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## CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL) MODEL IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT MTS AL-ANWAR AND SMP AL-JIHAD

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### Abstrak

Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) berperan penting dalam membentuk pemahaman dan pengamalan nilai Islam oleh siswa. Namun, metode pembelajaran yang masih berbasis hafalan dan ceramah menghambat keterlibatan aktif siswa. Model Pembelajaran Kontekstual (Contextual Teaching and Learning/CTL) dianggap mampu meningkatkan efektivitas PAI dengan menghubungkan konsep keislaman dengan pengalaman nyata. Meskipun telah diterapkan dalam berbagai mata pelajaran, penerapan CTL dalam PAI menghadapi tantangan berbeda di berbagai lingkungan pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis tantangan dan solusi penerapan CTL dalam PAI di dua sekolah Islam dengan latar belakang berbeda, yaitu MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) dan SMP Al Jihad Jakarta Utara (sekolah Islam metropolitan). Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus komparatif, melibatkan wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa di pesantren, tantangan utama adalah dominasi metode hafalan, minimnya bahan ajar berbasis studi kasus, serta pendekatan ceramah yang kurang mendukung pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman. Sementara itu, di sekolah metropolitan, kendala utama mencakup distraksi siswa akibat media sosial, kurangnya keterampilan berpikir kritis, dan kurikulum yang masih berfokus pada ujian. Studi ini menegaskan bahwa keberhasilan penerapan CTL dalam PAI bergantung pada adaptasi strategi pembelajaran yang sesuai dengan lingkungan belajar. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan kurikulum yang lebih fleksibel, bahan ajar berbasis studi kasus, serta pelatihan guru untuk mendukung pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman.

**Kata Kunci :** Model Pembelajaran Kontekstual, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Mts Al-Anwar, SMP Al-Jihad

### ***Abstract***

*Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding and practice of Islamic values. However, conventional teaching methods that rely on memorization and lectures often hinder active student engagement. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is considered a promising model to enhance the effectiveness of PAI by connecting Islamic concepts to real-world experiences. Although CTL has been implemented across various subjects, its application in PAI faces distinct challenges in different educational settings. This study aims to analyze the challenges and solutions of implementing CTL in PAI at two Islamic schools with different backgrounds: MTs Al Anwar (a pesantren/Islamic boarding school) and SMP Al Jihad North Jakarta (a metropolitan Islamic school). A qualitative approach with a comparative case study method was employed, involving interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings indicate that at the pesantren, the primary challenges are the dominance of rote memorization methods, a lack of case study-based teaching materials, and a lecture-based approach that does not support experiential learning. Meanwhile, at the metropolitan school, the main obstacles include student distractions from social media, a lack of critical thinking skills, and a curriculum that remains exam-oriented. To overcome these barriers, teachers at the pesantren have begun to develop experience-based teaching materials and incorporate more discussions. This study confirms that the successful implementation of CTL in PAI depends on adapting teaching strategies to the specific learning environment. Therefore, a more flexible curriculum, case study-based teaching materials, and teacher training are essential to support experience-based learning.*

**Keywords:** *Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Model, Islamic Religious Education (PAI), MTs Al-Anwar, SMP Al-Jihad*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a strategic role in shaping students' character and morality, enabling them to internalize Islamic values in their daily lives.<sup>1</sup> In the learning context, the main challenge lies in connecting Islamic concepts with students' real-life experiences, so that they do not merely understand Islamic teachings theoretically but are also able to apply them in practice. One approach considered effective in bridging the gap between theory and practice is the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model. This approach emphasizes the interconnection between learning materials and students' real-life experiences, making the learning process more meaningful and

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<sup>1</sup> Saichul Anam, "ISLAM, INKLUSI SOSIAL DAN PENDIDIKAN MULTIKULTURAL DALAM PENDIDIKAN," *Istifkar: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2023): 89–105.

applicable.<sup>2</sup> However, although CTL has been applied in various subjects, its implementation in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) still faces a number of challenges that require further investigation.

