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Contemporary Pedagogical Approach in Teaching Islamic Education: Navigating Challenges and Considerations

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CONTEMPORARY PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH IN TEACHING ISLAMIC EDUCATION: NAVIGATING CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Abstract: Through descriptive analysis, this study makes a unique contribution to Islamic education by delving into the contemporary challenges in the pedagogical approach, specifically, the dichotomy of modern vs. traditional methods and technology integration in teaching and learning. The findings of this study illuminate the pivotal role of the pedagogical approach in effective teaching and learning, particularly in the context of Islamic education. Balancing traditional and modern methods is a key challenge in implementing a pedagogical approach. As the new generation evolves, the traditional method can be effectively combined with modern approaches and technology to engage students and enhance their understanding of a topic. Technology integration in teaching Islamic education offers many benefits, including increased engagement, accessibility, and collaborative learning opportunities. This potential for increased engagement and accessibility through technology is exciting. It motivates Islamic Education Teachers to explore these possibilities, envisioning a future of Islamic education that is dynamic and interactive.

Keywords: Contemporary challenges, modern vs. traditional pedagogical approach, technology integration

Introduction

To meet the learning objectives, teachers must meticulously plan, implement, analyse, and reflect on their teaching and learning process. They need to select appropriate teaching methods and materials based on the syllabus. Since each generation approaches learning differently due to their exposure to the evolving era, teachers must understand the current generation and adapt their strategies and methods accordingly. This study directly addresses this need and aims to compare traditional and modern teaching methods. The study reveals that the traditional method, often criticised as outdated, is teacher-centred, while the modern method is student-centred. However, the traditional method can be highly effective when blended with modern techniques or tailored to suit the topics. This underscores the adaptability of traditional methods to the current generation, instilling confidence in their efficacy and recognising the importance of the audience's role in shaping the future of Islamic education. By acknowledging the value of traditional methods and their potential to meet the current generation's needs, this study instils hope and optimism in Islamic Education Teachers about the future of Islamic education.

Every teaching and learning session done by educators has a lesson plan based on their objectives, pedagogy of teaching strategies, teaching method chosen, and aid materials, ensuring students understand and attract the topics. As Lezah@ Lejah Kiamsin and Rosy binti Talin (2018) state in their research, the teaching method is one of the essential elements in simulating students' interests and helping them understand the topics. Regarding teaching methods, educators must ensure they are suitable and when and where to use them in parallel with the current era and the current generation of students. It also develops emotional and cognitive students by ensuring the lesson is more attractive and understanding. Mohamad Albaree (Abdul *et al*., 2019) state that emotional development can occur through suitable teaching methods. The teaching method has several definitions according to different scholars. This emphasises the importance of emotional development in students, evoking a sense of responsibility in the audience.

Almekhlafi, A. G., & Almeqdadi, F. A. (2010) defined the teaching method as a procedure of the science processes for the planned and organised information, and that being so, it is defined as a method of organising and implementing teaching and learning. In contrast, Danilov defined teaching methods as a system of conscious and purposeful actions to regulate the cognitive and practical activity of the talent and secure the acquisition of the educational content. This means that the teaching method is the

teacher's set of performances to achieve the expected behaviour among learners (Al-Taai, 2021). The teaching method is a course of action to achieve learning objectives with structured delivery steps (Mat *et al*., 2021).

Technology integration in education has revolutionised traditional teaching methods, offering innovative approaches to disseminating knowledge across various subjects, including Islamic education. Utilising digital tools, e-learning platforms, and multimedia resources presents opportunities and challenges for educators striving to enhance the teaching and learning of Islamic studies.

Teaching methods are the procedure, technique, or way of teaching, especially following a defined plan. The term teaching method refers to the general principles or pedagogy used for classroom instruction. Your choice of teaching method depends on what fits educational philosophy, classroom demographic, subject area(s), and school mission statement. Two types of teaching methods are highlighted: traditional and modern.

This study explores and addresses the issues faced in teaching Islamic education by contrasting traditional and modern approaches and investigating contemporary pedagogical methods emphasising student-centred learning and critical thinking. It also aims to identify, analyse, and incorporate modern educational theories and practices and integrate technology into the educational process by Identifying and analysing the challenges and solutions.

