

Islamic Education in the Contemporary Era: Initiating a Method Format that is Enjoyable and Fun

Saiful Lutfi & Khairil Anwar

IAIN Palangka Raya, Indonesia

saiful.lutfi@iain-palangkaraya.ac.id; khairil.anwar@iain-palangkaraya.ac.id

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Abstract

This research aims to initiate an enjoyable and fun format of Islamic education methods as a solution in improving the effectiveness of learning in the contemporary era. The importance of this research lies in the need for innovation in learning methods that not only emphasize the transfer of religious knowledge, but also develop 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication (4C). With interactive and fun learning methods, it is expected that students can be more active, enthusiastic, and have a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings. This research uses library research method by collecting and analyzing data from various relevant sources, such as books, scientific journals, and articles that discuss the concept of Joyful Learning in Islamic education. The results show that the application of the Joyful Learning method in Islamic education can increase students' learning motivation, reduce boredom in understanding religious material, and create a more conducive and interactive learning environment. Some of the strategies that can be applied in joyful Islamic learning include the use of digital technology, game-based learning, project-based learning, as well as based approach. By applying these methods, Islamic education does not only

focus on the cognitive aspect, but also shapes the character of learners who are creative, communicative, and collaboration

Keywords: Islamic Education; Joyful learning, 4C

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of human civilization. Through education, individuals not only gain knowledge, but also skills and values that will shape their character and mindset in facing life (Soraya, 2020; Tabroni et al., 2024). Islamic education has a very important role in shaping the character and personality of individuals based on Islamic values (Zain et al., 2024). Along with the changing concepts in modern education, traditional and monotonous learning methods are starting to be abandoned because they are considered less effective in increasing learner involvement (Haditia et al., 2024). Learning models that emphasize one-way lecture methods tend to reduce students' active participation and cause boredom in the learning process. Therefore, innovation is needed in learning methods that are more dynamic, interactive, and fun so that students can be more enthusiastic in understanding and internalizing Islamic teachings more deeply (Surawan, 2019).

The concept of 4C (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication) is one of the main foundations in the development of soft skills for 21st century learners (Mariadi et al., 2022). Islamic education must be able to integrate these four aspects so that students not only have a deep understanding of Islamic teachings, but also can apply critical thinking, creativity, collaboration skills, and the ability to communicate effectively in everyday life (Nurhalimah et al., 2024). The implementation of an enjoyable and fun learning model is a relevant alternative to create a more conducive learning atmosphere and stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning.

Joyful Learning is an approach that prioritizes a fun learning experience by emphasizing emotional, social, and practical involvement in the learning process (Lestari & Hindun, 2023). This approach is very suitable to be applied in Islamic education because it is able to build motivation in students, increase understanding of religious concepts, and make the knowledge learned more meaningful to students (Surawan & Arzakiah, 2022). With a pleasant learning atmosphere, students will be more motivated to explore Islamic

teachings more broadly and deeply (Revanda et al., 2024). The application of Joyful Learning method in Islamic education can be implemented through various innovative strategies, such as the use of digital technology, project-based learning, quizziz games and game-based learning. In the context of madrasah and Islamic-based schools, this method can increase the effectiveness of learning and reduce students' boredom in understanding religious material (Nafiah, 2024). Therefore, this research aims to formulate an interactive and fun Islamic education method model to create a more effective learning environment that is in line with the dynamics of the times.

METHODS

This research uses library research, which focuses on collecting and analyzing data from various relevant sources. The data sources in this research include books, scientific journals, articles, which are related to the concept of Joyful Learning in Islamic education. This approach is taken to analyze the concept of 21st century skills development in Islamic education, understand the concept and practice of Islamic education based on joyful learning, and explore its implementation in Islamic values-based learning

RESULTS

Islamic Education and the Development of 21st Century Soft Skills

In the era of globalization, Islamic education is not only oriented towards cognitive aspects alone, but must also develop the soft skills needed to face the challenges of the 21st century (Hasibuan & Prastowo, 2019). In addition, Islamic education also focuses not only on transferring religious knowledge, but also building skills that are relevant to the demands of the 21st century (Safitri, 2022). One of the concepts that is the focus in developing these skills is 4C (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication). These four aspects are very important in shaping learners who are adaptive, innovative, and able to compete in the dynamic world of work and social life (Septikasari, 2018).

1. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze information in depth, assess the accuracy of an argument, and find solutions to problems faced (Sutarto, 2023). In the

context of Islamic education, this skill can be applied in various fields, such as the study of Qur'anic interpretation, hadith, and fiqh. Learners are directed not only to receive information passively, but also to analyze, question, and compare various Islamic viewpoints based on relevant arguments (Rasyidi, 2024). For example, in learning fiqh, learners can be invited to discuss the differences of opinion among the four main schools of thought in Islam. They can examine the arguments used by each school and **draw** conclusions about how Islamic law develops in various social and cultural contexts (Jamil & Murniati, 2024).