Islamic education in Indonesia has diverse characteristics according to its demographic and geographical contexts. These differences strongly influence the implementation of learning models. In pesantren-based schools, such as MTs Al Anwar, contextual learning is more easily applied through the practice of worship and the habituation of Islamic values in students' daily lives. The boarding school environment allows students to directly experience the application of Islamic teachings in their everyday activities. However, the main challenges in implementing CTL in pesantren include the dominance of rote memorization, the lack of case-based learning materials, and limited technological resources to support experiential learning. Conversely, in metropolitan Islamic schools such as SMP Al Jihad, the implementation of CTL is more flexible and varied, utilizing digital media and social phenomena as part of the learning process. The challenges in this context include students' lack of focus due to social media distractions, a learning culture that remains oriented toward memorization, and a curriculum that tends to emphasize examinations and academic achievement alone.

Previous studies have examined the effectiveness of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in enhancing students' understanding across various subjects, including Islamic Religious Education. For instance, research on the effectiveness of CTL in improving learning outcomes has been conducted by Rosyidi & Muharor<sup>3</sup> and Nuhuyanan & Seknun<sup>4</sup> which demonstrated the effectiveness of CTL in biology subjects;

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<sup>2</sup> C F Suroyya, "Pengaruh Contextual Teaching and Learning Terhadap Hasil Belajar Pembelajaran Tematik SD Islam Insan Kamil Tuban," *Islamic Elementary Education Journal (IEEJ)* 1, no. 1 (2022): 37–44, [http://karya.brin.go.id/id/eprint/13637/1/Jurnal\\_Camila\\_STAI\\_Al\\_Anwar\\_Sarang\\_2022.pdf](http://karya.brin.go.id/id/eprint/13637/1/Jurnal_Camila_STAI_Al_Anwar_Sarang_2022.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Dedi Rosyidi and Muharor, "THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTEXTUAL LEARNING METHODS AND TECHNOLOGY USE IN TEACHING ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS," *Al-Masail: Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2023): 65–73.

<sup>4</sup> Yuliana Nuhuyanan and M. Faqih Seknun, "Pengaruh Penggunaan Bahan Ajar Biologi Dengan Pendekatan Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Pada Materi Ekosistem Terhadap Hasil Belajar Siswa," *PEDAGOGIC: Indonesian Journal of Science Education and Technology* 3, no. 2 (2023): 107–18, <https://doi.org/10.54373/ijset.v3i2.400>.

however, its implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) remain limited. Both studies indicated that CTL, when integrated with technology, enhances students' understanding of religious concepts in schools. Nevertheless, the limitations of these studies lie in their focus on cognitive achievement, without addressing the affective and spiritual dimensions of students. Furthermore, two studies on the implementation of CTL in schools and madrasahs conducted by Gandes<sup>5</sup> dan Hakim, Irsali, & Watsiqoh.<sup>6</sup> The focus of both studies was on public and urban schools, yet no comparison has been made with pesantren contexts, which possess distinct learning cultures. In addition, there are studies that address the challenges of implementing CTL in Islamic education. For example, Nuryadin highlights the barriers of digitalization in Islamic education, where social media distractions weaken students' focus.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Siswati, Abidin, and Zaldi found that the internalization of values in higher education pesantren is hindered by the dominance of traditional methods, such as lecturing and rote memorization.<sup>8</sup>

Based on the aforementioned studies, research on the implementation of CTL in Islamic Religious Education across two contrasting educational settings—pesantren and metropolitan schools—remains very limited. Most studies have primarily focused on the application of CTL in general education, without taking into account how environmental factors, school policies, and student characteristics influence the effectiveness of this approach in religious learning. Existing CTL research in Islamic Religious Education has been predominantly oriented toward cognitive outcomes, with little emphasis on affective dimensions and religious practices. Moreover, the majority of studies have been conducted

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<sup>5</sup> Theresia Gandes Kusumastuti, "Penggunaan Ctl Dengan Media Youtube Untuk Meingkatkan Keaktifan Dan Hasil Belajar Peserta Didik Kelas Xi Mipa 1 Semester Genap Pada Materi Indikator Asam Basa Di Sma N 1 Wedi Tahun Pelajaran 2021/2022," *WIDYA DIDAKTIKA: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan* 1, no. 2 (2022): 22–34, <https://doi.org/10.54840/juwita.v1i2.64>.

<sup>6</sup> Luqman Hakim, Anfasa Naufal Reza Irsali, and Tsamarah Nabilatul Watsiqoh, "The Innovation of Information and Communication Technology in Contextual Teaching and Learning Models Based PAI Learning," *Progresiva: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 2 (2023): 275–90, <https://doi.org/10.22219/progresiva.v12i02.28525>.