Method

This study employs a literature review to conduct a descriptive analysis of contemporary pedagogical approaches in teaching Islamic Education. By systematically exploring and summarising the existing body of knowledge, this analysis aims to identify patterns and draw informed conclusions from the literature. Utilising a qualitative research design, the study focuses on descriptive analysis through an extensive review of existing research (Creswell *et a*l., 2018). This methodology is particularly effective for synthesising and interpreting existing research findings and theoretical perspectives. The results and findings will be summarised and synthesised to offer a thorough overview of this field's current state of knowledge.

Result and Discussion

Challenges in Balance between Traditional Vs Modern Pedagogical Approach

3.1.1 Traditional Pedagogical Approach

The traditional method, considered classic, requires students to attend and listen to the teacher’s lecture and then gather facts from notes (Saira *et al*., 2021). According to Abdul Munir Ismail (2018), the traditional method is teacher-centered. Among the characteristics of traditional teaching methods are that they require the involvement of many students, lecture methods with only one-way communication, and student performance cannot be evaluated on understanding because they only focus on memorising topics (Ngasiman, 2014).

Abdul Munir Ismail also mentions teachers who use textbooks as the only material, which is also categorised as the traditional method. The Kuliah method is also considered traditional (Md *et al*., N. 2017). Hence, the traditional method has two types: the textbook method and the kuliah or lecture method.

According to Cambridge Dictionary, a textbook is a book that contains detailed information about a subject for people who are studying that subject. Every subject taught in school has its textbook according to their respective levels from year one until form 5. The textbook method has been used since the 1960s and is considered the primary method. In Malaysia, textbooks are the primary source of reference in the education field, and textbooks are also used as teaching aids to achieve teaching objectives. According to Tiya Sulistiyani (2022), 83.33% of Islamic education teachers use textbooks as the primary sources of teaching and learning. This also agrees with Muhammad Hifdil Islam's (2019) textbooks, which are commercial for schools, mainly Islamic boarding schools. Textbooks are also used to promote new curriculum changes, and the textbook method is where teachers only rely on textbooks throughout the lessons.

The lecture learning method is the most traditional or classical learning method that has long been used in education (Muslimin *et al*., 2019). According to Abdullah *et al*. (2020), the lecture or kuliah method is considered the most common method educators use. Kuliah, or lecture method, is when students only listen throughout the lesson (Md *et al*., 2017)

According to Muslimin, Sirajuddin Saleh and Muh. Darwis (2019) states that to achieve an effective lecture method, educators must ensure they implement it through three stages: preparation, implementation, and closing. First, the preparation phase is when teachers have set the learning objectives in their lesson plan; then, teachers determine whether to use the lecture method regarding the time in class. Next, teachers conduct two steps of the learning process in the implementation stage: the opening and the presentation. The opening stage is crucial because teachers explain the learning objectives, review the previous lesson, and connect it with the current lesson at the beginning of the learning process in class. It helps teachers measure students' understanding of previous topics, too. The presentation step is the core of the lecture method, where teachers must explain the main points systematically. Lastly, in the closing stage of learning, teachers must create activities that allow students to memorise the subject matter. First, teachers guide students to draw conclusions or summarise their learned topics. Second, the teacher's response or review of the learning material that has been delivered. Third, the teacher evaluates students' progress in understanding the topics. Figure 1 below concludes the main challenges in the traditional pedagogical approach: Teacher-centered learning, one-way communication, focus on memory over understanding, passive learning experience, limited student assessment, and measuring learning outcomes.

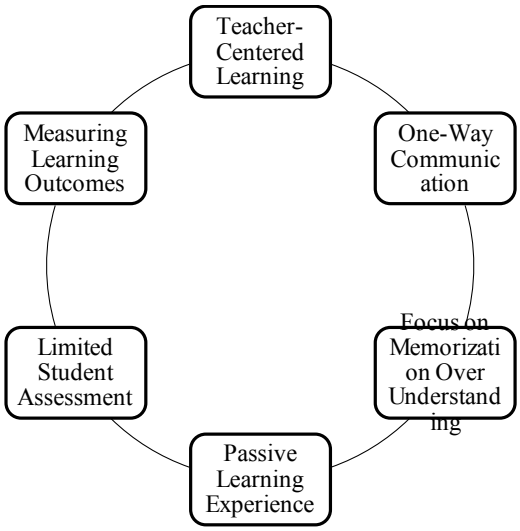

Figure 1: Main challenges in the traditional pedagogical approach

3.1.2 Contemporary Pedagogical Approach

Many changes affect students in the modern era. Education should be changed according to them to teach the new generation, and teachers should choose suitable methods. Thus, the modern method of teaching is called the modern method. Two things highlighted in the modern method are 21st-century learning and a student-centred approach.

