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The Transformation of Islamic Education Pedagogy: From Lecture-Dominated Teaching to Interactive Learning to Improve Student Concentration

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the pedagogical transformation of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) from the dominance of the lecture method toward interactive learning as an effort to improve student learning concentration at SMPIT Al-Ridwan. Previous studies have mostly discussed innovations in IRE learning methods, whereas research specifically linking the dominance of the lecture method to low student concentration and the pedagogical transformation toward interactive learning remains relatively limited. The study employed a descriptive qualitative approach conducted in 2026, involving one PAI teacher and 16 seventh-grade A students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed via data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results indicate that the dominance of the lecture method causes students to tend to be passive, easily bored, unfocused, and have low levels of participation. In response to these conditions, the teacher implemented interactive learning through group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and audiovisual media, which encouraged more active student engagement. The findings reveal changes in learning behavior marked by increased attention, participation, and student engagement during the learning process. The novelty of this study lies in the analysis of the transformation of Islamic Education pedagogy from a teacher-centered approach to a student-centered approach as a strategy to address learning concentration issues. Theoretically, this study expands the discourse on Islamic Education pedagogy by demonstrating that students' learning concentration is closely related to the pedagogical orientation applied by teachers in the learning process.

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Introduction

Education is a strategic process in shaping students' intellectual, moral, and spiritual abilities. Within the context of national education, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a crucial role in character building, instilling Islamic values, and guiding students to effectively implement religious teachings in daily life (Barr et al., 2022; Schweisfurth, 2021). The success of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning is not only determined by mastery of the subject matter but also by the teacher's ability to create a learning process that actively engages students in learning activities (Bond, 2020; De Bruijn-Smolters & Prinsen, 2024).

One of the factors determining the success of learning is students' concentration. Learning concentration is the ability of students to focus their attention on learning materials for a certain period of time so that the processes of receiving, processing, and understanding information can take place optimally (Chen et al., 2022). Low concentration often poses a challenge in learning because it causes students to lack focus, be easily distracted, and experience difficulty in understanding the material presented by the teacher (Balalle, 2024; Franco, 2022). In Islamic Education instruction, such conditions have the potential to hinder the achievement of educational objectives, which are not only focused on cognitive aspects but also on the development of religious attitudes and behaviors (Risana et al., 2025; Setyawan, 2018).

Various studies indicate that learning concentration is influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors include students' physical and psychological conditions, motivation, and readiness to learn, while external factors encompass the learning environment, educational facilities, and the teaching strategies implemented by teachers (Hairunisa, 2023; Hidayah et al., 2024). Among these various factors, learning strategies hold a particularly important position because they directly determine the level of student engagement in the learning process. Monotonous, teacher-centered learning tends to make students passive, whereas interactive learning can enhance students' attention, participation, and engagement throughout the learning process (Khakim & Kunaepi, 2026).

In Islamic Education instruction, the lecture method remains the most frequently used approach by teachers. This method is chosen because it is considered practical, easy to implement, and allows for the delivery of material in a relatively short time (Simon et al., 2026). The predominant use of the lecture method over the long term can lead to various learning problems. Teacher-centered learning often results in students merely acting as recipients of information, thereby limiting opportunities for discussion, asking questions, and actively developing understanding (Ghaemi Asl, 2025; Wang et al., 2026). Consequently, students tend to experience boredom, lose focus, and exhibit low levels of concentration during learning.

This phenomenon was also observed at SMPIT Al-Ridwan. Based on initial observations, the PAI learning process is still dominated by the lecture method, resulting in one-way learning interactions. In this situation, some students exhibit signs of low learning concentration, characterized by chatting during lessons, paying little attention to the teacher's explanations, showing signs of boredom, and having low levels of participation. This condition indicates a gap between the PAI learning objectives—which require active student engagement and current teaching practices that remain focused on verbal delivery of content.

Previous research has discussed various learning innovations in Islamic Religious Education. Several studies indicate that the use of group discussions, audiovisual media, project-based learning, and collaborative approaches can enhance student motivation and learning outcomes (Faizin et al., 2023a). Other research also reveals that interactive learning can increase student participation in the learning process (Aulia & Toriqularif, 2025; Trinova, 2021). Most of these studies still focus on the effectiveness of specific learning methods or media and have not specifically examined the relationship between the dominance of the lecture method, low student concentration, and pedagogical transformation in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning.