<sup>7</sup> Nuryadin, "Strategi Pendidikan Islam Di Era Digital," *Fitrab Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 3, no. 1 (2017): 209–55, <https://doi.org/10.71305/jmpi.v2i2.27>.

<sup>8</sup> Vialinda Siswati, Zainal Abidin, and Ahmad Zaldi, "Article History Supporting Pesantren-Based Higher Education to Internalize Value Education," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education Studies (IJIIES)* 6, no. 2 (2023): 207–22.

within a single educational context (either general schools or pesantren), thereby providing limited comparative insights. To date, no study has explicitly examined the challenges and strategies employed by teachers in implementing CTL within these two distinct Islamic educational environments, namely pesantren and metropolitan schools.

This study seeks to address this gap by conducting a comparative analysis of CTL implementation in Islamic Religious Education across two different educational contexts, namely MTs Al Anwar as a representation of pesantren and SMP Al Jihad North Jakarta as a metropolitan Islamic school. The primary focus is directed toward identifying the challenges faced by teachers in both settings and the efforts undertaken to overcome them. In addition, this study explores concrete strategies and solutions employed by teachers to ensure more effective contextual learning. Accordingly, this research explicitly seeks to answer the following questions: What challenges arise in the implementation of CTL in Islamic Religious Education? How do teachers develop strategies to address these challenges? And what factors distinguish the effectiveness of CTL implementation between pesantren and metropolitan schools? The comparative approach adopted in this study offers novelty, as such investigations remain rare, while simultaneously providing practical recommendations for the development of CTL-based Islamic Religious Education methods that are adaptive to diverse educational environments. Thus, this study underscores its contribution by presenting a comparative perspective that has not been widely explored, while offering practical insights for advancing CTL-based approaches in Islamic Religious Education.

Furthermore, the differences in CTL implementation across these two educational settings indicate that instructional strategies in Islamic Religious Education cannot be applied uniformly, but rather must be adapted to the characteristics and needs of students in each institution. Therefore, this study aims to identify the challenges encountered in implementing CTL in Islamic Religious Education within pesantren and metropolitan schools, as well as to analyze the solutions adopted by teachers to address these obstacles. By examining the factors that facilitate and hinder CTL implementation, this research is expected to contribute to the development of more effective instructional strategies, ensuring that Islamic Religious Education is not solely oriented toward cognitive outcomes

but also capable of fostering more contextual and applicable religious experiences for students.

## **B. METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a comparative case study method. A qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), particularly within two different educational contexts, namely pesantren and metropolitan Islamic schools. The comparative case study method was utilized to analyze the similarities and differences in CTL implementation across two Islamic schools with distinct environmental characteristics: MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad North Jakarta (metropolitan Islamic school). This case study design enabled the researcher to thoroughly explore the factors influencing CTL implementation, the challenges faced, and the strategies adopted by teachers to overcome these obstacles. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, and were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing

In the data reduction process, information was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, which produced a data display indicating that the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) presents different challenges and solutions in MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad (metropolitan school). To ensure the credibility of the findings, this study employed source triangulation, methodological triangulation, and time triangulation. The triangulation results demonstrate a high level of validity and reliability, as the patterns identified through interviews, observations, and documentation consistently align. Based on these findings, several recommendations were formulated to enhance the effectiveness of CTL implementation in PAI, including the development of teaching materials based on real-life experiences, the improvement of project-based assessment methods, and teacher training programs designed to increase adaptability to students' needs across different educational environments

### C. DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of CTL implementation in Islamic Religious Education at MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad (metropolitan school) reveals both similarities and contextual differences. At MTs Al Anwar, the pesantren environment strongly supports the direct practice of religious values, as students are accustomed to applying Islamic teachings in their daily routines. However, challenges arise from the curriculum's strong orientation toward rote memorization and classical text study, the limited availability of technology and case-based learning resources, and students' reliance on lecture-based methods that constrain the development of critical thinking. To address these issues, teachers integrate religious practices into daily activities, employ case studies based on students' lived experiences such as sharia economic transactions in the pesantren canteen and promote reflective practices through sermon training and writing assignments.

