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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Nurturing students' emotional intelligence in Islamic religious education: Integrating mindfulness and cooperative learning approach in teaching

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Abstract: This study investigates how the integration of mindfulness-based learning and cooperative learning fosters students' emotional intelligence in Islamic Religious Education in Madrasah Aliyah. The research adopts a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore teachers' instructional practices, students' learning experiences, and the role of reflective and collaborative learning environments in developing emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal competence. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 21 participants, and classroom observations, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that mindfulness practices enhance students' self-awareness and emotional regulation through reflective activities, while cooperative learning promotes empathy and social interaction through collaborative engagement. The study also highlights that reflective and supportive classroom environments significantly contribute to the development of emotional intelligence. Furthermore, pedagogical factors such as teacher modeling, classroom management, and the integration of Islamic values strengthen the effectiveness of these approaches. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative pedagogical framework that connects mindfulness, cooperative learning, and emotional intelligence within Islamic educational contexts. The findings imply that incorporating reflective and collaborative pedagogies can support holistic education by integrating cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions in contemporary Islamic education.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, cooperative learning, mindfulness learning, Islamic education, madrasah teacher.

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1. Introduction

The development of students' emotional intelligence has become an increasingly important focus in contemporary educational research, particularly in relation to the cultivation of social, emotional, and moral competencies required for learning in the twenty-first century (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2021; Keefer, Parker, & Saklofske, 2022). Emotional intelligence refers to individuals' ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively in themselves and others, which significantly influences students' academic achievement, social relationships, and psychological well-being (MacCann et al., 2020; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2021). Recent studies indicate that emotional intelligence contributes to improved classroom engagement, collaborative interaction, and positive learning outcomes among students (Durlak et al., 2022; Jones & Kahn, 2021; Hidayat, & Abdillah, 2022). Consequently, scholars have increasingly emphasized the integration of emotional intelligence development into educational practices as part of broader socio-emotional learning initiatives (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Keefer et al., 2022).

In the context of Islamic education, the development of emotional intelligence is closely associated with the cultivation of moral character, empathy, and spiritual awareness among learners (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). Islamic educational philosophy emphasizes the holistic development of learners' intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions through pedagogical practices that nurture ethical conduct and social responsibility (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). Concepts such as *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification), *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character), and *tarbiyah ruhiyyah* (spiritual development) highlight the importance of emotional and moral maturity in Islamic pedagogy (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020). Therefore, integrating emotional intelligence development into Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is consistent with the broader objectives of Islamic education in forming balanced individuals who possess both intellectual competence and ethical integrity (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022).

Recent educational research highlights the growing relevance of mindfulness-based learning approaches in supporting students' emotional and psychological development (Roeser et al., 2022; Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2021). Mindfulness refers to the capacity to maintain conscious awareness of present experiences with openness and non-judgmental attention, which has been shown to enhance emotional regulation and self-awareness (Klingbeil et al., 2022; Roeser et al., 2022). Studies indicate that mindfulness-based learning practices can improve students' emotional stability, empathy, and attentional control in educational settings (Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2021; Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Henriksen, Mishra, & Fisser, 2021). Furthermore, mindfulness interventions have been found to strengthen students' resilience, reduce stress, and promote positive interpersonal relationships within classrooms (Roeser et al., 2022; Klingbeil et al., 2022). These findings suggest that mindfulness-based pedagogy has significant potential to support the development of emotional intelligence among students. In addition to mindfulness-based learning, cooperative learning approaches have also been widely recognized as effective strategies for promoting social and emotional development in educational contexts (Johnson & Johnson, 2021; Gillies, 2021). Cooperative learning emphasizes collaborative interaction among students in small groups where learners work together to achieve shared learning goals (Slavin, 2021; Gillies, 2021). Research demonstrates that cooperative learning environments foster empathy, communication skills, emotional awareness, and interpersonal competence among students (Johnson & Johnson, 2021; Slavin, 2021). By engaging students in collaborative problem-solving activities, cooperative learning promotes positive interdependence, mutual support, and constructive social interaction in classroom environments (Gillies, 2021; Slavin, 2021).

