE learning. Similarly, a study by (Isgandarova, 2018) revealed that students' direct involvement in religious practice-based learning significantly increased their learning interest and religious attitudes. Nevertheless, most of these studies focus primarily on the effectiveness of instructional methods, while the role of teachers as planners, facilitators, and guides in demonstrative learning has not been thoroughly examined.

The urgency of this study lies in the importance of comprehensively examining the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in designing and implementing demonstrative learning as an effort to enhance students' learning interest. Teachers are not merely transmitters of knowledge but also act as mentors and motivators who create active and participatory learning environments. A deeper understanding of teachers' roles in this context is expected to contribute meaningfully to improving the quality of IRE learning in elementary schools.

Based on the above discussion, a research gap remains regarding how Islamic Religious Education teachers practically and contextually implement demonstrative learning to enhance students' learning interest, particularly through a case study approach. Therefore, this study aims to analyze in depth the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in demonstrative learning and its implications for students' learning interest, so that it may serve as both a practical and theoretical reference for the development of more effective IRE learning practices.

## METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of educational phenomena within their natural and social contexts, as well as to explore the meanings constructed by research participants based on their lived experiences (Adrias & Ruswandi, 2025; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The case study design was utilized to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in demonstrative learning and its implications for

students' learning interest within the real context of an elementary school, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly distinguishable (Yin, 2017)

The research was conducted at SDN 1 Cilangari, West Bandung Regency, which was selected purposively on the grounds that the school implements demonstration methods in Islamic Religious Education instruction and possesses characteristics relevant to the research objectives. The research participants consisted of the school principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, and third-grade students, all of whom were selected based on their direct involvement in demonstration-based IRE learning activities.

Data were collected through methodological triangulation, including in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain comprehensive information regarding teachers' roles, demonstrative learning strategies, and students' perceptions of their learning interest. Observations were carried out to directly examine the IRE learning process, teacher–student interactions, and the implementation of the demonstration method in the classroom. Document analysis involved reviewing instructional materials such as lesson plans, syllabi, and students' learning records (Patton, 2014; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

In this qualitative study, the researcher served as the primary research instrument (human instrument), directly engaging in data collection and analysis. To ensure systematic and focused data collection, supporting instruments were employed, including interview guidelines, observation checklists, and documentation formats developed in accordance with the research focus (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tisdell et al., 2025).

Data trustworthiness was established using four criteria of qualitative rigor: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was ensured through source and technique triangulation, as well as member checking with participants. Transferability was addressed by providing a rich and detailed description of the research context (thick description). Dependability and confirmability were strengthened through systematic documentation of the research process and the maintenance of an audit trail throughout data analysis (Miles et al., 2014; Shenton, 2004)

Data analysis followed the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three main stages: (1) data reduction, involving the selection and focusing of data relevant to the research objectives; (2) data display, through the organization of data into descriptive narratives and thematic matrices; and (3) conclusion drawing and verification, conducted iteratively to ensure the consistency and validity of the findings. Data analysis was carried out concurrently with data collection, allowing the researcher to refine the research focus based on emerging field findings.

The study was conducted from February to April 2025 encompassing the stages of preparation, field data collection, data analysis, and report writing. Through this methodological approach, the study is expected to provide an in-depth and contextualized understanding of the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in demonstrative learning as an effort to enhance elementary school students' learning interest.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Demonstrative Learning**

Based on the research findings at SDN 1 Cilangari, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers demonstrated a significant role in designing and implementing demonstrative learning as an effort to enhance students' learning interest. Teachers did not merely function as transmitters of knowledge but also assumed the roles of planners, facilitators, and mentors who actively guided the learning process to make it more contextual and meaningful. Learning planning was carried out by aligning IRE materials—particularly those related to worship and religious practices—with the

characteristics of third-grade students, who require concrete and visual learning experiences (Djamarah & Zain, 2018; Sudjana, 2019).