In contrast, SMP Al Jihad benefits from better access to technology and the integration of social and digital phenomena into the learning process, enabling students to relate more easily to the subject matter. Nevertheless, the school also faces challenges, including students' distractions from social media, a curriculum that remains heavily exam-oriented, and persistent reliance on lecture methods that limit the cultivation of critical thinking. Teachers in this setting adopt strategies such as the use of digital media and viral news as case studies, assigning project-based tasks (e.g., creating vlogs on Islamic practices in daily life), and enhancing classroom interaction by connecting Islamic teachings with contemporary social issues.

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge to improve CTL implementation in both contexts. For pesantren, there is a need to balance memorization with discussion and experiential case studies, develop learning materials that bridge classical texts and modern social realities, and provide more intensive training for teachers on contextual learning. For metropolitan schools, recommendations include leveraging technology as a learning aid, promoting student engagement through discussions and community projects rooted in Islamic values, and adopting project-based assessments to

evaluate students' application of religious principles in daily life. These findings emphasize that CTL in Islamic Religious Education must be context-sensitive, adapting to the distinct environments of pesantren and metropolitan schools to ensure that learning outcomes extend beyond cognitive aspects to include affective and practical religious experiences.

Meanwhile, the main challenge in implementing CTL at SMP Al Jihad lies in students' tendency to be more easily distracted by social media and digital culture. The exam-oriented curriculum also limits the exploration of contextual learning. Nevertheless, metropolitan schools have the advantage of greater access to technology, which enables the use of videos, viral news, and other digital media as learning tools. To address these challenges, teachers employ project-based learning strategies, such as assigning vlog production on the application of Islamic teachings in daily life, as well as case-based discussions relevant to students' experiences. Based on the data reduction process, this study presents the key findings regarding the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) across two schools with distinct characteristics, namely MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad (metropolitan Islamic school).

The implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) demonstrates significant variation depending on the institutional setting. This study focuses on two schools with contrasting educational environments, namely MTs Al Anwar, which operates within a pesantren tradition, and SMP Al Jihad, situated in a metropolitan area. Each institution presents unique advantages, challenges, and strategies in applying CTL according to its learning context.

At MTs Al Anwar, the pesantren environment constitutes a major supporting factor, as students (santri) live in a thoroughly Islamic atmosphere on a daily basis. This setting facilitates the integration of religious learning with direct practice, such as ritual worship, social interactions grounded in Islamic values, and other daily activities within the pesantren. Nevertheless, several challenges persist, including the dominance of lecture-based and memorization methods, limited technological resources, and the scarcity of case-based learning materials that stimulate critical thinking. To address these issues, teachers attempt to link theoretical instruction with practical applications. Examples

include sermon (khutbah) training, reflective assignments, and case studies derived from students' lived experiences, such as simulating Islamic economic transactions in the pesantren's canteen. These strategies enhance students' capacity to internalize religious concepts in a more applied and contextual manner.

In contrast, SMP Al Jihad encounters a different set of challenges in implementing CTL. Students are more easily distracted by social media and digital culture, while the curriculum remains largely exam-oriented, leaving limited space for project-based explorations. Furthermore, although classroom methods are comparatively more varied than in pesantren schools, the culture of rote memorization remains prevalent. On the other hand, the metropolitan setting provides a clear advantage in terms of technological accessibility, enabling teachers to integrate videos, viral news, and other digital media as instructional resources. The strategies employed include project-based learning, such as producing vlogs on the application of Islamic values in daily life, as well as discussions rooted in contemporary social phenomena relevant to students' experiences. These approaches allow students to engage more actively in connecting Islamic teachings with modern-day realities.

Overall, the findings suggest that the implementation of CTL in PAI at pesantren schools requires the development of contextual learning materials that bridge classical Islamic texts with contemporary social issues, alongside a balance between memorization and more interactive methods such as discussions and case-based learning. In metropolitan schools, however, the emphasis should be on strengthening student engagement in project-based activities rooted in Islamic values, harnessing technology in innovative ways, and developing assessment models that measure the practical application of Islamic teachings in daily life. Consequently, CTL holds significant potential as a pedagogical approach that becomes more effective and relevant when carefully adapted to the specific contexts and characteristics of different educational environments.<sup>9</sup>

