From Co-occurrence to Configuration: The Demonstration-Imitation Cycle in Grade VII Fiqh Instruction at an Indonesian Madrasah Tsanawiyah

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Abstract

Fiqh instruction at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) level combines legal knowledge with ritual practice, yet teacher-centered lecture dominates the classroom. Demonstration combined with concrete media has been proposed as an alternative, but prior research treats the two as concurrent additions rather than a single configuration. This qualitative case study examines this integration in a seventh-grade fiqh class at MTs Al-Irsyad, Kuala Jambi, asking how it takes shape, what conditions facilitate or hinder it, and how it is sequenced within the lesson. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 11 participants: the principal, two fiqh teachers, three teachers of other subjects, and five seventh-grade students. Observation of three sessions, and document analysis, with two-cycle coding and trustworthiness supported by triangulation, member checking, audit trails, and reflective notes. Integration occurred at three points of method-media convergence: preparatory, demonstrative, and evaluative, forming an interlinked configuration and a recurrent demonstration-imitation cycle in which teachers modeled a step before students imitated it. Feasibility depends on leadership support, media availability, teacher competence, and student receptiveness, and is limited by time constraints, inadequate media, and uneven attention. Teachers implement this configuration through a stable three-phase sequence: preparation, demonstration, and evaluation, whose weights vary with procedural complexity; segmented cycles and matched assessment characterize the most successful sessions. These findings reframe the demonstration-and-media pairing as a deliberate configuration and identify a micro-

mechanism integrating observational and experiential learning, with implications for fiqh teacher training and lesson design.
Keywords: demonstration-imitation cycle; fiqh instruction; ritual artifacts; embodied religious learning.

Introduction

Fiqh occupies a demanding place in Islamic religious education at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) level. Students must internalize the legal rulings (aḥkām) governing acts of worship, *wudu'*, *salat*, tayammum, and zakat, and execute them with procedural precision. Educational researchers classify subjects like this as procedural knowledge, in which understanding alone is insufficient, and skill comes from modeling combined with guided practice.[1] Indonesian madrasah classrooms, however, deliver fiqh mostly through teacher-centered lecture (*ceramah*), according to Wahyuni et al.[2] and Mardiyani,[3] This approach covers only the cognitive domain and ignores the affective and psychomotor domains. Fiqh is a practical subject, yet it is taught verbally and in an abstract manner. This study examines this discrepancy.

Two lines of research point toward a solution. The first is observational learning. Bandura's social learning theory holds that observing a competent model and then imitating the behavior under guidance is a reliable route to skill acquisition.[4] Recent work operationalizes this mechanism in domains far from fiqh: Chen et al. studied procedural knowledge in higher-education software learning, and Dreer examined the transmission of well-being practices among student teachers.[5] Neither study concerns ritual worship or early adolescents, but together they show that the attention–retention–reproduction–motivation sequence recurs across procedural and observational tasks. Whether the same sequence organizes fiqh instruction at the MTs level is one of the questions the present study takes up. The second line concerns concrete media. Kosmas, Zaphiris, Aziz, and Islam[6] show that real objects and physical activity can enhance cognitive performance,

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[1] Y.-T. Chen, S Liou, and S.-M. Chen, "Flipping the Procedural Knowledge Learning: A Case Study of Software Learning," *Interactive Learning Environments* 29, no. 3 (2021): 428-41, https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2019.1579231.

[2] E S Wahyuni, T Ridjal, and W Kurniawan, "Pengaruh Kompetensi Guru Dan Metode Pembelajaran Terhadap Motivasi Belajar Siswa (The Influence of Teacher Competence and Learning Methods on Student Learning Motivation)," *Jurnal Thalaba Pendidikan Indonesia* 4, no. 2 (2021): 117-22.

[3] K Mardiyani, "Potensi Peserta Didik Dan Peran Pendidikan Islam (Student Potential and the Role of Islamic Education)," *JRPP: Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 7, no. 2 (2024): 3780-84.

[4] Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977); for a procedural-knowledge operationalisation in higher-education software learning, see Chen, Liou, and Chen, "Flipping the Procedural Knowledge Learning: A Case Study of Software Learning."

[5] B Dreer, "Witnessing Well-Being in Action: Observing Teacher Well-Being during Field Experiences Predicts Student Teacher Well-Being," *Frontiers in Education* 8 (2023): 967905, https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.967905.

[6] F A Aziz and S N Islam, "Impact of Mixed Pedagogy on Engineering Education," *IEEE Transactions on Education* 65, no. 1 (2022): 56-63, https://doi.org/10.1109/TE.2021.3088808.

motor skills, and motivation, particularly for learners whose abstract reasoning is still developing. Taken together, these findings position the teacher's use of concrete objects as a method suited to the demands of procedural-embodied subjects.

