



Developing an Islamic Integrated Social Studies Learning Model for Enhancing Cognitive and Affective Competences

Abstract: Conventional social studies education often isolates academic knowledge from moral-spiritual development, resulting in low student ecological awareness. This study developed and evaluated an Islamic-Integrated Social Studies Learning Model to enhance cognitive and affective competences. Utilizing a Research and Development (R&D) design with a qualitative case study approach, the investigation involved 23 junior high students, academic experts, and a practitioner, employing Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's framework for data analysis. Expert validation confirmed high pedagogical feasibility (80%–89.5%). Empirical field tests demonstrated significant cognitive growth, with class averages increasing from 66.9 to 78.7, alongside a 47.8% surge in classical completeness. Concurrently, students' affective competence transformed into tangible environmental care actions. This model provides a replicable blueprint for faith-based institutions to foster academic excellence and moral responsibility simultaneously.

Keywords: Affective Competence, Cognitive Mastery, Educational Integration, Islamic Values, Social Studies.

Abstrak: Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (IPS) konvensional sering kali memisahkan pengetahuan akademik dari perkembangan moral-spiritual, sehingga mengakibatkan rendahnya kesadaran ekologis siswa. Penelitian ini mengembangkan dan mengevaluasi Model Pembelajaran IPS Terintegrasi Nilai Islam guna meningkatkan kompetensi kognitif dan afektif. Dengan menggunakan desain Research and Development (R&D) melalui pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif, investigasi ini melibatkan 23 siswa sekolah menengah pertama, pakar akademisi, dan praktisi lapangan, serta menerapkan kerangka kerja Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña untuk analisis data. Validasi ahli mengonfirmasi kelayakan pedagogis yang tinggi (80%–89,5%). Uji lapangan empiris menunjukkan pertumbuhan kognitif yang signifikan, di mana rata-rata kelas meningkat dari 66,9 menjadi 78,7, disertai lonjakan ketuntasan klasikal sebesar 47,8%. Secara paralel, kompetensi afektif siswa bertransformasi menjadi tindakan nyata dalam menjaga lingkungan. Model ini menyediakan cetak biru yang dapat direplikasi bagi lembaga pendidikan berbasis agama untuk menumbuhkan keunggulan akademik sekaligus tanggung jawab moral secara bersamaan.

Kata Kunci: Integrasi Pendidikan, Kompetensi Afektif, Nilai-Nilai Islam, Penguasaan Kognitif, Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial.

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INTRODUCTION

The integration of religious values into secular curricula serves as a crucial instrument in shaping modern societies that balance intellectual advancement with moral maturity. Logically, a rigid separation between social sciences and spirituality within educational systems risks producing generations that are cognitively proficient yet ethically disoriented when responding to social realities (Arshad & Khanam, 2023). Global phenomena demonstrate that moral decay, social apathy, and widespread ecological crises are frequently rooted in the failure of educational institutions to transform theoretical knowledge into behavioral awareness grounded in divine values. According to macro-evaluations of primary and secondary education, conventional curricula operating independently of spirituality tend to fail in building a responsive character toward humanitarian issues and environmental preservation. Consequently, reconstructing instructional models through an integrative approach that bridges general scientific understanding with spiritual doctrines is absolutely imperative to establish a society that is academically excellent and spiritually robust.

However, contemporary realities reveal a systemic problem wherein formal educational systems are frequently trapped in a covert form of secularization, particularly within the instruction of social studies (Favier, 2023). To date, social studies instruction in schools has tended to be presented as a collection of theoretical dogmas, historical memorization, and materialistic analyses entirely divorced from the spiritual dimensions of Islam. Consequently, students experience fundamental difficulties in perceiving the relevance between classroom subject matter and their moral responsibilities as religious beings entrusted with the stewardship of the Earth. A lack of learning motivation and low emotional engagement among students regarding socio-communal issues stem from the inability of educators to package social studies into a meaningful and contextual process. The failure to connect natural laws and social dynamics with the concepts of stewardship taught in religion renders the transfer of knowledge dry and mechanical, ultimately failing to stimulate students' affective consciousness in daily life.