21st-century learning focuses on a student-centred approach based on communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, values, and ethical applications. A student-centred approach where students and teachers play active roles in learning (Hasanova *et al*., 2021). Thus, the modern method can help students expand their knowledge about the environment and existence, enrich their worldview, and acquire critical and creative thinking skills (Mukhtoraliyevna & Egamberdiyevna, 2023).

One thing that is also considered a modern method is the student-centred approach. Student-centred learning is a lesson that brings meaning about how to teach to generate ways to think students and learning that emphasises responsibility and activity they are in learning compared to what the teacher does (Kamis *et al*., 2021). A student-centred approach emphasises the importance of interaction and strengthens independent learning in students (Herwin *et al*., 2021). There are several modern methods: inquiry discovery method, project method, problem-based method, question and answer method, drill practice method, and simulation method.

Inquiry derives from an English word that means 'investigation.' Piaget defined inquiry as a method to prepare students to do experiments by seeing what happens, proposing questions and answering them, analysing and comparing, according to Nurdin K, Muh. Sain Hanafy and Muhammad Halifa Mustami (2019) state that this method encourages students to be involved in an intellectual activity and to process a learning experience. The students will be able to develop their curiosity and bravery to participate in the teaching-learning process.

The first step in using the inquiry discovery method is orientation. The teacher explains the objective, the activity that has to be done, and the importance of the lesson topics. They were second, Formulating problems. Students are allowed to understand the problem that occurs. They are third formulating a hypothesis. Students give temporary and possible answers to develop critical thinking to predict a problem's answer. They were fourth, collecting data. Students will gather information whether on the internet or in the library. Fifth, hypothesis testing determines the acceptance of an answer found and develops rational thinking among students. They were last, concluding. Given the accurate data, students can make decisions by themselves. Teachers can encourage students to make decisions by asking questions to give short information.

The Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) introduced the project method in education in Malaysia in 2006, and it is one of the methods mentioned in 21st-century learning outlined by KPM. The project is a systematic learning method involving students' knowledge and skills through a structured exploration process that focuses on complex problems and answers them through careful product design. The purpose of this method is to encourage innovation in lessons by integrating technology. It also provides ample opportunities for the intellectual development of students and the formation of essential skills (Anisimova *et al*., 2021).

In the step-by-step project method, the Teacher will give out topics related to the syllabus, which must be related to real life and suitable for students. Second, students must make plans and are encouraged to brainstorm a plan using the inquiry method. They must provide or make tables and checklists for the entire project. On the other hand, teachers will be students during the project while observing and

monitoring students. The teacher will assess activities in class when doing projects. Lastly, for a full assessment, the teacher and students evaluate the project individually or in groups, and they will improve the final project and share experiences.

The problem-based method is one of the demanding but rewarding methods often used by teachers. Problem-based learning begins with an open-ended, usually authentic, related real-life problem, requiring students in groups to identify what they know and what they need to know that can help solve the problem, determine how they can acquire needed knowledge, formulate hypotheses, studies, or experiments, determine a solution, and report their findings (Malikovna *et al*., 2022).

According to Tamara Kavilova (2020), The problem method involves posing a problem, which may be a situation of a question, and then searching for ways to solve this problem by analysing such phenomena (situations, questions). Ways the problem-based method is as follows: The teacher assigns the problem based on topics learned or real-life events. Make sure the problem is compatible with assessments and develop knowledge and capabilities. Then, teachers make tutorials in small teams and list what the team needs to know to solve the problem. Each group member has to present the report with the solution and supporting material. Finally, each team presents and defends its conclusions.

Problem-based Methods are processes used to identify problems with a scenario to increase knowledge and understanding. They aim to develop problem-solving skills through self-directed learning as a lifetime habit and teamwork skills and are responsible for developing other skills and attributes. Problems have always mobilised and stimulated thinking and learning; when problems are experienced as relevant and vital, they energise our activity and focus our attention, and people are motivated to redirect their energies toward solving them.

Mohd Syaubari Othman and Ahmad Yunus Kassim (2017) define the question-answer method as focusing on asking students to answer sets of questions in place of lecturing. The question method is the best way to deliver or present material in the form of teachers whom students must answer or vice versa. Using the question-and-answer method also helps overcome interaction problems between teachers and students (Jaya *et al*., 2021).