The demonstration method (*metode demonstrasi*) functions as structured modeling: the teacher performs, names, and explains each ritual step in sequence, and students then rehearse it.[7] Pairing that with concrete media, actual ablution vessels, prayer mats, and prayer garments means students handle the real objects of worship instead of hearing verbal descriptions of them.[8] Early adolescents remain in the concrete-operational phase, so anchoring abstract jurisprudential categories in physical objects aligns with developmental theory and embodied learning studies, particularly in primary classrooms.[9] and in higher education.[10] Demonstration and concrete media together address fiqh's cognitive, affective, and psychomotor demands at once.[11]

This approach also fits an older tradition. The *uswatun ḥasanah* model, learning by observing and imitating an exemplary teacher, has long shaped instruction in pesantren and madrasah settings.[12] Recent Scopus-indexed work links that tradition to active-learning frameworks. Abdul Khalil et al.[13] use problem-based learning to develop ijtihād skills among undergraduate fiqh students. Usman and Mahmud[14] document gains from

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[7] M Ismail et al., "Peningkatan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Melalui Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Pembelajaran Fikih Thaharah Di MTs Hidayatud Diniyah (Improving Student Learning Motivation through the Demonstration Method in Thaharah Fiqh Learning at MTs Hidayatud Diniyah)," *Impressive: Journal of Education* 2, no. 4 (2024): 130-39.
[8] A Arsyad, *Media Pembelajaran (Learning Media)* (Rajawali Pers, 2017).
[9] Kosmas and Zaphiris, "Improving Students' Learning Performance through Technology-Enhanced Embodied Learning: A Four-Year Investigation in Classrooms."
[10] Aziz and Islam, "Impact of Mixed Pedagogy on Engineering Education."
[11] S Dly, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Pembelajaran Fikih Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Praktik Ibadah Siswa Di MTsS Darus Sholihin (Implementation of the Demonstration Method in Fiqh Learning to Improve Students' Worship Practice Skills at MTsS Darus Sholi," *Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 1, no. 4 (2025): 370-82.
[12] Syabuddin, M Jannah, and Sulaiman, "The Implementation of Character Education on the Tarbiyah and Teachers Training Faculty at the State Islamic University Indonesia (Morality Reinforcement Approach)," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 12, no. 12 (2020): 1-24.
[13] S Abdul Khalil, N F Mohd Razif, and M I Rosele, "Developing Ijtihad Skills for Undergraduate Students through Problem-Based Learning in Fiqh Subjects: Present Practices and the Way Forward," *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education* 39, no. 2 (2024): 197-217, https://doi.org/10.21315/apjee2024.39.2.11.
[14] A H Usman and A F Mahmud, "Addressing Low Speaking Proficiency in EFL Students: The Impact of Integrated Teaching Strategies in an Islamic Education Setting," *International Journal of Language Education* 8, no. 3 (2024): 503-19, https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v8i3.66493.

integrated teaching strategies in Islamic education. Nadlir et al.[15] rebuild madrasah teacher education around ethical reflection. Khimmataliev et al.[16] argue for integrating Islamic pedagogical principles with global frameworks. This literature operates at the tertiary and teacher-education levels; it does not examine how a teaching method and a physical medium are coupled within a single lesson of MTs' ritual-worship instruction, where fiqh's procedural-embodied character is most pronounced.

A body of Indonesian research has already studied demonstration-based fiqh learning at MTs and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah sites. Hendika,[17] Rohman,[18] Sholiha, and Rahmah,[19] Dly,[20] and Fadhlullah et al.[21] all report gains in motivation, mastery, and psychomotor performance. The present study's contribution lies in three conceptual and analytical moves that this literature leaves open. First, these studies treat demonstration and concrete media as parallel or interchangeable techniques; the present study reframes the pairing as a deliberately integrated configuration, in the sense of curricular integration developed by Khoruddin[22] and Trianto.[23] Second, they foreground learning outcomes over the phase-by-phase process, so how teachers plan, sequence, and evaluate

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[15] Nadlir et al., "Humanizing Teacher Education for Madrasah Contexts: A Curriculum Model Integrating Ethical Reflection on Socio-Scientific Issues," *Cogent Education* 12, no. 1 (2025): 2583513, https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2583513.

[16] D O Khimmataliev et al., "Integrating Islamic Pedagogy and the Sustainable Development Goals in Preparing Future Educators in Uzbekistan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 2 (2025): 216-31, https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i2.48413.

[17] A R Hendika, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Pada Pembelajaran Fikih Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Kelas VII Di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Salafiyyah (MTs) Tegalsari (Implementation of the Demonstration Method in Fiqh Learning to Improve Grade VII Student Motivation" (undergraduate thesis (skripsi), UIN KH Achmad Siddiq Jember, 2025).

[18] A Rohman, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Untuk Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Fikih Peserta Didik Kelas VIII MTsN 4 Lampung Selatan (Implementation of the Demonstration Method to Improve Grade VIII Fiqh Learning Outcomes at MTsN 4 South Lampung)" (undergraduate thesis (skripsi), IAIN Metro Lampung, 2020).

[19] N Sholiha and E N Rahmah, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Pada Pelajaran Fikih Di MI Al-Mukhlisin Jurumudi Tangerang (Application of the Demonstration Method to Improve Student Learning Motivation in Fiqh at MI Al-Mukhlisin Jurumudi Tangerang," *Qiro'ah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 12, no. 1 (2022): 27-42.