Despite the growing body of research on emotional intelligence, mindfulness-based learning, and cooperative learning in general educational contexts, empirical studies that examine the integration of these pedagogical approaches within Islamic Religious Education in madrasah settings remain relatively limited (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). Madrasahs represent a distinctive educational subsystem in Indonesia that integrates religious education with national curriculum standards (Azra, Afrianty, & Hefner, 2021; Lukens-Bull, 2021). However, previous studies suggest that teaching practices in madrasah classrooms often remain dominated by teacher-centered approaches that emphasize cognitive knowledge transmission rather than socio-emotional development (Tan, 2020; Lukens-Bull, 2021). Such instructional patterns may limit opportunities for students to develop emotional intelligence and collaborative competencies that are essential for holistic learning (Abdullah, 2022; Sahin, 2020).

This situation reveals a significant pedagogical challenge for contemporary Islamic education in Indonesia, particularly in integrating emotional intelligence development into classroom learning processes (Tan, 2020; Halstead, 2021). While Islamic educational philosophy strongly emphasizes moral and emotional development, classroom implementation often focuses primarily on memorization and content mastery rather than experiential learning approaches (Sahin, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). As a result, innovative pedagogical models are required to bridge the gap between Islamic educational values and contemporary educational practices that promote socio-emotional learning (Halstead, 2021; Tan, 2020). From a scholarly perspective, previous studies have generally examined mindfulness-based learning and cooperative learning as separate pedagogical approaches, while limited research has explored their integrated implementation in Islamic Religious Education contexts (Roeser et al., 2022; Gillies, 2021). Furthermore, empirical investigations addressing the relationship between mindfulness practices, cooperative learning environments, and emotional intelligence development in madrasah education remain scarce in international educational literature (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). This situation indicates a significant research gap, particularly in understanding how reflective and collaborative pedagogical approaches can be integrated to nurture students' emotional intelligence in Islamic educational environments.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its integrative examination of mindfulness-based learning and cooperative learning approaches in nurturing students' emotional intelligence within Islamic Religious Education in Madrasah Aliyah. By combining reflective mindfulness practices with collaborative learning environments, this research proposes a pedagogical framework that aligns contemporary educational strategies with Islamic educational values related to self-awareness, empathy, and moral responsibility (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020). Such integration contributes to the development of innovative teaching practices that support both emotional and spiritual dimensions of learning in Islamic education (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022).

Based on these considerations, the objective of this study is to investigate how the integration of mindfulness and cooperative learning approaches can nurture students' emotional intelligence in Madrasah Aliyah learning. Specifically, this research focuses on: (1) how do teachers integrate mindfulness practices and cooperative learning strategies in Islamic Religious Education classrooms in Madrasah Aliyah? (2) how do students experience mindfulness-based and cooperative learning activities in developing emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal competence during Islamic Religious Education learning? (3) in what ways do reflective (mindfulness) and collaborative (cooperative learning) classroom environments contribute to nurturing students' emotional intelligence in Madrasah Aliyah? (4) what pedagogical factors support or hinder the effective implementation of mindfulness and cooperative learning approaches in fostering students' emotional intelligence in Islamic Religious Education?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Mindfulness learning in Islamic educational contexts

Mindfulness learning has increasingly gained attention in contemporary educational research because of its potential to enhance students' emotional awareness, self-regulation, and reflective thinking during the learning process (Roeser et al., 2022; Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2021). Mindfulness refers to the ability to maintain conscious awareness of present experiences with openness and non-judgmental attention, enabling individuals to observe their thoughts and emotions without impulsive reactions (Klingbeil et al., 2022; Kabat-Zinn, 2021). In educational settings, mindfulness-based pedagogical practices encourage students to develop attentional focus, emotional balance, and reflective awareness, which contribute significantly to socio-emotional learning outcomes (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Durlak et al., 2022). Empirical studies demonstrate that mindfulness interventions can improve emotional regulation, empathy, and psychological resilience among students, thereby supporting the development of emotional intelligence in classroom environments (Roeser et al., 2022; Keefer, Parker, & Saklofske, 2022). Within Islamic educational traditions, reflective awareness promoted through mindfulness learning resonates strongly with spiritual practices that emphasize self-reflection and inner consciousness. Islamic pedagogy highlights the concept of *muhasabah* (self-evaluation) and *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul), which encourage individuals to reflect upon their emotions, intentions, and actions in order to achieve moral and spiritual growth (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). These concepts align with the