## D. RESULT

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<sup>9</sup> Muftiatul Husna, Uin Syarif, and Hidayatullah Jakarta, "Strategi Pembelajaran Berbasis Digital Dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Pembelajaran," *Muftiatul Husna* 166, no. 2 (2024): 166–78.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings, this study employed triangulation techniques, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), who define triangulation as a strategy for enhancing data credibility by comparing information obtained from multiple sources, methods, and periods of data collection. Three forms of triangulation were applied in this research: source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation.<sup>10</sup>

Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from teachers of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), school leaders, and students. The findings revealed a consistent pattern in the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) across the two schools. PAI teachers in pesantren environments such as MTs Al Anwar emphasized direct religious practices as the core of CTL, while teachers in metropolitan schools such as SMP Al Jihad relied more on digital technology and issue-based discussions. Principals and vice principals for curriculum confirmed these tendencies by highlighting differences in institutional policy: pesantren remained strongly oriented toward memorization and classical texts, whereas metropolitan schools allowed more flexibility in the adoption of innovative methods. Students' experiences also aligned with this pattern, as pesantren students reported being accustomed to experiential religious practices, while metropolitan students found CTL more meaningful when connected to their digital and social realities.

Technique triangulation was achieved by comparing the results of interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interviews with teachers, school leaders, and students consistently pointed to curricular rigidity as a major barrier to CTL, while students expressed greater enthusiasm for project-based and case-based learning compared to traditional lectures. Classroom observations supported these statements, revealing that teachers in SMP Al Jihad integrated videos and social media-based case studies, while teachers in MTs Al Anwar prioritized direct religious practices. Document analysis, particularly of syllabi and lesson plans, showed similar trends: although lesson

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<sup>10</sup> M Win Afgan Wiyanda Vera Nurfaqriani, Muhammad Wahyu Ilhami1 Arivan Mahendra, Rusdy Abdullah Sirodj, "Triangulasi Data Dalam Analisis Data Kualitatif Wiyanda," *Jurnal Pembelajaran Dan Pengembangan Matematika* 4, no. 2 (2024): 13–21, <https://doi.org/10.36733/pemantik.v4i2.9412>.

plans in SMP Al Jihad indicated a shift toward interactive methods, evaluation models were still predominantly exam-oriented, while in MTs Al Anwar CTL had yet to be explicitly institutionalized in the formal curriculum.<sup>11</sup>

Time triangulation was implemented by conducting data collection at three different stages: the early phase (June–July 2024), mid-phase (August–September 2024), and final phase (October 2024). The consistency of data across these phases further reinforced the reliability of the findings. In the early stage, teacher and school leader interviews indicated that both schools had adopted CTL but through differing approaches. Mid-phase observations confirmed that students were more engaged in project-based activities than in traditional lectures. By the final stage, document reviews demonstrated that while there had been minor pedagogical adjustments by individual teachers, there were no significant changes in official curriculum policies.<sup>12</sup>

The results of technique triangulation, which compared data from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, revealed consistent patterns across both schools. Interviews with teachers and school leaders indicated that the curriculum in both contexts remains strongly oriented toward memorization and examinations, which restricts the full implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). This finding was reinforced by classroom observations, which showed that students responded more enthusiastically to discussions and case-based activities than to traditional lectures, yet these interactive methods had not been fully integrated into daily instruction. Document analysis, including syllabi and lesson plans, further confirmed this trend: although there were indications of interactive teaching strategies, no formal policies explicitly mandated or institutionalized the application of CTL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI).

Time triangulation, conducted through data collection at different stages of the research (early, middle, and final phases), also demonstrated a high degree of consistency.

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<sup>11</sup> Dedi Susanto, Risnita, and M. Syahran Jailani, “Teknik Pemeriksaan Keabsahan Data Dalam Penelitian Ilmiah,” *Jurnal QOSIM Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial & Humaniora* 1, no. 1 (2023): 53–61, <https://doi.org/10.61104/jq.v1i1.60>.

<sup>12</sup> Wahyu Ginanjar Wandi Syahrul Mu’min, Ai Rohayani, “Penerapan Pendekatan Contextual Teaching and Epistemic : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan,” *Epistemic : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan* 4, no. 1 (2025): 90–107.

The information obtained during initial interviews with teachers and principals was in alignment with later classroom observations and lesson plan reviews. While some adjustments were observed during the research process—such as teachers' gradual adaptation to project-based tasks and contextual approaches—these changes were primarily pedagogical and did not reflect significant shifts in the schools' curricular policies.