[20] Dly, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Pembelajaran Fikih Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Praktik Ibadah Siswa Di MTsS Darus Sholihin (Implementation of the Demonstration Method in Fiqh Learning to Improve Students' Worship Practice Skills at MTsS Darus Sholi."

[21] M Fadhlullah et al., "Efektivitas Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Materi Ibadah Fiqih Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Effectiveness of the Demonstration Method in Fiqh Worship Material at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah)," *Interdisciplinary Explorations in Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2025): 418-30.

[22] M Khoruddin, *Integrasi Kurikulum: Konsep Dasar Dan Penerapannya (Curriculum Integration: Basic Concepts and Implementation)* (CV Literasi Nusantara Abadi, 2021).

[23] Trianto, *Model Pembelajaran Terpadu Dalam Teori Dan Praktik (Integrated Learning Models in Theory and Practice)* (Prestasi Pustaka, 2015).

demonstration-with-media lessons is rarely described in enough detail for other classrooms to reproduce. The present study documents and isolates a transferable micro-pattern: the demonstration-imitation cycle. Third, their findings rarely connect to the international literature on observational and embodied learning. The present study supplies that connection. It pursues all three at a single MTs site.

The study examines how demonstration and concrete media combine in fiqh learning among Grade VII students at MTs Al-Irsyad Kuala Jambi, Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, Jambi Province, Indonesia. Three questions guide the inquiry: (1) What forms does the integration of demonstration and concrete media take in practice? (2) What supporting and inhibiting factors shape its implementation? (3) What is the phase-by-phase implementation process, from preparation through demonstration to evaluation? The study draws on in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis within a qualitative descriptive field design. It treats demonstration and concrete media as a single configuration and offers a model that other MT teachers can adapt.

Research Methodology

This study uses a single-site qualitative descriptive case study design.[24] The research questions ask how an integrated pedagogical practice, teacher demonstration, combined with concrete media in fiqh instruction, is implemented, sustained, and constrained within one school. Case study design suits these "how" questions about real-world practice better than variable-oriented or hypothesis-testing designs.[25] The orientation is descriptive, keeping the analysis close to participants' own language and observable classroom practice. The aim is applied: producing an implementation model for fiqh teachers and madrasah administrators.[26]

Two methodological traditions inform this design, and because they carry different epistemological assumptions, their fit requires a brief note. Yin's case study is a design logic: it bounds the inquiry to a single real-world system, MTs Al-Irsyad, and warrants the "how" questions pursued here. Sandelowski's qualitative description is an analytic

[24] J W Creswell and J D Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2018).
[25] Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods*, 6th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2018).
[26] M Sandelowski, "Whatever Happened to Qualitative Description?," *Research in Nursing & Health* 23, no. 4 (2000): 334-40, https://doi.org/10.1002/1098-240X(200008)23:4%3C334::AID-NUR93.0.CO;2-G>.

stance: it commits the analysis to staying close to participants' own words and to observable practice, favoring low-inference, data-near description over the heavier theoretical reworking characteristic of grounded theory or phenomenology. The two are compatible because they govern different things. The case study fixes the boundary of what is studied; qualitative description fixes the level of interpretation applied within that boundary. Adopting both means the study reports a bounded case in descriptively faithful terms. The theoretical connections drawn in the Discussion to observational and embodied learning are interpretive extensions offered after the descriptive account, not a framework imposed upon it.

Field research was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Al-Irsyad Kuala Jambi, a private madrasah under the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, located in Parit 5, Kampung Laut, Kuala Jambi Subdistrict, Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, Jambi Province. Purposive case selection (Patton[27]) drove the choice of site on three grounds. Preliminary observations showed that lectures predominated in fiqh instruction and that demonstrations and concrete media, when they appeared, were used sporadically and had not yet been organized into a deliberate, planned configuration. The site was therefore well suited to the study's aim: to document how such integration emerges and functions, and where it falters, against a lecture-dominant baseline. Structurally, the school had what an integrated approach needs: a practical worship curriculum, readily available concrete materials, and institutional willingness to participate. It was also sufficiently accessible to support the sustained engagement required by qualitative case study research.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling using maximum variation logic.[28] The final sample comprised 11 participants across four categories. The principal (*kepala madrasah*; $n = 1$) made institutional decisions on pedagogical change. Seventh-grade fiqh teachers ($n = 2$) were the primary practitioners and key informants. Other subject teachers at the same grade level ($n = 3$) helped triangulate observations on student engagement and cross-curricular norms. Seventh-grade students ($n = 5$) had experienced the fiqh learning process directly. The five students were purposively varied to include

[27] M Q Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*, 4th ed. (SAGE, 2015).
[28] Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*.

both higher- and lower-achieving learners and both sexes; this small number was intended to surface a range of student perspectives, not to represent the full variation of responses by achievement level or sex, a limitation returned to below. All participants provided informed consent before data collection; for students under eighteen, parental consent was also obtained through the school. Participants are identified throughout by role-based pseudonymous codes: the principal (P), the two fiqh teachers (T-1 and T-2), and the five students (S-1 to S-5). Only the institution is named, with the principal's written permission.