This condition is vividly reflected in empirical field phenomena, where social studies instruction at the junior high school level remains heavily dominated by monotonous, teacher-centered conventional methods (Nadifa & Wahyudi, 2025). Preliminary field data indicate that students rarely experience varied learning activities, leading to boredom, passivity, and a perception of social studies as merely a memorization burden to pass examinations. The most concerning consequence of this instructional pattern is the remarkably low level of ecological awareness and social responsibility exhibited by students within the school environment, as evidenced by persistent littering and negligence toward school plants. When confronted with real environmental degradation, students tend to remain apathetic and fail to offer concrete solutions because they are unaccustomed to critical reasoning anchored in moral-religious obligations. This wide disparity between theoretical cognitive knowledge and affective behavioral manifestations in the field serves as a strong signal that currently applied instructional models require immediate and accelerated structural revision.

A synthesis of the literature regarding previous research trends indicates that discourses on optimizing social studies instruction predominantly center on the application of constructivist-based Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) strategies to enhance student outcomes (Hidayati & Khairi, 2026). Previous scholars have consistently clustered social studies model developments around the utilization of the physical environment, interactive simulations, and macro-social problem-solving to boost students' cognitive achievements and critical thinking skills. These studies demonstrate that linking subject matter with immediate real-world events significantly facilitates the reconstruction of ideas and conceptual understanding. Conversely, a parallel body of research within Islamic Education (PAI) has extensively explored the inculcation of religious character, yet these investigations frequently remain confined to isolated, normative-theological spaces without addressing practical applications within general education subjects (Istiyani et al., 2024). Thus, both research trends





operate on separate trajectories: social studies focuses on secular socio-scientific reasoning, while religious education focuses on abstract spiritual reinforcement.

Despite the abundance of research on CTL and character development, a significant research gap persists where the epistemological integration that bridges Islamic values with the structural curriculum of social studies remains heavily neglected. Previous studies have largely viewed the cultivation of an environmental care attitude as an automatic byproduct of instruction rather than designing an explicit pedagogical intervention that links ecological issues with Islamic moral doctrines. The fundamental weakness of conventional social studies models that adopt external standards, such as those from the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (Jouda, 2026), is the total absence of a spiritual dimension that could serve as an binding moral compass for student actions. No formal instructional model has comprehensively integrated the potential of natural resources with Islamic prophetic values into a valid set of lesson plans (RPP), modules, and evaluation instruments. This practical and conceptual void causes social studies instruction in faith-based schools to lose its essence and fail to foster transformative affective competences.

To address this research gap, the present study offers scientific novelty by developing an Islamic-Integrated Social Studies Learning Model systematically designed to enhance students' cognitive and affective competences in a parallel manner. The state of the art (SOTA) of this research lies in the codification of an instructional structure that does not merely append religious verses onto textual materials, but fundamentally reconstructs the learning phases through the processes of idea clarification, confrontation, reconstruction, and experimentation based on the values of *Tawhid* (monotheism). This novelty materializes in an R&D instructional product that synergizes the thematic standards of people, places, and environments with the philosophy of human responsibility as caretakers of the Earth (*khalifah fil ardhi*) (Latif et al., 2023). The urgency of completing this research at present is paramount, given that accelerating environmental degradation in the modern era demands an educational solution that not only





equips students with ecological literacy but also binds their consciousness through the impetus of faith and practical morality.

Based on the aforementioned background, the primary research problem is directed toward formulating and testing the effectiveness of an Islamic value-based social studies learning model capable of reconstructing cognitive knowledge while simultaneously constructing tangible affective actions. The theoretical argument advanced in this study is that integrating Islamic educational values into contextual social studies significantly enhances students' intrinsic motivation and academic mastery because learning becomes more meaningful, while effectively fostering environmental care through binding moral instructions. Theoretically, this article contributes to expanding the boundaries of knowledge constructivism by incorporating spirituality as a pivotal element in adaptive behavioral modification (Lee et al., 2024). Practically, this study delivers a tangible contribution to teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in Islamic educational institutions by providing a valid, practical, and effective instructional framework ready for wider replication.