Given these conditions, there is a research gap that requires attention. Previous studies tend to view learning concentration as a result of individual student factors, while the aspect of teachers' pedagogical orientation has received relatively little attention. Low learning concentration is not only influenced by student characteristics but can also arise as a consequence of learning designs that are overly teacher-centered. Therefore, research is needed to elucidate the relationship between pedagogical orientation and student learning concentration in the context of PAI instruction.

The novelty of this study lies in the development of the Transformative Islamic Pedagogy perspective, which views the improvement of student learning concentration as the result of a transformation in pedagogical orientation from *teacher-centered learning* toward *student-centered learning*. Unlike previous studies that only highlighted the effectiveness of specific teaching methods, this study offers an analytical framework linking pedagogical orientation, *student engagement*, and learning concentration in Islamic Religious Education. Thus, this study provides a theoretical contribution by expanding the perspective of Islamic pedagogy, positioning learning concentration as a consequence of the instructional design implemented by teachers. Based on the above, this study aims to analyze the factors causing low student concentration in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning, which is still dominated by the lecture method, and to explain pedagogical transformation through interactive learning as a strategy to improve student learning concentration at SMPIT Al-Ridwan.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the case study method to analyze the pedagogical transformation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) from a dominance of the lecture method toward interactive learning in enhancing students' learning concentration at SMPIT Al-Ridwan. The case study approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the learning phenomena occurring within the natural school context ((Busetto et al., 2020). The research was conducted from January to April 2026 at SMPIT Al-Ridwan. Research informants were selected using *purposive sampling*, considering their direct involvement in the PAI learning process. The informants consisted of one PAI teacher and 16 seventh-grade A students. The teacher was selected because of their role in planning and implementing learning, while the students were selected because they directly experienced the learning process that was the focus of the study.

Research data were obtained through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation (Aspers & Corte, 2021). Observations were conducted to examine the

learning process , patterns of teacher-student interaction, levels of learning concentration, and the implementation of interactive learning in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with teachers and students to gather information regarding learning experiences, factors contributing to low student concentration, the forms of learning transformation implemented, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of interactive learning. Documentation was used to supplement the data through the collection of learning materials, records of learning activities, photos of learning sessions, and other documents relevant to the research.

Data analysis utilized the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 2022). Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were first categorized based on research themes, then presented in narrative form to facilitate interpretation. Conclusions were then drawn through a continuous verification process until a comprehensive understanding of pedagogical transformation in PAI learning was achieved. To ensure data credibility, the study employed source triangulation, methodological triangulation, and *member checking*. The *member checking* process was conducted by reconfirming the interview results and data interpretations with the main informants to ensure consistency between the research findings and the experiences reported by the informants.

Table 1. Research Informants

Informant Code	Informant Category			Number	Criteria
G-01	Islamic Teacher	Education		1	Teaches Islamic Education and implements interactive learning
Grades through S-16	S-01 7th Students	Grade	A	16	Participating in Islamic Education classes, which were the subject of the study
Total				17	

Results

Low Student Concentration in Islamic Education Classes Dominated by Lecture Methods

The research results indicate that low student concentration in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) lessons is related to the dominant use of the lecture method in the learning process. Based on observations, learning predominantly occurs in a one-way manner, with the teacher as the central source of information, while students act as recipients of the material. This situation leads some students to exhibit signs of lack of focus, such as talking to their classmates, paying insufficient attention to the teacher's explanations, and losing focus during prolonged lessons.

These findings are reinforced by interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers who explained that the lecture method is indeed frequently used because it is considered easier for conveying a substantial amount of material within a limited timeframe. However, teachers acknowledge that not all students are able to maintain concentration throughout the learning process.

“When lessons rely solely on lectures, there are usually some students who start losing focus after 15 to 20 minutes. Some begin talking to themselves

or stop paying attention to the material being explained.” (IF-01/Islamic Education Teacher, interview, February 12, 2026).

Similar findings were also reported by students who admitted to feeling bored when lessons were conducted in a monotonous manner.

“If I just have to listen to the teacher’s explanation continuously, sometimes I get bored and find it hard to focus until the end of the lesson.” (IF-05/Student, interview, February 15, 2026).

Data from observations and interviews indicate that students’ low concentration is not only influenced by individual factors but is also linked to teaching methods that do not provide sufficient opportunities for student participation.