principles of mindfulness that promote conscious awareness of internal emotional states and ethical self-regulation (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). In this sense, mindfulness-based learning can be understood as a pedagogical approach that supports the cultivation of reflective awareness consistent with Islamic spiritual values.

Furthermore, integrating mindfulness practices into Islamic Religious Education can strengthen students' emotional intelligence by encouraging reflective learning and moral consciousness. Through reflective activities such as contemplative observation, emotional reflection, and mindful attention, students develop greater awareness of their emotional experiences and interpersonal relationships (Roeser et al., 2022; Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2021). Such reflective learning processes are consistent with the broader objectives of Islamic education, which aim to cultivate balanced individuals who possess intellectual competence, emotional maturity, and spiritual awareness (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020). Consequently, mindfulness learning provides an innovative pedagogical pathway for nurturing both emotional intelligence and spiritual development in Islamic educational contexts.

2.2. Cooperative learning in Islamic educational pedagogy

Cooperative learning is widely recognized as an effective instructional approach for promoting collaborative interaction, social engagement, and shared responsibility among students in classroom environments (Johnson & Johnson, 2021; Gillies, 2021). This pedagogical approach involves structured group activities in which students work together to accomplish shared learning objectives while supporting one another's academic and social development (Slavin, 2021; Gillies, 2021). Grounded in social constructivist learning theory, cooperative learning emphasizes the importance of dialogue, collaboration, and collective knowledge construction among learners (Johnson & Johnson, 2021; Slavin, 2021). Through cooperative learning activities, students engage in meaningful interaction that encourages communication skills, mutual respect, and collaborative problem-solving. Research suggests that cooperative learning environments significantly contribute to students' socio-emotional development, particularly in terms of empathy, interpersonal communication, and emotional awareness (Gillies, 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). Students who participate in cooperative learning groups learn to appreciate diverse perspectives, manage interpersonal conflicts constructively, and develop supportive relationships with their peers (Johnson & Johnson, 2021; Slavin, 2021). These social interactions provide opportunities for students to develop emotional competencies that are closely associated with emotional intelligence. As a result, cooperative learning has been widely recognized as an effective pedagogical strategy for fostering both academic achievement and socio-emotional development.

In the context of Islamic education, cooperative learning aligns with pedagogical values rooted in the principles of *shura* (consultation) and *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation), which emphasize collaboration and collective responsibility in knowledge-seeking processes (Halstead, 2021; Tan, 2020). Islamic educational traditions encourage students to engage in cooperative inquiry and shared learning experiences as part of broader efforts to cultivate social harmony and ethical responsibility within the learning community (Sahin, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). By implementing cooperative learning strategies in madrasah classrooms, educators can promote values such as empathy, mutual respect, and collaborative engagement among students. Therefore, cooperative learning not only enhances academic learning but also supports the development of moral and social competencies consistent with Islamic educational values.

2.3. Emotional intelligence in Islamic religious education

Emotional intelligence has become a central concept in contemporary educational research due to its strong influence on students' academic success, interpersonal relationships, and psychological well-being (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2021; MacCann et al., 2020). Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and manage emotions effectively in oneself and others (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). In educational contexts, emotionally intelligent students demonstrate greater emotional regulation, improved communication skills, and stronger collaborative relationships with peers and teachers (Jones & Kahn, 2021; Schonert-Reichl, 2022). These competencies contribute significantly to positive classroom

climates and effective learning processes. Scholars identify several key dimensions of emotional intelligence relevant to educational settings, including emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social competence (Mayer et al., 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). Emotional awareness enables students to recognize and understand their emotional states, while emotional regulation helps them manage stress and conflict effectively (MacCann et al., 2020; Brackett et al., 2021). Empathy allows students to understand and respond to the emotional experiences of others, which strengthens interpersonal relationships and collaborative learning (Jones & Kahn, 2021; Durlak et al., 2022). Together, these competencies enable students to participate constructively in social interactions and cooperative learning environments.