The question-and-answer method is one method that can improve various abilities and optimise various developments needed by students in a way that is fun and interesting for children (Putri & Widyasari, 2019). In order to make suitable questions, teachers must refer to the taxonomy bloom to develop critical thinking among students. First, the teacher asks a question according to the topics, and students answer the question. The students compare their answers and discuss them with peers or teachers. Then, the teacher helps correct misconceptions (if any). Lastly, conclude the answer based on the questions.

The designed question should encourage and challenge students to correct their misconceptions and understand the concept themselves. Students are required to express and discuss their ideas with other students and teachers. The teacher needs to provide opportunities and prompt students to answer the questions by conducting discussions while controlling the scope of the discussion so that it does not go off-topic.

The drill and practice method is a method with repeat activity of the facts or the efficiency gained. According to Yuliana Sri Pengesti and Wadiyo (2021) in their research, the application of the drill method in learning is carried out by the teacher by presenting learning material to students through repeated exercises so that students can master the subject matter and are skilled in carrying out the exercises given as a form of effectiveness in using the drill method. This drill and practice method aims to master the students' skills while ensuring their immortality (Rathakrishnan *et al*., 2018).

To ensure the drill and practice method is effective, Step-by-step drills and practice methods must be applied (Yusuf *et a*l., 2023). The teacher must identify exercises and explain their meaning and purpose before doing them. Exercise can show students its benefits. The teacher must emphasise diagnosis because students cannot expect faultless skills in the preparatory exercise. In the next exercise, the teacher analyses student difficulties to determine which exercises require improvement. Teachers must pay attention to student characteristics and time so students will not get bored and can improve the needs of students.

Repeated exercise helps students remember what they studied. This method enables students to understand and master the concepts, principles, or procedures more effectively. Therefore, good drills and practising must meet the requirements of learning objectives, and drills not only on paper but also orally are considered drills.

Simulation is a method or technique to produce expertise without going through the actual event (So, Chen, Wong, & Chan, 2019). This method lets students experience the same as an example or almost the same as an actual life event in a safe environment. As Hing Yu So, Phoon Ping Chen, George Kwok Chu Wong, and Tony Tung Ning Chan (2019) said in their article, the most significant benefit of simulation-based education is the ability to provide an experience by immersing and engaging learners in an artificial environment that captures their attention and exposes them to critical contextual characteristics relevant to their performance.

McGaghie and team (McGaghie *et al*., 2010) have summarised features and best practices in simulation-based education that could lead to effective learning (So, Chen, Wong, & Chan, 2019)—first, plan. Educators have to identify the goals to be achieved. For example, educators have to know the instructions of an activity and the roles of individuals and groups who will be participants. Next, pre-briefing. Before an activity starts, educators should explain to learners the rules and expectations, such as confidentiality issues and respect for each other. Simulation environments and simulators are introduced to students during pre-briefing. Lastly, provide feedback. After the simulation finishes, educators and students can provide feedback. The feedback can be grouped or individually, with educators as a guide.

Simulation is a teaching method in which the behaviour is not controlled, and participants can bring their own experience, knowledge, and skills to the situation and consequently enrich the learning process, change the academic setting to a real-life situation, and provide an effective and efficient language learning experience. Simulation can also be considered a problem-solving activity where learners express their opinions, feelings, and personalities. Simulation increases students' interest and motivation in the topic being studied. It makes the material more realistic and relevant than the traditional education approach. Figure 2 concludes the main challenges of the contemporary pedagogical approach, namely implementation complexity and teacher readiness, student engagement and responsibility, assessment challenges, resource and technological dependency and time-intensive nature.

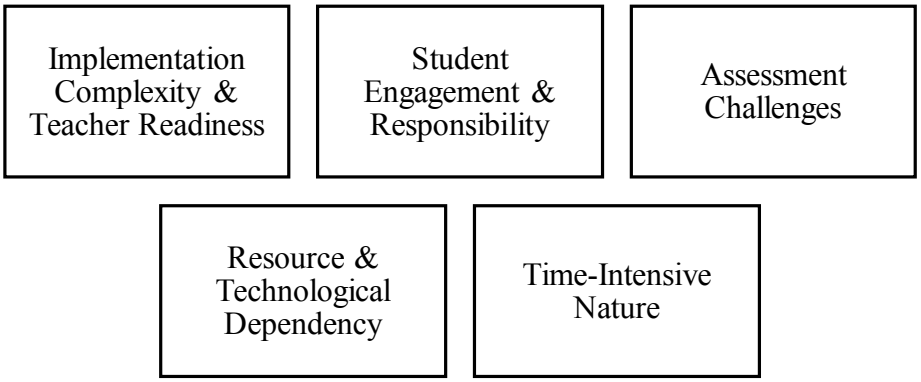

Figure 2: Figure 2 concludes the main challenges of the contemporary pedagogical approach