At the planning stage, IRE teachers developed instructional plans that systematically incorporated demonstrative steps, beginning with initial explanations, followed by teacher-led demonstrations, and culminating in students' direct practice. Teachers also considered students' readiness and time allocation to ensure the effectiveness of the learning process. This approach was reflected in the following interview excerpt with an IRE teacher:

*"If the material is explained only verbally, students quickly become bored. Through demonstrations, they can observe and directly practice the activities, which helps them understand better and become more interested."*  
(IRE Teacher, interview, February 2025)

Classroom observations revealed that IRE teachers played an active role as facilitators who guided students throughout the demonstration process. Teachers first modeled the procedures and then gradually assisted students as they practiced the learning materials, such as the procedures for ablution (wudu) and prayer (salat). This approach encouraged students' direct involvement and fostered a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. The teachers' role as mentors was also evident through the provision of immediate feedback, including corrections and positive reinforcement.

An analysis of instructional documents indicated that IRE teachers had integrated the demonstration method into their lesson plans, complete with learning objectives, activity sequences, and practice-based assessments. This integration reflects teachers' pedagogical awareness of the importance of student-centered instructional methods. These findings are consistent with Mulyasa (2022), who emphasizes that professional teachers must be capable of designing learning activities that actively engage students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

The findings also highlight the teachers' role as motivators in demonstrative learning. Teachers consistently provided encouragement, praise, and motivation to students who were willing to perform demonstrations in front of the class. This strategy helped reduce students' feelings of embarrassment and enhanced their self-confidence. According to Uno (2021), teacher-provided motivation plays a crucial role in fostering students' learning interest and willingness to participate actively in the learning process.

Overall, the results indicate that Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN 1 Cilangari have effectively fulfilled their roles in demonstrative learning. Teachers functioned as systematic planners, active facilitators, patient mentors, and motivating figures who encouraged student engagement. These roles serve as an essential foundation for creating more engaging IRE learning experiences that are oriented toward increasing students' learning interest. This finding supports the view of Gagné et al. (2017), who argue that learning effectiveness is largely determined by teachers' ability to manage meaningful and participatory learning experiences.

### **The Implementation of Demonstrative Learning and Its Impact on Students' Learning Interest**

The findings indicate that the implementation of demonstrative learning in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SDN 1 Cilangari had a positive impact on students' learning interest. Demonstrative learning was implemented in a structured manner through several stages, including a brief explanation of the material, teacher-led demonstrations, and students' direct practice. This learning pattern resulted in higher levels of student engagement compared to conventional lecture-based instruction.

Classroom observations revealed increased student attention and enthusiasm when the teacher applied the demonstration method. Students appeared more focused, actively asked

questions, and demonstrated a high level of curiosity toward the material being practiced. This was particularly evident in lessons related to worship practices, such as the procedures for wudu (ablution) and salat (prayer), where students were given opportunities to practice in front of the class in turn. These findings suggest that demonstrative learning is effective in creating a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

The interview data with students further supported the observational findings. Most students stated that learning through demonstration was more enjoyable and easier to understand than merely listening to the teacher's explanations. One student expressed the following:

*"When there is practice involved, I feel more motivated to learn. It is easier to remember the procedures than just listening to explanations."*

(Third-grade student, interview, February 2025)

In addition to increasing enthusiasm, the implementation of demonstrative learning also contributed to greater student activeness during lessons. Students who were previously passive began to show confidence in asking questions and attempting to practice the material in front of their peers. IRE teachers intentionally provided equal opportunities for students to participate in demonstrations, which helped foster self-confidence and active participation. According to Slameto (2015), a high level of learning interest is reflected in increased attention, involvement, and enjoyment in the learning process.

Documentation of learning outcomes and teachers' observational notes indicated positive changes in students' learning attitudes following the implementation of demonstrative learning. Students not only showed greater interest in IRE lessons but were also better able to recall and re-practice the material they had learned. This finding aligns with Sudjana (2019), who asserts that learning experiences involving direct practice are more meaningful and have a stronger influence on students' understanding and learning interest.