Thus, they not only understand Islamic law textually, but are also able to develop a critical and argumentative way of thinking in understanding religious teachings (Safitri & Anshori, 2024). In addition, critical thinking also helps students in sorting out the right information in the midst of increasingly swift information flow, especially in today's digital era. Many hoaxes or Islamic teachings are misunderstood due to the lack of critical thinking skills in sorting out valid sources of information (Adijaya et al., 2021). Therefore, Islamic education must equip students with critical thinking skills so that they are not easily influenced by misunderstandings and can make decisions based on strong arguments.

2. Creativity

Creativity is the skill of creating innovative new ideas and being able to solve problems in unusual ways (Jamil & Murniati, 2024). One such application is game-based learning in Qur'anic learning, where teachers use interactive apps or cards to help learners learn tajweed and memorize verses in a more fun way (Nisa et al., 2024). In addition, creativity can also be realized through Islamic calligraphy art projects, such as making digital calligraphy or Arabic letter-based art applied to canvas, wood carvings, or murals in the school environment (Amrulloh & Indrianto, 2022).

In addition, learning Islamic history can be packaged in the form of Islamic drama or theater, which allows students to understand the stories of prophets and Islamic figures through direct experience (Nurmeta et al., 2024). By applying creativity in various aspects of learning, Islamic education becomes more dynamic, interactive, and able to increase students' interest in understanding and practicing Islamic teachings in everyday life (Rohimah, 2025).

3. Collaboration

Collaboration is the ability to work together with others in achieving a common goal. In Islamic learning, collaboration can be applied through group discussions, case studies and joint projects, where learners learn to work in teams and respect the opinions of others (Priyono & Sinurat, 2020). One example of the application of collaboration in Islamic education is through *muhadharah* activities (speech practice in pesantren or madrasah). In this activity, learners work together in composing speech texts, practicing their delivery, and providing feedback to each other to improve their public speaking skills. In building a collaboration, each individual must have a caring and respectful attitude towards others. Respect is an attitude of mutual respect that creates harmonious relationships by accepting others as they are, appreciating differences, supporting regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion, and continuing to interact with different beliefs (Husniah et al., 2025). This process not **only** improves communication skills but also teaches learners to work together and support each other in improving learners' abilities (Khadijah & Ramayani, 2023).

4. Communication

Communication is the ability to convey information clearly, effectively, and convincingly, so that the message conveyed can be well understood by the recipient (Saputra et al., 2024). One way to improve communication skills in Islamic education is through public speaking training in the context of da'wah, such as muhadharah students are taught how to convey Islamic messages with language that is easy to understand, interesting, and not patronizing and so that students are able to make speeches or lectures properly and correctly, train confidence when appearing to speak in front of people (Munawir, 2021).

In addition, **communication** is also important in building tolerance in an increasingly diverse society. In a world full of different views, learners must be equipped with good communication skills so that they can express their opinions politely and respect differences. In Islamic discussions, for example, learners can be trained to present their arguments using strong arguments and good language that does not offend other parties (Azmi et al., 2023).