3.1.3 Balance Modern and Traditional Teaching Methods

Balancing modern and traditional teaching methods is essential for creating a comprehensive and effective educational environment. This approach involves integrating technological advancements and innovative pedagogies with established teaching practices that have stood the test.

Modern teaching techniques emphasise student-centred learning, where students actively participate in their education. This includes using technology, such as interactive software, online resources, and multimedia tools, which cater to different learning styles and keep students engaged (Smith & Jones, 2021). Furthermore, project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and collaborative learning environments encourage critical thinking and real-world problem-solving skills (Brown, 2019).

Traditional teaching methods, such as direct instruction and lecture-based delivery, provide a structured and systematic approach to education. These methods effectively deliver a large amount of information coherently and organised. They are handy for foundational knowledge and ensuring all students understand core concepts (Williams, 2020).

To achieve a balance, educators should consider the strengths and limitations of both approaches. For example, while technology can enhance engagement and provide personalised learning experiences, it should be used to supplement, not replace, traditional methods. Teachers can use technology to introduce new concepts or reinforce lessons while relying on direct instruction to explain complex ideas and ensure comprehension (Smith & Jones, 2021).

Moreover, a balanced approach requires flexibility and adaptability. Teachers should assess students' needs and lesson objectives to determine the most appropriate methods. Combining traditional lectures with interactive activities like group projects and discussions can create a dynamic and effective learning environment (Brown, 2019).

Ongoing professional development for educators is also crucial. Training in modern technologies and traditional pedagogies ensures teachers can effectively blend these methods (Williams, 2020). By continuously refining their skills and staying current with educational trends, teachers can provide the best possible education for their students. Figure 3 below explains the Balance of Modern and Traditional Teaching Methods:

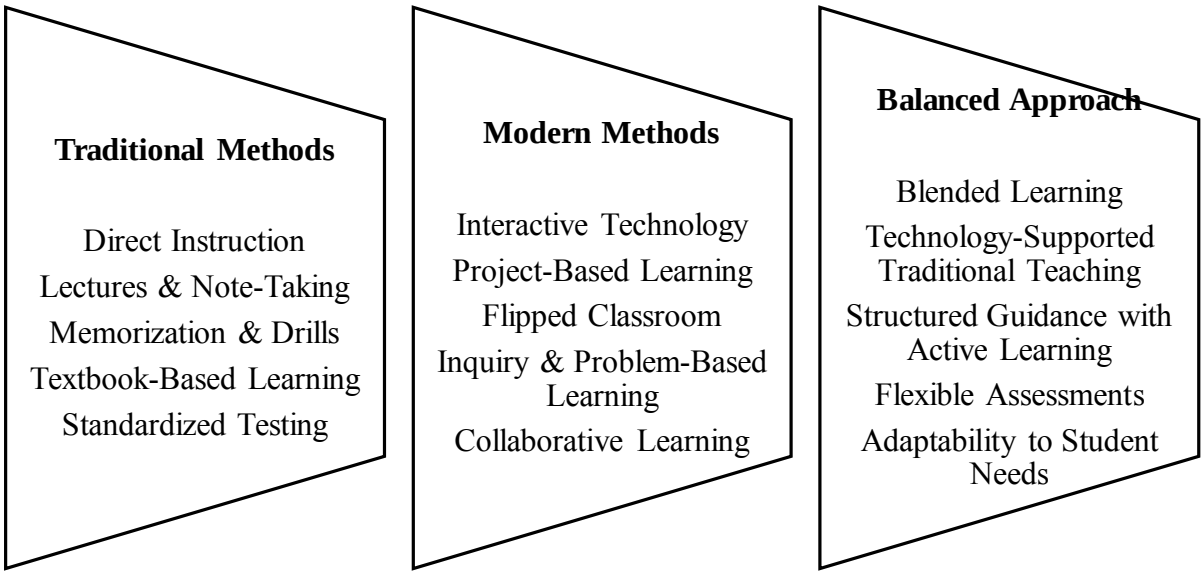

Figure 3: Balance of modern and traditional teaching methods:

3.2. Challenges in Technology Integration in Teaching Islamic Education

Constructivist learning theory, which emphasises active, student-centred learning, forms a foundational basis for integrating technology into education. According to Piaget (1952) and Vygotsky (1978), learners construct knowledge through experiences and interactions with their environment. Technology facilitates this by providing interactive and engaging platforms for students to explore and understand Islamic concepts deeply (Jonassen, 1999).