Table 1. Indicators of Low Student Concentration in PAI Learning

Indicator	Field Findings
Attention to the material	Easily distracted
Student engagement	Relatively low
Participation in asking questions	Limited
Learning interaction	Teacher-dominated
Learning enthusiasm	Tends to decline
Focus during learning	Unstable

Source: Results of research data analysis, 2026.

Based on Table 1, students’ low concentration is indicated by a decline in attention, participation, and engagement during the learning process. These findings highlight the need for pedagogical transformation capable of creating more active and participatory learning.

Transformation of PAI Learning through an Interactive Approach

Research results show that teachers are implementing pedagogical transformation by integrating various interactive learning strategies into the PAI learning process. These strategies include group discussions, active question-and-answer sessions, student presentations, and the use of audiovisual media relevant to the learning material.

Based on the observation results, learning that was previously teacher-centered began to shift toward learning that involved more active student participation. Students were given the opportunity to discuss, express their opinions, and present group work results in front of the class.

According to the PAI teacher, the change in learning strategies was implemented to address student boredom during lessons.

“I started reducing overly long lectures and giving students more opportunities to discuss and express their own opinions.” (IF-01/PAI Teacher, interview, February 20, 2026).

One student also noted that learning becomes more engaging when group activities are involved.

“When there are discussions or presentations, we become more active because we have to think and express our opinions.” (IF-09/Student, interview, February 22, 2026).

Table 2. Forms of Pedagogical Transformation in PAI Instruction

Before Transformation	After Transformation
Lectures predominate	Group discussion
Passive students	Active students
One-way interaction	Two-way interaction
Teacher as the center of learning	Teacher as facilitator
Limited participation	Broader participation

Source: Results of research data analysis, 2026.

The data in Table 2 show that pedagogical transformation results in a shift in learning patterns from teacher-centered learning toward more interactive and participatory student-centered learning.

Increased Student Engagement and Concentration through Interactive Learning

The research results indicate that interactive learning has a positive impact on student engagement and concentration during the PAI learning process. Based on observations, students appeared more focused on learning activities when they were directly involved in discussions, presentations, or group activities.

The PAI teacher explained that students' attention levels changed after interactive learning strategies were implemented.

“When students are involved in discussions and presentations, they appear more focused because they feel a sense of responsibility toward the ongoing learning activities.” (IF-01/PAI Teacher, interview, March 3, 2026).

This finding is supported by students' experiences, who felt that learning became more engaging compared to simply listening to lectures.

“I find it easier to understand the material when I participate in discussions because I'm not just listening, but also explaining and asking questions.” (IF-12/Student, interview, March 5, 2026).

Table 3. The Impact of Interactive Learning on Student Concentration

Concentration Aspects	Before Transformation	After Transformation
Focus on the material	Relatively low	Increased
Attention during learning	Easily distracted	More stable
Learning engagement	Passive	Active
Willingness to ask questions	Low	Increasing
Enthusiasm for learning	Fluctuating	Higher
Class participation	Limited	Wider

Source: Results of research data analysis, 2026.

Based on Table 3, interactive learning encourages increased student engagement in various learning activities, which ultimately contributes to the formation of better learning concentration. These findings indicate that pedagogical transformation not only changes learning strategies but also creates a learning environment more conducive to the development of students' attention and engagement in Islamic Religious Education.

Discussion

The research results indicate that low student concentration in Islamic Religious Education classes at SMPIT Al-Ridwan is closely linked to the predominant use of the lecture method in the learning process. This finding is evident from various indicators that emerged during the learning process, such as students' low attention to the material presented by the teacher, limited participation in class discussions, declining enthusiasm for learning, and the emergence of behaviors indicating a loss of focus, such as talking with classmates and failing to pay attention to the teacher's explanations. These conditions indicate that one way learning has not been able to create an engaging and meaningful learning experience for students. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (IRE), this situation poses a significant challenge because the objectives of IRE are not solely focused on mastering cognitive aspects but also encompass the development of students' religious attitudes, values, and behaviors. When students are unable to maintain concentration during the learning process, the internalization of Islamic values which is the primary goal of religious education is also at risk of not being fully achieved.