Data were collected using three complementary techniques applied iteratively across the field research period.[29] Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all participant categories. Teacher interviews (approximately 35 minutes each) covered lesson planning, demonstration techniques, media selection, enabling factors and barriers, and reflections on student responses. Student interviews (approximately 20 minutes each, conducted in small groups to reduce power imbalances) addressed experiences of fiqh learning, understanding of worship procedures, and responses to the integrated approach. The principal's interview addressed institutional support, resource allocation, and policy frameworks. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim in Indonesian; analytically relevant excerpts were translated into English and back-translated by a bilingual colleague to verify accuracy.[30]

Participatory observation was conducted during three 45-minute fiqh lessons for seventh-grade students. The protocol drew on the observational-learning sequence Bandura's theory specifies attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation,[31] and on work on embodied learning by Kosmas and Zaphiris,[32] and was refined after the first two sessions. It tracked the sequence of the teacher's demonstrations (modeling, naming, explaining, inviting), the inventory and use of concrete media, students' behavioral and verbal engagement, the three-phase lesson structure (preparation, demonstration,

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[29] F R Fiantika et al., *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Qualitative Research Methodology)* (PT. Global Eksekutif Teknologi, 2022).
[30] A Squires, "Methodological Challenges in Cross-Language Qualitative Research: A Research Review," *International Journal of Nursing Studies* 46, no. 2 (2009): 277-87, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2008.08.006.
[31] Bandura, *Social Learning Theory*.
[32] Kosmas and Zaphiris, "Improving Students' Learning Performance through Technology-Enhanced Embodied Learning: A Four-Year Investigation in Classrooms."

evaluation), and the quality of student practice following each demonstration. Field notes were taken during each session and developed into descriptive memos within twenty-four hours.

Documentary analysis examined lesson plans (Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran/RPP), syllabi, attendance and assessment records, and photographic and video documentation provided by the school. These documents showed institutional intent and were compared against observed practices and interview accounts.[33]

Analysis followed the interactive qualitative model of Miles et al.,[34] proceeding through three concurrent iterative processes: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Transcripts, field notes, and document excerpts were imported into NVivo 14 and coded in two cycles.[35] The first cycle used descriptive and in vivo codes to stay close to participants' language; the second used pattern coding to consolidate first-cycle codes into analytical categories matching the three research questions: forms of integration, enabling and inhibiting factors, and implementation processes. The coding framework was developed inductively and refined through constant comparison across data sources. A second researcher, experienced in qualitative coding but independent of the fieldwork, separately coded approximately 20% of the corpus. These excerpts were sampled across all participant categories and coded using the second-cycle framework. Intercoder agreement was assessed over the three principal analytical categories corresponding to the research questions. Before discussion, agreement across these categories fell in the substantial range (Cohen's $\kappa = 0.61–0.80$). All remaining discrepancies were resolved through discussion to full consensus, and the final code structure reflects that agreement.[36]

Trustworthiness was evaluated against Lincoln and Guba's four criteria.[37] Credibility was supported by prolonged engagement at the site, sustained observation across multiple fiqh sessions, source triangulation (principal, teachers, students), method triangulation (interviews, observations, documents), and member checking, in which the

[33] G A Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 27-40, https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027.
[34] Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (Washington: SAGE Publications, 2014).
[35] J Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 4th ed. (SAGE, 2021).
[36] Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*.
[37] Yvonna S Lincoln and Egon G Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (SAGE, 1985).

fiqh teachers and the principal reviewed and confirmed preliminary interpretations. Transferability is supported by a thick description of the site, participants, and pedagogical practices, which allows readers to assess the applicability of these practices to their own contexts. Dependability is addressed through an audit trail documenting analytical decisions, code revisions, and emerging themes. For confirmability, reflexive notes were kept throughout the fieldwork. As a lecturer at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, familiar with the regional madrasah ecosystem, the researcher examined how this position might have shaped data collection and interpretation.

This study followed standard ethical procedures for qualitative research involving educational institutions and minors. Institutional permission was obtained from the principal of MTs Al-Irsyad Kuala Jambi before fieldwork began. Informed consent was obtained from all adult participants; parental and student consent was obtained for participants under eighteen. Participants were told they could withdraw at any time without consequences. Pseudonyms protect individual identities throughout, and raw data are stored in encrypted form accessible only to the research team.

Research Findings

MTs Al-Irsyad Kuala Jambi is a private madrasah under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in a riverside community in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, Jambi Province. Most residents of the regency are Muslim and actively participate in pesantren and madrasah life, so the community expects the school to develop students' fiqh literacy. The seventh-grade fiqh curriculum covers personal acts of worship (*ibadah maḥḍah*), ṭahārah, *wudu'*, tayammum, *salat*, zakat, and fasting, each of which is directly tied to students' daily religious practice.

During the observation period, teachers drew on three approaches in the fiqh class: lecture, which remained the most common mode; demonstration-only sessions; and, less consistently, an integrated approach combining demonstration with concrete media, which is the focus of this study. Across the observed lecture-only sessions, students' attention tended to drop, few volunteered to participate, and most could not perform the procedures correctly when asked at the end of the lesson.