Within Islamic education, emotional intelligence is closely associated with the development of *akhlaq al-karimah* (noble character), which emphasizes virtues such as patience, compassion, empathy, humility, and self-control (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). Islamic pedagogy aims to cultivate individuals who possess emotional maturity and moral integrity through educational processes that integrate intellectual learning with ethical development (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). These values correspond closely with the competencies associated with emotional intelligence in contemporary educational psychology. Therefore, nurturing emotional intelligence within Islamic Religious Education contributes to the formation of ethically responsible individuals who demonstrate emotional awareness, empathy, and moral sensitivity in their social interactions.

3. Method

3.1. Research design

This study employed a qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach to explore how mindfulness and cooperative learning approaches nurture students' emotional intelligence in Islamic Religious Education in Madrasah Aliyah. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for investigating complex educational phenomena because it enables researchers to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations within their natural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The phenomenological approach focuses on understanding individuals lived experiences related to a particular phenomenon, allowing researchers to capture deeper insights into participants' perspectives and meanings (Van Manen, 2017; Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019). In this study, phenomenology was considered appropriate because the research aims to explore teachers' instructional practices and students' learning experiences in implementing mindfulness and cooperative learning in Islamic Religious Education.

The phenomenological design allows the researcher to examine how participants interpret and experience the integration of reflective mindfulness practices and collaborative learning environments in developing emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal competence among students (Moustakas, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Through this approach, the study seeks to reveal the essence of how mindfulness and cooperative learning practices are implemented in madrasah classrooms and how these pedagogical strategies contribute to nurturing students' emotional intelligence.

3.2. Research setting and participants

The study was conducted in several Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic senior secondary schools) in Indonesia. Madrasah Aliyah represents an important educational institution that integrates national curriculum standards with Islamic educational values and religious instruction. These institutions play a crucial role in shaping students' moral character, emotional maturity, and religious understanding (Tan, 2020; Lukens-Bull, 2021). Therefore, examining teaching practices within this context provides valuable insights into the integration of contemporary pedagogical approaches within Islamic education. Participants in this study consisted of Islamic Religious Education teachers who were actively involved in classroom learning activities that incorporated cooperative learning and reflective learning practices. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, which is commonly employed in qualitative research to identify individuals who possess relevant knowledge and experiences related to the research phenomenon (Palinkas et al., 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The selection

criteria included teachers who had experience implementing collaborative learning strategies and reflective learning activities in Islamic Religious Education classrooms. In total, 21 participants were involved in the study, consisting of teachers and students who provided rich and diverse perspectives regarding the learning process.

3.3. Data collection

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews**,** classroom observations, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive insights into participants' experiences. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to explore participants' perceptions while maintaining flexibility to probe deeper into emerging themes (Kallio et al., 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore their experiences in implementing mindfulness practices and cooperative learning activities during Islamic Religious Education lessons. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was recorded with participants' consent to ensure accuracy in data transcription and analysis. Interview questions focused on several aspects, including teachers' instructional strategies, students' emotional experiences during collaborative learning activities, and reflective practices that promote emotional awareness. In addition to interviews, classroom observations were conducted to examine how mindfulness and cooperative learning activities were implemented during classroom instruction. Observational data allowed the researcher to capture real-time interactions between teachers and students as well as collaborative learning processes occurring within classroom environments (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Document analysis was also used to support the research findings by examining lesson plans, instructional materials, and classroom activity records related to Islamic Religious Education teaching practices. Document analysis helps provide contextual understanding of instructional strategies and pedagogical practices implemented in educational settings (Bowen, 2017). The combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis enabled the researcher to obtain comprehensive data and strengthen the credibility of the findings.