METHOD

This study was designed as an instructional Research and Development (R&D) initiative (Wu & Chen, 2021), utilizing a qualitative case study approach during its core operational phases specifically within the definition, design, and qualitative evaluation stages (Yin, 2018). The selection of a case study design was scientifically driven by the need to gain a profound, holistic, and contextualized understanding of how an Islamic-integrated social studies model operates within a specific educational environment, capturing nuanced interactions that standardized quantitative measures fail to reveal. The investigation was strategically situated at MTs As-Salafiyah Sumber Duko. This location was selected due to its unique institutional profile as an Islamic junior high school that explicitly aims to balance conventional social studies curricula with rigorous religious education, thereby presenting an ideal, information-rich environment to test the integration of spiritual values with empirical social science concepts.





A purposive sampling technique was deployed to select research informants, ensuring that participants possessed direct experience and relevant expertise regarding the implementation of the developed instructional tools. The subject cohort comprised academic experts, a field practitioner (the social studies teacher), and 23 junior high school students from class VII C. Data collection was systematically executed through three synchronized qualitative techniques: semi-structured in-depth interviews, direct classroom observations, and rigorous documentation studies. In-depth interviews were conducted using validated interview guides to capture expert and practitioner assessments regarding material organization, language, and module design. Concurrently, non-participant classroom observations were performed to document tangible student actions, engagement levels, and behavioral changes. These efforts were supplemented by a comprehensive analysis of archival documents, including student worksheets (LKS), lesson plans (RPP), and the newly compiled religious-based social studies modules.

The qualitative data gathered from the field were systematically analyzed by operationalizing the iterative framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. During the data condensation phase, raw transcripts from expert interviews, field notes from classroom observations, and textual statements from student worksheets were rigorously filtered, coded, and categorized to eliminate redundancies, keeping only the data directly relevant to model validity and behavioral outcomes. Next, in the data display phase, these condensed insights were systematically organized into narrative texts and structured matrices (as reflected in the expert validation records) to map out patterns of pedagogical feasibility and student responses. Finally, in the conclusion drawing and verification phase, emerging themes regarding cognitive and affective enhancement were continuously cross-referenced, tested for consistency, and verified against field evidence to formulate robust, data-grounded assertions regarding the model's overall instructional viability.





To guarantee the trustworthiness, credibility, and overall rigor of the qualitative findings, a multi-layered data validation strategy was strictly enforced. Methodological triangulation was achieved by cross-examining data obtained from interviews with experts against the empirical observations of student behavior and the qualitative responses written in student worksheets. Additionally, member checking was performed by returning the synthesized interview findings and evaluation summaries to the respective academic validators and the field practitioner to verify that the interpreted data accurately reflected their professional judgments. Extended field engagement was also maintained throughout the implementation cycle, allowing the researcher to observe the students' environmental care habits continuously over time, thereby ensuring that the documented behavioral transformations were stable, authentic, and free from temporary artificiality.

RESULT

Validity and Practicability of the Islamic-Integrated Social Studies Learning Model

The initial data collection was conducted through a product validation process executed by three expert validators, comprising two academic experts and one educational practitioner. The comprehensive evaluation encompassed five primary components of the instructional tools: material organization, linguistic aspects, module design, lesson plans (RPP), and assessment instruments consisting of pretest-posttest items. All quantitative data obtained from the evaluation sheets were accumulated and converted into percentages to determine the feasibility level of the developed Islamic-integrated social studies learning model prior to field testing.