Fiqh Teacher T-1 explained why fiqh instruction needs more than one model:

> "Fiqh is a subject that cannot be limited to simply presenting the material; practical application is necessary so that students can understand how to put it into practice. For example, regarding the topics of ṭahārah and *wudu'*, students sometimes

> (memorize) the order of the body parts that must be purified, but in practice, it is not uncommon for students to wash them haphazardly or get them wet."

Integration as Configuration: Three Loci of Method–Media Coupling (RQ1)

RQ1 concerns the nature of the integration, whether demonstration and concrete media function as a bound configuration or as two techniques that share a lesson. (RQ3, below, takes up a different question: the temporal sequence through which that configuration is enacted. The two research questions operate at different analytical levels (the relational and the sequential). Observations and interviews pointed to coupling: across the observed sessions, the two elements were jointly designed and mutually dependent at three loci: the preparatory, the demonstrative, and the evaluative. The point is that at each locus, the demonstration and the artifact depended on one another, which is what distinguishes a configuration from co-occurrence.

Coupling at the preparatory locus occurs during the planning stage, when teachers align the demonstration sequence with the artifacts that will support it. Teachers do not draft scripts and object lists separately; they build the two together, step by step, so each part of the demonstration is tied to a specific object, position, and verbal explanation. For the *wudu'* lesson, the teacher sets out a bucket, a dipper, and a basin in a place where every student can see them, then rehearses the coordination among speech, movement, and the placement of the tools.

T-2 explains why fiqh demands this kind of preparation:

> "As part of my efforts to bridge the gap between students' theoretical knowledge and practical application, I usually set up practical materials in a place where students can see them directly, as long as it does not disrupt the learning process. Fiqh is different from other subjects; in other classes, such as Aqidah Akhlaq, there is usually no need to have practical materials on hand, but in fiqh, explaining concepts by demonstrating the tools used helps students understand them more easily during practical exercises."

Coupling at the demonstrative locus happens during class. The teacher names each step, states its legal status (*farḍ* or *sunnah*), performs it with real objects, pouring water from the dipper, placing the feet on the prayer mat, positioning the body for sujūd, and has students watch. The tightest form of this coupling, and the signature of the configuration, is a recurring demonstration-imitation cycle: the teacher performs one step, pauses, and has students imitate it before moving to the next. The teacher does not run through the entire procedure in a single unbroken demonstration. (How this cycle unfolds

in time is treated under RQ3; here it matters as the point at which method and medium are most tightly bound.)

One Grade VII student (S-2) explained why this step-by-step method works better for her than a single continuous demonstration:

> "I understand the fiqh material better when the teacher conducts practical sessions. Before, there were no practical sessions, and to be honest, sometimes I would memorize the material to prepare for exams."

Coupling at the evaluative locus means using the same materials in assessment. Students perform the procedures with actual wudhu equipment, prayer mats, or prayer garments instead of reciting steps aloud or answering written questions. Teachers use an observation checklist while students work and give immediate corrective feedback. Because the assessment setting closely resembles real worship, the gap between classroom performance and at-home practice appears to narrow.

Together, these three loci reveal a single instructional architecture in which media and demonstration are coupled across planning, enactment, and assessment. Teachers and students alike point to this, the mutual dependence of method and medium, not the bare presence of objects alongside a demonstration, as what defines the approach. What this architecture looks like as it unfolds in real time, its ordering, weighting, and internal rhythm, is the question RQ3 addresses.

Supporting and Hindering Conditions (RQ2)

Four conditions support the approach, and three limit it—institutional *leadership support.* The principal treats active-method fiqh instruction as part of the school's identity. He allows use of the muṣallā and wudhu area during lessons and reserves time in the schedule for practice sessions.

> "Part of ensuring that learning proceeds effectively is providing learning materials, whether in the form of documents or tools. In some subjects, I always urge teachers to place greater emphasis on hands-on practice, because knowledge without practice will not lead to anything, and practice brings students closer to real-world situations."

Supplies for hands-on activities. The school has wudhu supplies, prayer attire (shawls, robes, caps), prayer mats, and miniature Ka'bah models for the ḥajj unit. These cover teacher demonstrations in every observed session, but fall short for students practicing individually at the same time.

Teacher competence. Teachers pair command of fiqh material with classroom techniques sharpened through in-service training. They anticipate where students will

misunderstand a point, adjust the pace of each step to seventh-graders' attention spans, and correct errors on both procedural and legal grounds.

T-1 describes a burden of the job that outsiders tend to miss:

> "I have to be honest, there's a widespread assumption that teaching fiqh is easy, and that's because people have never experienced being a fiqh teacher. In fact, the greatest demands are placed on fiqh teachers because we must ensure that students have the knowledge and can apply it. It's not uncommon for students who already know how to perform wudu' to be able to do it during practice but fail to apply it in their daily lives. and once again, it is the fiqh teacher who is considered to have failed."

Student engagement. This matches findings from Hendika,[38] Dly,[39] and Ismail et al.[40] Students responded better to the integrated approach than to lecture-only sessions, citing clear procedures, the chance to handle real objects, and hands-on practice.

Three conditions limit implementation.

Time allocation is the constraint teachers raise most often. Integrated lessons take longer to prepare, and the demonstration-imitation cycle, individual practice, and performance assessment each add time compared with lecture. For a complex procedure like *salat*, the observed sessions often lacked either depth in demonstration or breadth in practice.