3.4. Data analysis

Data collected from interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed using thematic analysis, which allows researchers to identify patterns and themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis was chosen because it provides a systematic approach to interpreting qualitative data while maintaining flexibility in identifying emerging themes related to the research phenomenon. The data analysis process followed several stages. First, the researcher transcribed all interview recordings and carefully reviewed the data to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences. Second, initial coding was conducted to identify significant statements and key ideas related to mindfulness learning, cooperative learning, and emotional intelligence development. Third, similar codes were grouped into broader thematic categories that reflected patterns in participants' experiences. Finally, the themes were interpreted to construct a comprehensive description of how mindfulness and cooperative learning approaches contribute to nurturing students' emotional intelligence in Islamic Religious Education.

4. Result

4.1. Teachers' instructional practices in integrating mindfulness and cooperative learning

The first theme emerging from the thematic analysis concerns teachers' instructional practices in integrating mindfulness reflection and cooperative learning strategies within Islamic Religious Education classes in Madrasah Aliyah. Interview findings obtained from teachers, supported by classroom observations, indicate that teachers deliberately design learning activities that combine reflective awareness with collaborative engagement in order to nurture students' emotional intelligence and interpersonal competence. Teachers explained that the integration of mindfulness and cooperative learning enables students not only to understand Islamic teachings cognitively but also to internalize moral values through reflective thinking and social interaction.

Observational data further revealed that teachers frequently structured classroom activities to include reflective moments, group discussions, and collaborative problem-solving tasks, thereby creating learning environments that encourage emotional awareness and respectful communication among students.

Teachers reported that mindfulness practices are often introduced at the beginning of lessons as a way to help students regulate their emotions and prepare mentally for learning activities. One teacher described how reflective awareness is incorporated into daily classroom routines:

> "At the beginning of the lesson, I usually ask students to pause for a moment and reflect on their intentions for learning. I encourage them to calm their minds and focus on the values we will discuss in the lesson. This short reflection helps students become more attentive and emotionally prepared for group discussions. When students are emotionally calm, they interact with their classmates more respectfully and thoughtfully." (T1).

Classroom observations confirmed that these reflective moments were regularly implemented as part of instructional practice. During one observed session, the teacher invited students to close their eyes briefly and reflect on how Islamic values such as patience and compassion could guide their behavior during collaborative learning activities. Following this reflective exercise, students were asked to form small groups and discuss ethical scenarios related to everyday life, demonstrating active engagement and respectful interaction with their peers. Another teacher explained that cooperative learning activities play an essential role in helping students connect Islamic teachings with real-life social experiences. According to this participant, group discussions encourage students to explore diverse perspectives and develop empathy toward others.

> "When students work in cooperative groups, they are exposed to many different opinions and experiences. This process teaches them how to listen carefully and respect the views of others. In Islamic Religious Education, this is very important because moral values such as respect, empathy, and humility are not only learned from textbooks but also from interacting with others." (T3).

Observational findings supported this perspective by showing that group learning tasks often required students to analyze ethical dilemmas based on Islamic teachings. During these discussions, students exchanged ideas and negotiated interpretations of moral concepts such as honesty, justice, and compassion. These collaborative dialogues appeared to encourage students to reflect on both the emotional and ethical implications of their responses. Teachers also emphasized that reflective questioning plays a significant role in integrating mindfulness with cooperative learning. One teacher explained that reflective questions help students connect emotional awareness with ethical reasoning:

> "When students discuss a particular issue, I often ask them questions that encourage reflection, such as 'How would you feel if you were in that situation?' or 'Why do you think someone might react emotionally in this circumstance?' These questions help students understand that emotions influence human behavior, and they also encourage empathy." (T6).