The overall validation process confirmed that the data obtained in this study possess strong validity and reliability, as evidence gathered from diverse sources, techniques, and timeframes pointed to coherent findings. The results emphasize that the implementation of CTL in PAI must be carefully adapted to the unique context of each institution, taking into account environmental factors, teacher and student readiness, and the extent of policy support provided by the school. To achieve greater effectiveness, innovations are needed in teaching methods, the development of context-based learning materials, and targeted teacher training that equips educators to integrate CTL more systematically into PAI instruction.

The findings further illustrate significant differences in the contextual application of CTL between MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad (metropolitan). The pesantren environment provides strong support for the direct practice of Islamic teachings in students' daily lives; however, this context remains limited in fostering pedagogical innovation and critical thinking skills. In contrast, students in the metropolitan setting are more deeply immersed in digital culture and social media, making CTL approaches more effective when linked to contemporary social phenomena. These insights highlight that while both contexts present unique opportunities and challenges, the central barrier to optimal CTL implementation lies in the continued dominance of a curriculum that prioritizes memorization and standardized examinations.

Although each school demonstrates distinct strengths in implementing Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), the challenges they face remain substantial. In the pesantren context, the primary obstacles lie in the dominance of memorization and lecture-based methods, coupled with the limited availability of case-based learning materials. By contrast, in the metropolitan school, the greatest challenges emerge from students' susceptibility to

distractions posed by social media and the persistent emphasis on examination-oriented curricula. To address these barriers, teachers in the pesantren have sought to integrate learning with students' daily religious activities, while teachers in the metropolitan school have employed digital media and contemporary social phenomena as instructional tools.

These findings underscore that the application of CTL in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) must be carefully adapted to the specific characteristics of each educational context. Pesantren institutions need to place greater emphasis on balancing memorization with discussions and case-based learning derived from real-life experiences, whereas metropolitan schools should focus on optimizing the use of technology and integrating socially oriented projects rooted in Islamic values.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, innovation in teaching materials, assessment methods, and teacher training emerges as a key factor in enhancing the effectiveness of contextual learning across both types of schools.

#### **E. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN MTS AL-ANWAR AND SMP AL-JIHAD**

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is strongly influenced by the educational environment. The differences in characteristics between MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad (metropolitan school) significantly affect the methods of implementation, the challenges encountered, and the strategies employed by teachers in adapting CTL. Based on data analysis using the Miles and Huberman model, it was found that although both institutions strive to apply CTL, there are notable variations in methods and the overall effectiveness of contextual-based learning.

At MTs Al Anwar, a pesantren-based institution, the CTL approach is more readily integrated through practices of worship and the daily routines of the students. The boarding school environment enables learners to directly embody Islamic teachings in their everyday lives, thereby strengthening the connection between theoretical knowledge and practical religious experiences.<sup>14</sup> However, this study also found that the

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<sup>13</sup> Fahmi, *Manajemen Pendidikan Pengembangan Madrasah Dan Profesional Guru Pada Lembaga Pendidikan Islam, Paper Knowledge . Toward a Media History of Documents*, vol. 3, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> Marzuki Abu Bakr, *Pesantren : Perubahan, Aktualisasi Dan Pengembangan*, n.d.

implementation of CTL in pesantren still encounters several challenges. Among these are a curriculum that remains heavily oriented toward memorization and the study of classical texts, the limited availability of case-based instructional materials, and the predominance of lecture methods that tend to be one-directional. Constraints in the use of technology also pose a significant barrier, as audiovisual media and internet-based resources are rarely utilized in the learning process. As a response, teachers attempt to integrate instruction with students' daily activities, employ case studies drawn from the lived experiences of the santri, and enhance exercises in delivering sermons as well as reflective practices of worship. These strategies are intended to foster more applicable understanding, ensuring that students' learning is not confined merely to rote memorization.