T-2 describes how time pressure affects *salat* lessons:

> "A fiqh teacher is expected to meet at least three requirements: first, students must understand the material; second, they must be able to put it into practice; and third, they must apply both the theoretical and practical knowledge gained in class to their daily lives. However, there are only two hours of fiqh class per week. Therefore, I often schedule practical exercises outside of class hours."

Insufficient equipment forced students to share devices in groups of three or four during practice. This cut into individual practice time, lengthened wait times, and led to off-task behavior while students waited for their turn. The principal traced the problem to the budget:

> "Ideally, practical materials should be commensurate with the number of students and the number of class hours allocated; with two hours of fiqh instruction per

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[38] Hendika, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Pada Pembelajaran Fikih Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Kelas VII Di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Salafiyyah (MTs) Tegalsari (Implementation of the Demonstration Method in Fiqh Learning to Improve Grade VII Student Motivation."

[39] Dly, "Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Pembelajaran Fikih Untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Praktik Ibadah Siswa Di MTsS Darus Sholihin (Implementation of the Demonstration Method in Fiqh Learning to Improve Students' Worship Practice Skills at MTsS Darus Sholi."

[40] Ismail et al., "Peningkatan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Melalui Penerapan Metode Demonstrasi Dalam Pembelajaran Fikih Thaharah Di MTs Hidayatud Diniyah."

> week, adequate practical materials are also needed. However, this issue has not yet been resolved due to budget constraints in procuring practical materials. Furthermore, the lack of materials will inevitably cause students to grow bored while waiting for their turn, which will make the practical sessions less effective."

Implementation Process: The Temporal Sequence within a Lesson (RQ3)

RQ1 established that method and media are coupled; RQ3 asks how that coupling is choreographed in time within a single lesson. Across the sessions observed, teachers followed the same three-phase sequence for each worship topic: preparation, demonstration, and evaluation. The order did not vary. What varied was the relative weight and pacing of the phases, which tracked the complexity of the procedure: a short procedure, such as tayammum, compressed the demonstration phase, whereas a multi-step procedure, such as *salat*, stretched it and, under time pressure, often left the evaluation phase truncated. This section describes the temporal signature of the approach, its ordering, weighting, transitions, and internal rhythm.

Phase 1: Preparation. Before class, teachers complete four tasks: set learning objectives across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains; draft a step-by-step demonstration script specifying the artifact and instructions for each step; prepare and test materials (filling water, folding clothes, placing mats); check the line of sight from different seats; and allocate time for each phase within the lesson period.

Phase 2: Demonstration. The class opens with a brief introduction, after which the teacher places the materials where everyone can see them and begins the lesson. The teacher names each step, classifies it, performs it with the aids, and explains it, alternating between modeling the step and having students imitate it. After the full procedure is complete, volunteers practice selected steps under supervision while the teacher corrects procedure, posture, and pronunciation. The session ends with supervised whole-class practice as the teacher circulates among students.

T-1 describes the sequence:

> "To make it easier for the students, I usually begin the lesson with a brief introduction so they understand the objectives and the steps they will be practicing. I always prepare the materials in advance, then demonstrate each step one by one and ask the students to imitate me. If something isn't quite right, I explain the mistake, whether it's in the movement, position, or pronunciation. After all the steps are complete, I ask a few students to come to the front to practice on their own, and then I ask all students to practice while I walk around providing guidance and feedback."

Phase 3: Evaluation. Teachers use four modes of evaluation across a single topic cycle, not a single session: individual performance assessed against an observation checklist; peer assessment in pairs using teacher-supplied criteria; brief written reflections where students name the steps they still find hard; and a whole-class discussion on what has been learned and what still needs practice at home. Using all four modes throughout the topic cycle enables teachers to cover the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains and track each student's progress over time. One student (S-4) describes the value of peer assessment:

> "With that peer assessment, we observe each other using the criteria provided by the teacher. For example, when I perform wudhu, my friend watches my movements and lets me know if something isn't quite right, and I do the same for him. That way, I become aware of mistakes I hadn't realized on my own so that I can correct them right away during the next practice session."

Two temporal features distinguished the sessions that teachers and students rated most successful: a segmented demonstration-imitation cycle in place of a single long demonstration, and assessment conditions matched to real worship, using the same artifacts used in teaching. Corrective feedback, delivered during practice and not deferred to the end, threaded through all three phases.