These research findings can be explained through a constructivist perspective, which positions students as the primary agents in the learning process. According to constructivist theory, learning is an active process through which individuals construct knowledge based on their experiences and interactions with the learning environment (Jabar, 2025). Therefore, instruction that treats students merely as recipients of information tends to hinder the active construction of knowledge that should naturally occur. In learning dominated by lecture-based methods, students' opportunities to explore ideas, ask questions, express opinions, and reflect on the material become severely limited. Students are more likely to experience boredom and lose focus on the material being studied. These findings reinforce the argument that learning concentration cannot be separated from the quality of interactions established during the learning process. The lower the level of student engagement in learning activities, the greater the likelihood of a decline in attention and concentration during the learning process.

The results of this study also align with various studies on *student engagement*, which explain that student engagement is one of the primary factors determining the quality of learning. *Student engagement* refers not only to physical participation in learning activities but also encompasses cognitive and emotional engagement throughout the learning process (Kadafi & Ulpah, 2023). Students who are actively engaged tend to have more stable attention, demonstrate higher motivation, and are able to maintain concentration for longer periods compared to students who merely act as passive listeners (Faizin et al., 2023b). This study found that the dominance of the lecture method leads to low student engagement, which directly impacts the quality of their learning concentration. Low student learning concentration is not only caused by the individual characteristics of

the students but is also influenced by the pedagogical approaches applied by teachers in the learning process.

In response to this situation, teachers transformed their teaching by implementing various interactive learning strategies, such as group discussions, active question-and-answer sessions, student presentations, and the use of audiovisual media. The research results indicate that this transformation produced significant changes in learning interaction patterns. Whereas the learning process was previously dominated by the teacher's role as an information provider, after the transformation, students gained greater opportunities to actively participate in the learning process. This change indicates a shift in learning orientation from *teacher-centered learning* toward *student-centered learning* (Mutmainnah et al., 2025). This shift serves as a key indicator in efforts to improve learning quality, as it provides students with the opportunity to engage directly in the process of knowledge construction.

From the perspective of social constructivism developed by Vygotsky, social interaction plays a central role in the learning process. Knowledge is not constructed solely through individual effort but develops through communication, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas with the social environment (Maghfiroh & Muttaqin, 2025; Recha & Hidayati, 2026). Therefore, activities such as group discussions, presentations, and question-and-answer sessions provide greater opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the learning material. Through these interactions, students not only receive information from the teacher but also gain the opportunity to interpret, critique, and reconstruct the information they have received. It is this process that makes learning more meaningful and enhances students' engagement with the material being studied.

Research findings indicate that interactive learning has a positive impact on increasing student engagement during the learning process. Students appear more active in asking questions, providing responses, participating in group discussions, and presenting their work in front of the class. This engagement creates a more dynamic learning atmosphere compared to learning dominated solely by lectures. When students feel they have a role in the learning process, they tend to demonstrate a higher level of attention toward the material being studied. This condition demonstrates that student engagement serves as a mediating factor linking pedagogical transformation to improved learning concentration.

Based on these overall findings, this study developed the *Transformative Islamic Pedagogy Model* (TIPM) as a conceptual synthesis explaining the mechanism for enhancing students' learning concentration in Islamic Religious Education. This model indicates that improved learning concentration does not occur directly through the use of specific methods, but rather through a transformation of pedagogical orientation that fosters students' active engagement in the learning process.