Based on the empirical data in Table 1, the evaluation provided by Expert 1 (Material, Language, and Model Design Expert) reached a percentage of 82.8%. Furthermore, the assessment of the lesson plans and pretest-posttest instruments by Expert 2 obtained a score of 80%. The final validation performed by the Field Practitioner Expert regarding all aspects of the instructional tools yielded the highest percentage of 89.5%. The accumulated scores from the three validators consistently demonstrate that the developed learning model and tools are



positioned within the valid category and fulfill the eligibility criteria for classroom implementation.

Table 1. Expert Validation Results of the Instructional Tools

No.	Validator	Evaluation Criteria	Average Score
1.	Academic Expert 1	Materials, language, & model design	82.8%
2.	Academic Expert 2	Lesson plans & assessment instruments	80.0%
3.	Field Practitioner	Materials, language, design, RPP, & test	89.5%

Instructional Effectiveness on Students' Cognitive and Affective Competences

The efficacy test of the model was executed through a limited experiment in class VII C involving 23 students as research subjects. The effectiveness parameters were measured using two primary indicators: the enhancement of cognitive competence (knowledge scores via pretest and posttest) and the reinforcement of affective competence (observation of environmental care behavior). The students' affective competence was evaluated through the recording of tangible actions within the school environment, such as maintaining cleanliness and caring for school plants, which was further substantiated by analyzing the solution-oriented ideas formulated by the students in their worksheets.

Quantitative data from the cognitive competence test indicated a significant shift in scores prior to and following the implementation of the model. The class average score increased by 11.8 points, rising from an initial pretest score of 66.9 to 78.7 on the posttest. In terms of individual mastery, the number of students achieving the minimum completeness threshold surged from only 7 students during the pretest session to 18 students at the conclusion of the posttest session.

The synthesis of classical mastery data reinforces the model's effectiveness, recording a drastic percentage increase of 47.8%. In the initial phase (pretest), the classical mastery level



achieved by the students was remarkably low, standing at only 30.4%. However, after the Islamic integrated social studies learning model was implemented, the classical mastery percentage increased to 78.2% on the posttest. This empirical growth confirms the effectiveness of the model in facilitating the reconstruction of cognitive knowledge while simultaneously building students' affective proficiencies.



Picture 1. Posttest Shows Significant Growth

DISCUSSION

The empirical evidence generated from this study confirms that the integration of Islamic values into a social studies learning model successfully addresses the critical gap in contemporary education, specifically the fragmentation between general knowledge and moral-spiritual development. The high validation scores from academic experts and field practitioners indicate that the instructional design is conceptually sound and practically viable for classroom implementation. Furthermore, the substantial shifts observed in both individual and classical mastery demonstrate that the model effectively achieves its primary objectives. This dual-track advancement confirms that academic instruction does not need to be sacrificed to cultivate





ethical behavior; rather, the two dimensions can synergistically reinforce one another within a structured, value-driven learning ecosystem.

When contrasted with existing literature, these findings strongly support and expand the foundational tenets of Knowledge-Based Constructivism and Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) (O'Connor, 2022). According to developing theories, learning is optimized when students actively construct knowledge through meaningful, real-world experiences rather than passive rote memorization. The significant cognitive gains observed in this research align with classic constructivist frameworks, proving that when students are presented with issues close to their environment such as natural resource management they reconstruct ideas more fluidly through discussion, contrast, and evaluation. However, while traditional contextual models predominantly focus on secular or material problem-solving, this study extends the paradigm by establishing that the infusion of spiritual imperatives serves as a powerful catalyst for cognitive engagement.

Conversely, this research offers a critical alternative to conventional social studies frameworks that treat affective development as a secondary, indirect byproduct of cognitive instruction. Traditional, secularized social studies models often struggle to translate environmental awareness into actual student behavior, frequently failing to bridge the gap between ecological literacy and active stewardship (Castillo-Paredes et al., 2021). By intentionally anchoring the curriculum in Islamic principles regarding environmental responsibility, this model overcomes the limitations identified in prior research where societal ecological awareness remained stubbornly low. The observed transformation of student attitudes into tangible actions, such as proactive waste management and plant preservation, demonstrates that religious education provides the necessary moral imperative that secular frameworks often lack, thereby correcting the behavioral passivity observed in standard instructional designs.