Discussion

Integration as configuration

The demonstration method and concrete media did not co-occur in the lessons observed; they worked as a single configuration. What distinguished stronger practice from weaker was the tightness of coupling at three points: teachers matched the demonstration script to the artifact inventory during planning, kept students' perceptual access aligned with their own modeling during enactment, and used the same artifacts in assessment that students had handled during instruction. The conceptual literature on integrated learning models[41] treats integration as a property of curricular design, the combination of distinct subjects or content domains across a program of study, as when science is linked with mathematics or character education is embedded across the curriculum. The present case identifies a different kind of integration operating at a different unit. What is combined here is a pedagogical method and a physical medium,

[41] Khoruddin, *Integrasi Kurikulum: Konsep Dasar Dan Penerapannya (Curriculum Integration: Basic Concepts and Implementation)*.

and the site of combination is a single lesson. The contribution is therefore conceptual: the coupling of method and medium operates by a logic that the joint design and mutual dependence of a technique and an artifact that the curricular-integration concept was not built to capture.[42]

Similar coupling effects appear elsewhere. Aziz and Islam found that mixed pedagogy in engineering education produced gains only when explicit, analytical, and embodied modes were combined, not when they were placed side by side.[43] Usman and Mahmud report comparable effects when several language skills are nested within a single instructional cycle in Islamic EFL teaching.[44] The fiqh classroom examined here suggests the same logic holds for procedural, embodied religious instruction.

The demonstration-imitation cycle

One pattern stood out above the others. Across the observed lessons, the cycle most consistently associated with sustained engagement and successful practice ran as follows: the teacher performed a single step with the concrete artifact, paused, and had students imitate that step before moving on. This maps onto the observational-learning sequence Bandura describes: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, a sequence that Chen et al.[45] operationalized in higher-education procedural-knowledge research, and that Dreer observed in the transmission of teacher well-being.[46] These populations and domains differ from the fiqh classroom, and the parallel is offered as a theoretical correspondence, not as transported evidence. What the present case adds is an instance of the same sequence in ritual-worship instruction with early adolescents.

Within the limits of a Grade VII attention span, segmentation, not the demonstration as a whole, appeared to support retention and reproduction. Having the artifact in view during this cycle also aligns with Kosmas and Zaphiris, who measured gains in motor performance and motivation when elementary students combined bodily action with

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[42] Trianto, *Model Pembelajaran Terpadu Dalam Teori Dan Praktik (Integrated Learning Models in Theory and Practice)*.
[43] Aziz and Islam, "Impact of Mixed Pedagogy on Engineering Education."
[44] Usman and Mahmud, "Addressing Low Speaking Proficiency in EFL Students: The Impact of Integrated Teaching Strategies in an Islamic Education Setting."
[45] Chen, Liou, and Chen, "Flipping the Procedural Knowledge Learning: A Case Study of Software Learning."
[46] Dreer, "Witnessing Well-Being in Action: Observing Teacher Well-Being during Field Experiences Predicts Student Teacher Well-Being."

tangible objects.[47] Watching and copying a model is one mechanism; anchoring that copying in a physical object is another. Both have been studied independently. This classroom is one of the few settings where researchers have observed them working together.

Conditions of feasibility: an institutional ecology

Teacher skill alone did not sustain the integration described above. Leadership endorsement, material provision, teacher capability, and student receptivity all had to align; where one was absent, the coupling weakened. This aligns with recent Scopus-indexed work on Islamic teacher education, which argues that pedagogical innovation in Indonesian madrasah depends on institutional and curricular scaffolding rather than on individual teachers alone.[48]

Time pressure was the clearest sign of this dependence. Teachers at MTs Al-Irsyad reported that integrated lessons require time budgeting at the planning stage, which the standard fiqh timetable does not provide. Abdul Khalil et al.[49] found the same constraint in problem-based learning for undergraduate fiqh: active-learning methods demand planning time that scaled implementation rarely accommodates. The same pressure appears at the secondary level with demonstration-and-media teaching and at the tertiary level with problem-based learning. That pattern points to a structural feature of how fiqh teaching periods are scheduled across Indonesian Islamic education.

Convergence with Islamic pedagogical tradition

The practice observed at MTs Al-Irsyad also fits a long-standing strand of Islamic pedagogy. The Qur'anic description of the Prophet Muhammad as *uswatun ḥasanah*, a pattern to be observed and followed (QS. Al-Ahzab 33: 21), has long been read by Indonesian scholars as both a moral and a methodological principle.[50] Correct worship,

[47] Kosmas and Zaphiris, "Improving Students' Learning Performance through Technology-Enhanced Embodied Learning: A Four-Year Investigation in Classrooms."
[48] Nadlir et al., "Humanizing Teacher Education for Madrasah Contexts: A Curriculum Model Integrating Ethical Reflection on Socio-Scientific Issues."
[49] Abdul Khalil, Mohd Razif, and Rosele, "Developing Ijtihad Skills for Undergraduate Students through Problem-Based Learning in Fiqh Subjects: Present Practices and the Way Forward."
[50] Syabuddin, Jannah, and Sulaiman, "The Implementation of Character Education on the Tarbiyah and Teachers Training Faculty at the State Islamic University Indonesia (Morality Reinforcement Approach)."

on this reading, is transmitted through observation, imitation, and correction. The hadith *ṣallū kamā ra'aytumūnī uṣallī* ("pray as you have seen me pray") has historically served as a warrant for embodied, modeled instruction in ritual worship.