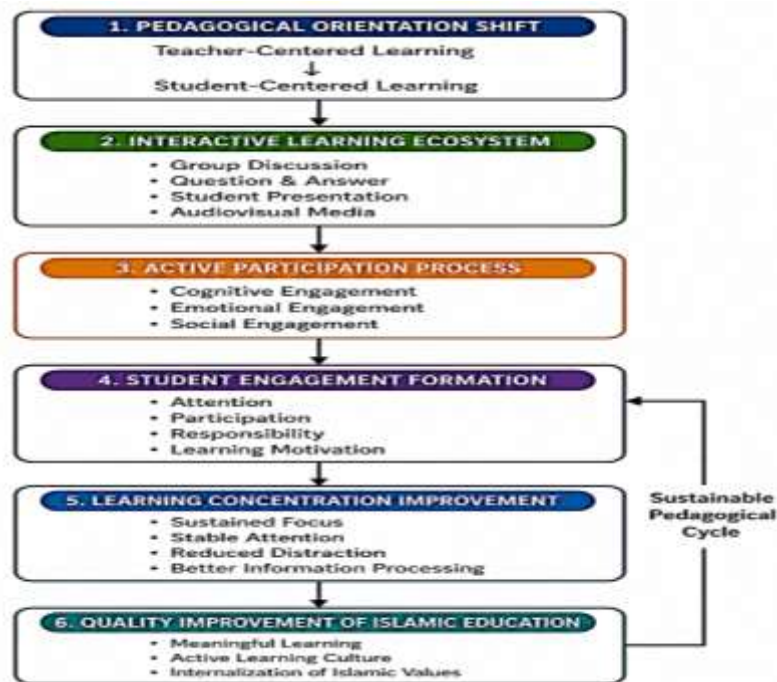


Figure 1. Transformative Islamic Pedagogy Model (TIPM) for Enhancing Students' Learning Concentration in Islamic Religious Education

Figure 1 shows that the process of enhancing learning concentration begins with a shift in pedagogical orientation from *teacher-centered learning* to *student-centered learning*. This paradigm shift serves as the primary foundation for change because it determines the patterns of interaction that occur in the classroom. This shift in orientation then results in *an* interactive learning ecosystem, realized through group discussions, Q&A sessions, student presentations, and the use of audiovisual media. These learning strategies not only transform teaching methods but also create space for students to actively participate in the learning process.

The Interactive Learning Ecosystem fosters the development of *an Active Participation Process*, which encompasses students' cognitive, emotional, and social engagement. At this stage, students no longer act as passive recipients of information but become active participants in the learning process, engaging in critical thinking, discussion, collaboration, and problem-solving. This active participation then leads to *student engagement*, characterized by increased attention, participation, learning motivation, and academic responsibility. In this model, *student engagement* serves as a mediating variable linking pedagogical transformation to improved learning concentration. The higher the level of student engagement, the greater their likelihood of maintaining focus and attention throughout the learning process.

The next stage is *the improvement of learning concentration*, evidenced by more stable focus, reduced distractions, increased attention to the material, and students' ability to process information more effectively. These findings confirm that learning concentration is the result of students' active engagement in a supportive learning environment. Ultimately, improved learning concentration contributes to the enhancement of the quality of Islamic Education (*Quality Improvement of Islamic Education*), characterized by the

creation of more meaningful learning, the development of an active learning culture, and the increasingly effective internalization of Islamic values in students' lives. This model also demonstrates the existence of a sustainable pedagogical cycle, a condition where improvements in learning quality reinforce student engagement in subsequent learning processes, thereby creating continuous learning improvements. TIPM indicates that student learning concentration is not merely an individual psychological issue but rather the product of pedagogical transformation capable of fostering students' active, participatory, and sustained engagement in Islamic Education learning. This model serves as the primary conceptual contribution of the research while offering a new perspective in the study of Islamic Education pedagogy.

Conclusion

This study found that low student concentration in Islamic Religious Education at SMPIT Al-Ridwan is related to the dominance of the lecture method, which results in one-way learning and limits students' active engagement. This condition is characterized by low levels of attention, participation, and focus among students during the learning process. In response to this issue, teachers implemented pedagogical transformation through interactive learning methods, including group discussions, question and answer sessions, student presentations, and the use of audiovisual media. The research findings indicate that interactive learning effectively enhances student engagement in the learning process, resulting in improved attention, participation, and concentration on the learning material compared to when instruction was dominated by the lecture method.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of research on Islamic Religious Education pedagogy through the perspective of Transformative Islamic Pedagogy, which posits that learning concentration is a consequence of the pedagogical orientation applied by teachers. These findings expand the understanding that learning concentration is influenced not only by individual student factors but also by the level of *student* engagement shaped through instructional design. Practically, the results of this research provide implications for Islamic Religious Education teachers to reduce the dominance of the lecture method and develop more participatory, interactive, and student-centered learning to create a more conducive and effective learning atmosphere.

This study has limitations because it was conducted in a single class and a single school with a relatively limited number of informants, so the findings cannot yet be generalized to a broader context. Additionally, this study employed a qualitative approach, so it has not quantitatively measured the level of change in students' concentration following the implementation of interactive learning. Therefore, future research is recommended to develop the Transformative Islamic Pedagogy model at different educational levels and school contexts and to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to measure the relationship between interactive learning, student engagement, and learning concentration more comprehensively.

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