Observations during classroom sessions indicated that such reflective questioning frequently guided students' discussions. Teachers often paused group activities to invite students to reflect on the emotional dimensions of the topic being discussed, thereby deepening students' understanding of both the academic content and its ethical implications. Another teacher highlighted that mindfulness reflection helps students maintain emotional balance during cooperative learning interactions:

> "Sometimes students become too eager to defend their opinions during group discussions, which can create tension among group members. Reflective pauses help them step back and think more carefully about how they communicate with others." (T9).

Classroom observations confirmed that teachers occasionally introduced short reflective pauses during discussions when conversations became emotionally intense. These pauses allowed students to reconsider their responses and continue the discussion in a calmer and more constructive manner. Teachers further explained that cooperative learning encourages students to develop mutual responsibility and emotional support within their groups. One participant noted:

> "In cooperative learning, students realize that their success depends on the success of their group members. This encourages them to support each other academically and emotionally. I often observe students helping their peers understand difficult concepts or encouraging them to share their ideas." (T12).

Observational data revealed several instances where students provided assistance and encouragement to classmates during group activities. These supportive interactions appeared to strengthen collaborative relationships and create a sense of shared responsibility within the classroom. Another teacher reflected on the broader pedagogical significance of integrating mindfulness and cooperative learning:

> "The combination of reflection and collaboration allows students to learn not only about Islamic teachings but also about how to practice those values in their daily interactions. When students reflect on their emotions and then engage in cooperative dialogue, they begin to understand how Islamic moral principles apply to real-life situations." (T16).

Overall, the findings from teacher interviews and classroom observations indicate that instructional practices integrating mindfulness reflection and cooperative learning create meaningful opportunities for nurturing students' emotional intelligence in Islamic Religious Education. Through reflective awareness, collaborative dialogue, and guided ethical discussions, teachers facilitate learning experiences that help students develop emotional regulation, empathy, and respectful communication. These pedagogical practices demonstrate that combining reflective mindfulness with cooperative learning can transform classroom instruction into a holistic educational process that integrates cognitive understanding, emotional awareness, and moral development.

4.2. Students' learning experiences in developing emotional intelligence

The second theme emerging from the thematic analysis concerns students' learning experiences in developing emotional intelligence through the integration of mindfulness reflection and cooperative learning activities in Islamic Religious Education classes. Interview data obtained from teachers, supported by classroom observations, reveal that students' emotional intelligence gradually develops through learning environments that encourage reflection, emotional awareness, and collaborative interaction among peers. Teachers reported that when students are given opportunities to pause, reflect on their emotions, and engage in meaningful dialogue with classmates, they begin to demonstrate greater empathy, patience, and interpersonal sensitivity during the learning process. Observational findings further confirmed that reflective activities conducted at the beginning of lessons often created a calmer classroom atmosphere, allowing students to participate in discussions with greater emotional awareness and attentiveness toward others' perspectives. Several teachers explained that students' emotional development becomes visible when reflective practices are consistently integrated into classroom instruction. One teacher described how students gradually develop emotional awareness through guided reflection during learning activities:

> "When students are encouraged to pause and reflect before starting the lesson, they become more aware of their emotional state. I often notice that students who initially appear distracted or restless become calmer after reflection. This calmness influences how they interact with their peers during group discussions. They become more patient when listening to others' opinions and more thoughtful in expressing their own ideas. Over time, I observe that students begin to recognize their emotions and manage them more effectively." (T2).

Observational data collected during classroom sessions also revealed that reflective practices helped students maintain emotional balance during cooperative learning activities. In several observed lessons, teachers initiated short reflective moments before group discussions, asking students to consider how Islamic values such as patience, compassion, and humility could guide their interactions with peers. During these sessions, students appeared more attentive and respectful while participating in group conversations. Their responses to classmates' opinions often included phrases such as "I understand your perspective" or "That is an interesting point," indicating a growing awareness of others' emotional experiences. Another teacher emphasized that cooperative learning activities allow students to experience emotional intelligence development through direct social interaction with peers:

> "Group discussions provide students with real opportunities to practice empathy and emotional awareness. When they collaborate with classmates who have different opinions or backgrounds, they must learn how to listen carefully and respond respectfully. Sometimes disagreements occur during discussions, but these moments actually help students learn how to manage their emotions and communicate more constructively." (T4).