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), highlights the importance of integrating technology to enhance pedagogical strategies and content delivery. Effective teaching with technology requires a nuanced understanding of how technological tools can support specific educational goals in Islamic studies.

3.2.1. Benefits of Technology Integration in Islamic Education

Research indicates that technology can significantly increase student engagement and motivation. Interactive tools like educational apps, games, and multimedia content make learning more appealing and can cater to diverse learning styles (Almekhlafi & Almeqdadi, 2010). For instance, animated stories and digital Quran recitations can capture students' attention and make learning more relatable and enjoyable (Rahman *et al*., 2013).

Technology provides access to many resources and materials that may not be available in traditional classroom settings. Online platforms and digital libraries offer extensive collections of Islamic texts, scholarly articles, and educational videos, which students can access anytime and anywhere (Al-Furaih & Al-Awidi, 2013). This flexibility supports self-paced learning and accommodates students with different learning needs.

Digital tools facilitate student collaboration, fostering community and shared learning. Platforms like discussion forums, social media, and collaborative software enable students to engage in discussions,

share insights, and work on projects together, enhancing their understanding of Islamic teachings through collective inquiry (Al-Senaidi *et al*., 2009).

3.2.2 Challenges of Technology Integration in Islamic Education

One of the significant challenges in integrating technology into Islamic education is the digital divide. Access to technology varies widely, particularly in developing countries where resources may be limited (Eickelmann & Vennemann, 2017). This disparity can hinder the consistent implementation of technology-based educational initiatives.

Effective technology integration requires educators to be proficient in using digital tools and incorporating them into their teaching practices. However, many teachers lack the necessary training and professional development to utilise technology effectively (Tondeur *et al*., 2012). This gap can impede the successful adoption of technology in Islamic education.

Technology must be incorporated into Islamic education with careful consideration of cultural and religious sensitivities. Ensuring that digital content aligns with Islamic values and teachings is crucial. Educators must critically evaluate and select appropriate technological resources that respect and uphold Islamic principles (Yusof & Zain, 2015).

3.2.3. Considerations and Practical Applications

Several initiatives have successfully implemented online Quranic education, providing accessible and flexible learning opportunities for students worldwide. Platforms like Quran Explorer and Bayyinah TV offer comprehensive Quranic studies, including *tafsir* (exegesis), *tajweed* (recitation rules), and Memorisation courses, demonstrating the potential of technology to enhance Islamic education (Quran Explorer, 2024; Bayyinah, 2024.).

Interactive learning tools, such as mobile apps and educational games, have been developed to teach various aspects of Islamic education. For example, apps like Muslim Kids TV and Islamic Quiz offer engaging content covering Islamic history, ethics, and daily practices, making learning fun and educational for young learners (Muslim.Kids.TV, 2024; https://an-nasihah.com/project/quizzes/, 2024).

Conclusion

In conclusion, a pedagogical approach is essential if the teacher wants to make effective learning. The balance between traditional and modern methods is one of the challenges in implementing a pedagogical approach. The traditional method focuses on a teacher-centred approach, while the modern method prefers a student-centred approach. In the traditional method, textbooks and *kuliah* or lecture methods were used. On the other hand, the modern method has several methods: the inquiry discovery method, project method, problem-based method, question and answer method, drill practice method, and simulation method. With the evolution of the new generation, the teacher must be aware of this challenging turn of events and change their teaching method. Even though many teachers prefer the modern method to encounter the current generation, the traditional method can also be applied with a mix of technology to attract students and better understand a topic.

Otherwise, technology integration in teaching Islamic education offers numerous benefits, including enhanced engagement, accessibility, and collaborative learning opportunities. However, challenges such as the digital divide, teacher training, and cultural sensitivities must be addressed to realise the full potential of technology in this field. As technology evolves, ongoing research and development are essential to ensure that Islamic education remains relevant and effective in the digital age.

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