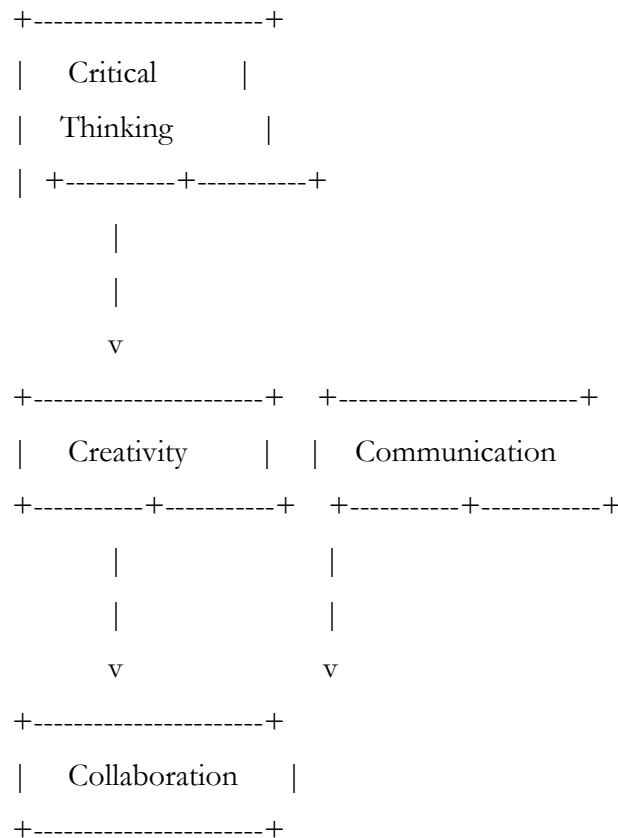


Diagram 1. 21st Century Skills

The 4Cs diagram is a concept that describes four key 21st century skills that are critical to success in the modern world, particularly in education and work. The 4Cs refer to Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication. These four skills are considered an essential foundation in developing an individual's ability to adapt, innovate and work effectively in an ever-evolving society. These four skills - Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication - are interconnected and form the foundation of the abilities needed to succeed in the 21st century. Mastering the 4Cs allows individuals to adapt quickly to change, work effectively with others, and continuously thrive in a challenging environment

DISCUSSION

Joyful learning as a fun and enjoyable learning method

Joyful learning is a method is a systematic and planned way, technique, or procedure to achieve certain goals (Alvanajati et al., 2025). Joyful Learning It is a learning

approach that emphasizes a fun, interesting, and interactive learning atmosphere. In the context of Islamic education, this method is very relevant because it can increase learner involvement, reduce boredom, and foster a love of knowledge and Islamic teachings (Abrori et al., 2025). One of the main principles in Joyful Learning is to make learning a fun experience, which can be done through various strategies, such as game-based learning, the use of interesting digital media, and project-based learning. For example, in learning the Qur'an, learners can utilize interactive applications that present the experience of reading the Qur'an with the concept of educational games, so that they are more motivated to learn (Dini et al., 2019).

In Islamic Education, learning about the Prophet Muhammad's hijrah can be more effective and fun by applying the Joyful Learning method. This method is able to increase students' interest and enthusiasm for learning, especially in understanding historical material that is often considered monotonous. With an interactive approach, students can be more emotionally involved in the hijrah story, making it easier for them to understand and remember the event (Sajida et al., 2024). A pleasant learning atmosphere also helps reduce boredom, stress and anxiety in learning. Students will feel more comfortable and enthusiastic in following the lessons, so they are more open to explore the values contained in the learning (Primaidola & Karim, 2023). This is because each individual has had the experience of facing difficult situations in their lives, and each individual has the potential to make the necessary positive changes, function interpersonally, and behave as they should (Lestari et al., 2024).

Learning Revolution in Religious Schools

Islamic education in religious schools such as madrasah (MI, MTs, MA) often still uses conventional learning methods that are one-way (teacher-centered learning). This model causes students to be less active in the learning process and easily feel bored (Fitria & Darwis, 2024). Therefore, the application of Joyful Learning is an innovative solution that can increase student engagement, strengthen understanding of the material, and make learning more effective and fun (Mahmudi & Arief, 2025). Joyful Learning is a learning method that emphasizes interactive, fun and experiential learning. This approach incorporates various strategies such as game-based learning, project-based learning, interactive discussions, simulations, and the use of digital technology in the teaching-learning process (Tugiah & Asmendri, 2022). Because the success in the learning process is

greatly influenced by a conducive learning atmosphere and student motivation (Aida et al., 2025). The following is the application of Joyful Learning in madrasah at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) levels

1. Implementation of Joyful Learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI)

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) is equivalent to primary school and is the initial level of education for students. At this stage, children are still in the exploration phase and love activities that involve play and direct interaction. Therefore, the implementation of Joyful Learning in MI should be oriented towards active, fun, and experiential learning (Prasetyo et al., 2020). Innovative learning approaches can make the learning process in MI more interesting and effective, one of which is the Role-Playing method allows students to act as Islamic figures in historical dramas, such as the story of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, so that their understanding of Islamic history becomes deeper (Triyanto & Bisri, 2024). With this method, learning in MI becomes more fun, increases the motivation of students, and forms a strong foundation in understanding and practicing Islamic values in everyday life (Nisa et al., 2024). In addition, teachers can also utilize technology such as the use of animated learning video media so that the learning process becomes more interesting and increases students' understanding (Mariadi & Surawan, 2023).