The implementation of demonstrative learning also facilitated more intensive two-way interactions between teachers and students. Teachers were no longer positioned as the sole source of knowledge but instead functioned as facilitators who guided and supported students throughout the learning process. This positive interaction fostered closer emotional relationships between teachers and students, which further supported the enhancement of learning interest. This finding is consistent with Uno (2021), who emphasizes that a conducive and interactive learning environment is a key factor in fostering students' learning interest.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the implementation of demonstrative learning in Islamic Religious Education at SDN 1 Cilangari significantly contributed to increasing students' learning interest. Learning activities that are concrete, participatory, and interactive encouraged students to become more active, enthusiastic, and engaged in the learning process. These findings affirm that the demonstration method is an effective instructional strategy for enhancing elementary school students' learning interest, particularly in Islamic Religious Education.

### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Demonstrative Learning**

The findings reveal that the effectiveness of demonstrative learning in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SDN 1 Cilangari is influenced by a number of supporting and inhibiting factors. These factors stem from teachers, students, and the school environment, all of which directly or indirectly affect the implementation of the demonstration method in the learning process.

One of the primary supporting factors in demonstrative learning is the competence and readiness of IRE teachers in designing and implementing practice-based instruction. Teachers demonstrated a solid understanding of the procedural steps involved in the demonstration method and were able to adapt them to the characteristics of elementary school students. In addition, support

from the school principal and the overall school environment played an important role, particularly in providing simple learning facilities to support religious practice activities. This finding is reinforced by the following statement from an IRE teacher:

*“The school supports practical activities, so we can prepare simple tools for learning. This also helps students understand the material more easily.”*

(IRE Teacher, interview, February 2025)

Active student involvement also emerged as a significant supporting factor. Students showed high levels of enthusiasm and curiosity when they were directly engaged in demonstrative activities. Concrete learning experiences encouraged students to participate actively and interact with both teachers and peers. According to Djamarah and Zain (2018), students' direct involvement in learning activities is a key element in creating meaningful learning experiences that positively influence learning interest.

On the other hand, the study also identified several inhibiting factors in the implementation of demonstrative learning. One major obstacle was students' feelings of shyness and lack of self-confidence when required to perform demonstrations in front of the class. Some students were reluctant to participate due to fear of making mistakes or being observed by their peers. This condition was expressed by one student during the interview:

*“Sometimes I feel shy about coming to the front of the class. I am afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at.”*

(Third-grade student, interview, February 2025)

In addition to students' psychological factors, limited instructional time was also identified as a constraint in applying the demonstration method. Demonstrative learning requires more time than lecture-based instruction, particularly when many students are involved in hands-on practice. Teachers must therefore manage instructional time effectively to ensure that all students have equal learning opportunities. This finding is consistent with Sudjana (2019), who emphasizes that the demonstration method requires effective time and classroom management to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

To address these challenges, IRE teachers implemented several strategies, such as providing initial demonstrations, organizing students into small groups, and offering continuous reinforcement and motivation. Teachers also sought to create a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere so that students would feel comfortable and confident when participating in demonstrations. This approach aligns with Uno (2021), who highlights the importance of teachers' roles in creating a conducive learning climate to foster students' interest and confidence.

Overall, the findings indicate that the supporting and inhibiting factors of demonstrative learning are interrelated and require careful management by teachers. School support, teacher competence, and student involvement serve as key success factors, while students' psychological barriers and time constraints must be addressed through adaptive pedagogical strategies. These findings emphasize that the effectiveness of demonstrative learning is determined not only by the instructional method itself but also by teachers' ability to manage the various factors influencing the learning process.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers play multiple roles in demonstrative learning, namely as planners, facilitators, mentors, and motivators. These roles emphasize that teachers no longer function merely as transmitters of knowledge but rather as managers of students' learning experiences. This interpretation is consistent with constructivist pedagogical theory, which positions teachers as facilitators who assist students in

constructing understanding through direct experience (Piaget, 1952; Piaget & Cook, 1952; Vygotsky, 1978).

The planning of demonstrative learning conducted by IRE teachers reflects strong pedagogical competence, particularly in aligning instructional methods with the developmental characteristics of elementary school students. According to (Mulyasa, 2014), professional teachers are required to design learning activities that integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in a balanced manner. The findings of this study support this view, as demonstrative learning enables students not only to understand concepts cognitively but also to practice them in real and meaningful ways.