From a theoretical perspective, the parallel growth in cognitive and affective domains can be explained through the holistic integration of knowledge and faith, where academic themes are analyzed through a philosophical view of human-nature harmony. By restructuring materials around the potential of natural resources and filtering them through Islamic values, students are guided through a rigorous internal cognitive process: classifying ideas, contrasting them with peers, building new frameworks, and evaluating them through reasoned application. The novelty of this research lies in its successful operationalization of conceptual integration into a functional pedagogical tool. It moves beyond mere theoretical discourse on Islamic educational synthesis by providing a concrete (Inayati & Pratama, 2022), replicable mechanism that successfully merges National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) thematic standards with spiritual character-building.

The broader implications of these findings are highly significant for both educational theory and macro-level academic policy. Theoretically, this study challenges the binary opposition between secular social sciences and religious education, proposing an integrated epistemic framework where spiritual values act as an interpretive lens for scientific and social realities. Practically, the model offers a strategic blueprint for curriculum developers and school administrators seeking to fulfill national educational mandates that require simultaneous character development and academic excellence (Abdussamad et al., 2022). By utilizing this integrated approach, educators are equipped with a systematic methodology to foster critical thinking and civic responsibility without compartmentalizing the religious identities of the students, thereby maximizing instructional efficiency in faith-based or culturally conservative educational settings.

In conclusion, while the developed model offers a robust and effective framework for holistic education, certain localized limitations must be acknowledged to guide future scholarly inquiries. The scope of this study was restricted to a limited experimental group within a specific junior high school context, which may limit the immediate generalizability of the behavioral and





cognitive metrics across highly diverse demographic regions. Therefore, it is strategically recommended that future research initiatives focus on longitudinal, large-scale implementation across varied institutional frameworks, including public, private, and traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). Additionally, subsequent investigations should explore the integration of advanced digital tracking tools to monitor the long-term sustainability of students' affective transformations and environmental habits beyond the immediate classroom environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the comprehensive development and evaluation phases, it can be concluded that the Islamic-integrated social studies learning model serves as an effective pedagogical solution to the long-standing dichotomy between secular academic instruction and spiritual character development. The core lesson learned from this investigation indicates that social science concepts become significantly more impactful when filtered through relevant religious values, which naturally act as a moral imperative for students. Rather than overwhelming the curriculum, the strategic synthesis of National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) thematic standards with Islamic tenets regarding environmental stewardship creates a powerful synergy. This synergy not only guides students to successfully reconstruct complex cognitive knowledge but also translates academic literacy into tangible, reflective, and proactive ethical behaviors within their immediate school environment.

The primary strength and scholarly contribution of this article lie in its ability to bridge the gap between theoretical integration and concrete classroom practice. While previous literature has extensively debated the conceptual necessity of integrating faith and learning, this study contributes a validated, highly practical, and fully operationalized instructional framework complete with structured modules, lesson plans, and authentic assessment tools. Theoretically, this research enriches the discourse on Knowledge Based Constructivism by proving that spiritual integration can stimulate higher-order cognitive processing. Practically, it





provides curriculum designers and educators in faith-based institutions with a systematic, replicable blueprint to achieve dual excellence in academic metrics and character cultivation without compartmentalizing the students' religious identities.

Nevertheless, certain localized boundaries of this study must be acknowledged to outline a clear trajectory for future academic inquiries. The scope of this research was methodologically confined to a formative R&D cycle and a limited qualitative case study involving a single class at one specific Islamic junior high school, which restricts the immediate transferability of the behavioral and cognitive metrics to broader, more diverse student demographics. Consequently, the strategic agenda for future research should focus on expanding the scale of implementation through multi-site longitudinal studies across public, private, and traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). Furthermore, subsequent investigations are encouraged to explore the integration of digital gamification or smart tracking technologies to evaluate the long-term sustainability and cross-contextual permanence of students' affective transformations beyond the school perimeter.

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