2. Implementation of Joyful Learning in Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs)

Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) is equivalent to Junior High School (SMP). At this level, students begin to enter the logical and analytical thinking phase, so interesting learning methods are very important to increase their interest in learning. Joyful Learning in MTs can be applied through the use of technology, interactive discussions, and creative projects. The implementation of Joyful Learning in MTs can be done through various innovative strategies that make learning more interesting and interactive (Prasetyo et al., 2020). An example of the application of Joyful Learning in Akidah Akhlak lessons, discussion and simulation methods can be applied by dividing students into groups to discuss real cases related to Islamic morals and find solutions based on Islamic teachings (Hafiza, 2024). In addition, creative projects in digital da'wah can be an effective way to improve students' critical thinking and communication skills. They can create digital da'wah content such as short video lectures on TikTok or Islamic podcasts on manners in Islam, This approach not only creates a fun learning

atmosphere, but also trains learners to be more active in understanding, internalizing, and conveying Islamic values in daily life (Mala & Masfufah, 2024).

3. Implementation of Joyful Learning in Madrasah Aliyah (MA)

Madrasah Aliyah (MA) is equivalent to senior high school. At this level, students already have the ability to think more deeply and are ready to develop a broader understanding of Islam. Therefore, the application of Joyful Learning in MA can be focused on critical discussions, Islamic-based research, and the application of digital methods and experiments in learning (Rezeki et al., 2024). The implementation of Joyful Learning in Madrasah Aliyah (MA) can be done through various innovative methods that encourage active involvement of students in learning. In the subject of Tafsir Al-Qur'an, the Project-Based Learning approach can be applied by giving research projects to students to study certain themes in the Al-Qur'an, such as verses related to science or social relations in Islam. The results of the research are then presented in the form of a video presentation to make it more interesting and easy to understand (Miladiyah & Jauhari, 2025).

Meanwhile, in the subject of Ushul Fiqh, learning can be made more interactive through debates and analysis of Islamic issues. The teacher can organize a simulation of a fatwa hearing, where students act as scholars who discuss contemporary issues based on the perspective of Islamic law (Safitri et al., 2023). In the field of digital da'wah technology and media, teachers can implement project-based learning. Learners work on relevant projects, such as making a da'wah video or an Islamic-themed poster (Lingga, 2025). With the application of this method, learners not only gain a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings, but also hone analytical thinking skills, communication, and innovation and learning becomes more fun (Purwaningrum et al., 2024).

Tabel 1. Implementation Joyful Learning in MI, MTs and MA

Level	Approach	Implementation Techniques	Focus	Examples of Activities
MI (Elementary)	Game-based Learning	Use educational games and activities to teach basic concepts.	Engaging students with fun, interactive learning methods.	a. Math board games b. Language arts games
	Visual and	Utilize visuals,	Making	a. Animated videos

Level	Approach	Implementation Techniques	Focus	Examples of Activities
MTs (Junior High)	Music Media	music, and videos to enhance learning.	learning more dynamic and enjoyable through multimedia.	for science concepts b. Songs for learning the alphabet
	Group Work & Class Discussions	Organize small group activities and discussions.	Building teamwork and social skills while discussing topics.	a. Group discussions on simple topics (e.g., family, friends) b. Collaborative art projects
	Collaborative Learning	Group projects and teamwork to solve problems or create presentations.	Encouraging cooperation and peer learning.	c. Group research projects d. Collaborative presentations
	Creative & Innovative Learning	Foster creativity through arts, problem-solving, and design.	Encouraging creative thinking and innovative ideas.	a. DIY projects b. Creative writing or art creation
	Experimental Learning (Practical)	Hands-on activities like experiments, field trips, or role-play.	Making learning more tangible and real-world applicable.	a. Science experiments b. Field trips to historical sites
MA (Senior High)	Project-based Learning	Long-term projects that involve planning, research, and execution.	Developing critical thinking, research, and problem-solving skills.	a. Research projects on social issues b. Business plan creation
	Problem-based Discussions & Debates	Engage students in debates or discussions on real-world issues.	Building critical thinking and public speaking abilities.	a. Debating current events b. Problem-solving discussions
	Research-based Assignments	Assignments that require in-depth research and analysis.	Fostering independent learning and in-depth understanding.	a. Research papers on contemporary issues b. Independent study on specific topics

The implementation of Joyful Learning at MI, MTs, and MA is structured to suit the developmental stages of students at each level. At MI, it's about making learning fun through games and multimedia. At MTs, students are encouraged to collaborate and explore creatively. At MA, the focus is on more advanced project work, debates, and research-based tasks, making learning engaging and relevant to real-life challenges. Each stage builds on the previous one, ensuring a comprehensive approach to joyful learning across different educational levels.

CONCLUSION

Islamic education in the contemporary era needs to teach 21st century skills (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication) so that students are ready to face future challenges. The Joyful Learning method can make the teaching and learning process more fun and increase the spirit of learning through games, simulations, and digital technology. In addition, religious schools need to change the way of teaching to be more interactive, such as discussions, role playing, and digital da'wah projects, so that learning is more interesting and easily understood by students, especially in Islamic education in the contemporary era.

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