This is not a claim that the pedagogy used here has doctrinal endorsement. Teachers and students at this site already had a vocabulary for what they were doing: demonstration and imitation as the proper way to transmit ritual knowledge, predating the international literature on observational and embodied learning. That overlap likely explains why both teachers and students readily adopted the approach, and it speaks to recent calls to integrate Islamic pedagogical frameworks with contemporary educational science.[51]

Theoretical and practical contributions

Three theoretical contributions follow. First, the study treats method and media as a configuration, extending the integration concept from the combination of content domains in curricular design to the coupling of a method and a medium within a single lesson. Second, it identifies the demonstration-imitation cycle as a candidate classroom-level mechanism that appears to join observational learning (in the tradition of Bandura, operationalized by Chen et al.,[52] and Dreer,[53] With embodied learning, a mechanism that future experimental or comparative work could test. Third, it places that candidate mechanism inside an institutional ecology of enabling and constraining conditions, adding to the small Scopus-indexed literature on pedagogical reform in Indonesian madrasah.

Three practical implications follow. Fiqh teachers should segment demonstrations into demonstration-imitation cycles and use the same artifacts at assessment that students handled during instruction, a low-cost change that strengthens transfer to worship practice outside school. Time, the most acute constraint, can be partly managed by spreading demonstrations across consecutive periods and by using the school's muṣallā and ablution facilities as authentic learning spaces. Madrasah principals should treat fiqh pedagogy

[51] Khimmataliev et al., "Integrating Islamic Pedagogy and the Sustainable Development Goals in Preparing Future Educators in Uzbekistan."
[52] Y.-H. Guo et al., "Experience and Discussion on Introducing the 'Internet Plus' Classroom Into Teaching Physiological Experimentation," *Frontiers in Education* 7 (2022), https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.713213.
[53] B Dreer, "Witnessing Well-Being in Action: Observing Teacher Well-Being during Field Experiences Predicts Student Teacher Well-Being," *Frontiers in Education* 8 (2023): 967905, https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.967905.

reform as an institutional task: protected timetabling, modest budgets for media, and access to active-learning training together form the minimum support the approach needs. Curriculum designers should specify pedagogy for ritual-worship content at the MTs level.

Limitations

Several limitations apply, and they bear on how confidently the patterns reported here can be read. First, the evidential base is limited: participant observation covered three 45-minute fiqh lessons, a slender basis for describing any pattern as "consistent" or "recurrent." The regularities reported, including the demonstration-imitation cycle, are best read as hypotheses grounded in a small observational sample; they await confirmation across more sessions and more teachers. Second, this is a single-site case study at one private madrasah in Jambi Province. The thick description supports readers' own transferability judgments but does not support statistical generalization to all Indonesian MTs. Third, the data are observational and interview-based, with no standardized measurement of learning outcomes; reported gains in engagement, retention, and performance reflect what participants said and what the researcher observed, rather than psychometric testing. Fourth, the five-student sample cannot adequately represent variation in achievement level and sex; the student perspectives reported here are illustrative, and examining genuine differences by achievement level or sex would require a larger, more systematically sampled group. Fifth, the focus on a single subject (fiqh) and a single grade (Grade VII) limits what can be inferred about other Islamic subjects and developmental stages, even within the same school.

Finally, the researcher's position carries specific risks. As a lecturer at UIN Sultan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, embedded in the regional madrasah network, the researcher had institutional proximity to the site, which may have eased access but could equally have shaped which details drew attention. Participants may have anticipated the researcher's expectations and responded accordingly. Reflexive memoing monitored these effects but cannot fully neutralize them; independent replication, particularly by researchers outside the Jambi network, would help establish the extent to which the findings depend on the researcher's position.

Conclusion

This study examined how the demonstration method and concrete media work together in fiqh instruction for Grade VII students at MTs Al-Irsyad Kuala Jambi. The main finding reframes this pairing from co-occurrence to configuration. Across the observed lessons, what appeared to distinguish stronger practice from the rest was the deliberate coupling of demonstration and artifacts at three points: planning, enactment, and assessment. Within this configuration, one candidate mechanism stood out. In the demonstration-imitation cycle, the teacher modeled a step using the artifact and had students imitate it immediately before moving on. This cycle tracked most consistently when sustained attention and successful practice were present. It appears to function as a classroom version of observational and embodied learning, operating simultaneously in a subject that is both procedural and physical, a combination the literature on Islamic education has rarely examined.

The findings extend the idea of integration from combining content domains in curriculum design to coupling method and medium within a single lesson, and they isolate a candidate mechanism that future comparative or quasi-experimental studies can test. Integrated fiqh instruction depends on more than what one teacher does in the room: timetabling, material provision, teacher skill, and student receptiveness all shape whether it works. The most stringent constraint was the time allocated to active-learning approaches. Other studies report the same constraint for problem-based learning in undergraduate fiqh, suggesting the problem lies in how fiqh periods are scheduled across Indonesian Islamic education.

Four directions for further work follow. Comparative case studies across multiple madrasahs in Jambi and elsewhere could show which parts of this configuration hold up in different institutional settings. Studies that pair observation of the demonstration-imitation cycle with standardized psychomotor and procedural knowledge tests could test the mechanism rather than merely describe it. Design-based research conducted with fiqh teachers could produce planning protocols that fit within the time constraints documented here. Longitudinal studies could track whether ritual competence learned in class carries over into students' actual worship, a question that fiqh research has barely touched, despite being the one that matters most.

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