SMP Al Jihad Jakarta Utara, as an Islamic school situated in a metropolitan area, implements CTL primarily through the utilization of digital media, the incorporation of social phenomena, and discussions centered on contemporary issues.<sup>15</sup> Students in metropolitan environments are more exposed to digital culture and global information; therefore, contextual-based Islamic Education (PAI) must be connected to contemporary realities such as digital ethics, interreligious tolerance, and various social phenomena within urban communities.<sup>16</sup> However, the main challenges encountered include students' lack of focus due to distractions from social media, a curriculum that remains predominantly exam-oriented, and limited critical thinking skills resulting from the persistence of rote memorization and lecture-based teaching methods. In response to these challenges, teachers at SMP Al Jihad have adopted strategies such as integrating digital media into lessons, assigning project-based tasks, and conducting case study-based discussions to enhance students' understanding of the relevance of Islamic teachings in modern life.

The validity and reliability of the findings were ensured through triangulation of sources, methods, and time. Source triangulation compared information from teachers, school leaders, and students, all of which revealed consistent patterns in distinguishing the

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<sup>15</sup> Wandi Syahrul Mu'min, Ai Rohayani, "Penerapan Pendekatan Contextual Teaching and Epistemic : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan."

<sup>16</sup> Sumiati Sumiati, "Penerapan Model Contextual Teaching And Learning (CTL) Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Dan Hasil Belajar Siswa," *Ideguru: Jurnal Karya Ilmiah Guru* 8, no. 3 (2023): 611–19, <https://doi.org/10.51169/ideguru.v8i3.546>.

strengths and challenges of CTL implementation in both schools. Method triangulation, which involved in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, further reinforced the finding that CTL implementation continues to face limitations due to curricula and teaching methods that are not yet fully interactive. Meanwhile, time triangulation confirmed that data collected at the beginning, middle, and end of the study remained consistent, thereby affirming that the research findings are credible and accurately represent the actual conditions in both schools.

Based on the results of data analysis, this study affirms that the success of implementing CTL in Islamic Education (PAI) is highly dependent on the school context, teachers' readiness to adapt instructional methods, and the extent to which school policies support experience-based approaches. In the pesantren context, there is a pressing need for innovation in instructional materials to make them more applicable, as well as for enhancing students' critical thinking skills through the use of discussion and case-based learning methods.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, in metropolitan schools, more interactive teaching strategies are required to sustain the engagement of students who are accustomed to digital culture. In addition, the development of project-based evaluation models is essential to assess both the understanding and the practical application of Islamic values in students' daily lives.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the implementation of CTL in Islamic Religious Education cannot be carried out uniformly; rather, it must be adapted to the specific needs and characteristics of each school in order to be more effective in enhancing students' understanding and practice of Islamic teachings.

## F. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study on the challenges and solutions in implementing the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at MTs Al Anwar (pesantren) and SMP Al Jihad Jakarta Utara (Islamic metropolitan school), it is evident that CTL practices are strongly influenced by the unique

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<sup>17</sup> Siti Sarifah Masrur, Surawan, *Revolusi Pembelajaran Keagamaan Di Madrasah*, 2024.

<sup>18</sup> Amir Hamzah, Irma Soraya, and Mohammad Kurjum, "Desain Bahan Ajar Bermuatan Nilai-Nilai Islam Melalui Model Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek: Kajian Teoritis Dan Praktis," *TAJDID: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman Dan Kemanusiaan* 9, no. 1 (2025): 227–45, <https://doi.org/10.52266/tajid.v9i1.4302>.

characteristics of each educational environment. The pesantren setting, with its disciplined religious practices, naturally supports experience-based learning within students' daily lives. However, the implementation of CTL in pesantren remains constrained by a curriculum heavily oriented toward memorization, a lack of case-based teaching materials, and the continued dominance of lecture-centered methods. In contrast, the metropolitan school demonstrates more flexible and innovative CTL practices through the use of digital media and social phenomena as teaching resources. Nevertheless, this environment faces its own challenges, including students' reduced focus due to social media distractions and the persistence of exam-oriented, memorization-based curricula.

This study concludes that the effective implementation of CTL in PAI requires adaptation to the contextual realities of each school. In pesantren, the development of case-based teaching materials and strategies that strengthen students' critical thinking through discussion and contextual exploration are essential. Meanwhile, metropolitan schools require more interactive learning strategies to sustain student engagement in a digital culture, as well as the adoption of project-based assessment models to evaluate the understanding and application of Islamic values in daily life. By tailoring CTL approaches to the needs and characteristics of each educational context, PAI can be delivered more effectively, fostering deeper comprehension, lived experiences, and meaningful application of Islamic values among students.

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