Furthermore, the role of teachers as motivators proved to be crucial in fostering students' courage and self-confidence. The provision of positive reinforcement and guidance during demonstrations helped students overcome feelings of shyness and fear of making mistakes. This finding aligns with learning motivation theory proposed by Uno (2021), which emphasizes that teachers' support and encouragement are key external factors in nurturing students' learning interest.

The findings also demonstrate that the implementation of demonstrative learning positively influenced students' learning interest, as reflected in increased attention, enthusiasm, and active participation during lessons. From a theoretical perspective, this phenomenon can be explained through experiential learning theory, which asserts that learning becomes more meaningful when students are directly involved in learning activities (Kolb, 2014).

Demonstrative learning provides concrete experiences that align with the cognitive developmental stage of elementary school students, who are generally in the concrete operational phase. Piaget (1970) explains that at this stage, children understand concepts more effectively through tangible activities rather than abstract verbal explanations. Therefore, it is reasonable that students exhibit higher learning interest when IRE instruction is delivered through demonstration rather than lecture-based methods.

These findings are also consistent with previous studies demonstrating the effectiveness of the demonstration method in enhancing students' learning interest and understanding. Nurhadi et al. (2021) found that demonstration-based IRE instruction significantly increased students' participation and interest. Similarly, (Adhikari, 2024; Islam et al., 2024; Joni, 2019) reported that students' direct involvement in religious practice activities positively influenced their attitudes and learning interest. Thus, the results of this study reinforce existing empirical evidence that demonstrative learning is a relevant and effective instructional strategy in the context of elementary Islamic Religious Education.

The discussion of supporting factors reveals that teacher competence, school support, and student involvement are key elements contributing to the success of demonstrative learning. Theoretically, this finding aligns with a systemic perspective on learning, which suggests that instructional effectiveness is influenced by interactions among teachers, students, and the learning environment (N. Sudjana, 2021)

On the other hand, inhibiting factors such as students' shyness and limited instructional time indicate that demonstrative learning requires adaptive classroom management and pedagogical strategies. Students' shyness can be understood as an affective factor influencing learning courage and engagement. According to Slameto (2015), students' emotional conditions play a significant role in determining their learning interest and involvement. Therefore, teachers' strategies in creating a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere become crucial.

Time constraints also represent a common challenge in the implementation of active learning methods. This finding is consistent with Sudjana (2019), who notes that the demonstration method requires careful time management to ensure that all students receive optimal learning opportunities.

Teachers' strategies, such as organizing students into small groups and conducting demonstrations in stages, represent relevant pedagogical adaptations to address these challenges.

Theoretically, this study strengthens the relevance of constructivist and experiential learning theories in Islamic Religious Education, particularly through the use of the demonstration method. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of the role of IRE teachers in designing active, contextual, and experience-oriented learning activities. Teachers are encouraged to continuously develop their pedagogical competence in order to effectively manage both supporting and inhibiting factors in the learning process.

In conclusion, the discussion demonstrates that the success of demonstrative learning in enhancing students' learning interest is determined not only by the instructional method itself but also by the quality of teachers' roles and the support of the learning environment. These findings contribute valuable insights to the development of more meaningful and student-centered Islamic Religious Education practices in elementary schools.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that demonstrative learning in Islamic Religious Education is an effective instructional strategy for enhancing elementary school students' learning interest when supported by optimal teacher roles. Islamic Religious Education teachers play a crucial role as planners, facilitators, mentors, and motivators in creating learning experiences that are contextual, participatory, and meaningful. The implementation of the demonstration method enables students to engage directly in the learning process, thereby increasing their attention, activeness, and learning enthusiasm. The success of demonstrative learning is influenced by teachers' pedagogical competence, support from the school environment, and active student involvement. Meanwhile, challenges such as students' shyness and limited instructional time can be addressed through adaptive pedagogical strategies. Therefore, this study emphasizes that improving students' learning interest depends not only on the instructional method employed but also on the quality of teachers' roles in managing learning experiences that align with students' developmental characteristics.

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