Classroom observations confirmed that cooperative learning activities frequently required students to negotiate different perspectives while completing group assignments related to Islamic ethical issues. In one observed lesson, students worked in small groups to analyze scenarios involving honesty, fairness, and

compassion. During the discussion, several students expressed differing viewpoints about how the characters in the scenario should respond to ethical challenges. Rather than dismissing alternative perspectives, group members engaged in thoughtful dialogue, indicating that collaborative interaction encouraged students to reflect on both emotional and moral dimensions of the topic. Teachers also reported that reflective questioning during discussions plays an important role in helping students connect emotional awareness with Islamic moral teachings. One teacher explained:

> "During discussions I often ask students questions that encourage them to reflect on emotions, such as 'How would you feel if you were in that situation?' or 'Why do you think this person reacted in that way?' These questions encourage students to think beyond the factual aspects of the lesson and consider the emotional experiences of others." (T7).

These reflective questions were frequently observed during classroom interactions. Students were often invited to consider how emotions such as compassion, patience, or forgiveness might influence decision-making in everyday life situations. Through these reflective discussions, students demonstrated increasing ability to articulate emotional perspectives, suggesting that emotional awareness was gradually becoming integrated into their learning experiences. Another teacher observed that cooperative learning environments encourage students to support each other emotionally during classroom activities:

> "When students work in groups, they begin to recognize when their classmates feel nervous, confused, or hesitant to speak. Often other group members will encourage them or help explain the topic again. These small acts of support demonstrate empathy and emotional understanding among students." (T10).

Observational findings supported this statement. During group discussions, students were frequently seen assisting peers who struggled to express their ideas. Some students gently prompted quieter classmates to share their thoughts, while others offered clarification or encouragement. These interactions suggested that cooperative learning environments create opportunities for students to practice emotional sensitivity and mutual support. Teachers further explained that mindfulness reflection helps students manage emotional responses during challenging discussions. One participant noted:

> "Sometimes students become frustrated when their opinions are challenged, but reflective practices help them pause and reconsider their reactions. Instead of responding emotionally, they learn to think carefully about their words and listen more attentively to others." (T13).

This observation was evident in classroom interactions where students occasionally disagreed about interpretations of ethical scenarios. Rather than escalating into conflict, many discussions remained respectful and constructive, indicating that reflective learning practices encouraged students to regulate emotional reactions. Another teacher emphasized that students' emotional intelligence becomes more visible over time as reflective and collaborative learning practices continue to be implemented:

> "At the beginning of the semester, some students were reluctant to share their thoughts or listen to others' perspectives. However, after several weeks of reflective and cooperative learning activities, I noticed significant changes in their behavior. They became more confident in expressing their ideas while also showing greater respect toward their classmates." (T16).

Overall, the findings from interviews and classroom observations suggest that students' learning experiences in mindfulness-based and cooperative learning environments contribute significantly to the development of emotional intelligence. Through reflective awareness, collaborative dialogue, and supportive classroom interaction, students gradually develop emotional competencies such as empathy, patience, emotional regulation, and interpersonal sensitivity. These experiences indicate that integrating mindfulness reflection and cooperative learning within Islamic Religious Education provides meaningful opportunities for nurturing students' emotional intelligence while simultaneously reinforcing Islamic ethical values such as compassion, respect, and mutual understanding.

4.3. Reflective and collaborative learning environments in nurturing emotional awareness and empathy

The third theme emerging from the thematic analysis emphasizes the critical role of reflective and collaborative learning environments in nurturing students' emotional awareness and empathy within Islamic

Religious Education classrooms. Based on interview data collected from teachers and supported by classroom observations, it is evident that the creation of a psychologically safe, reflective, and socially interactive learning environment enables students to express their thoughts, regulate their emotions, and develop a deeper understanding of others' perspectives. Teachers consistently highlighted that when classroom environments are intentionally structured to promote reflection and collaboration, students become more open, empathetic, and respectful in their interactions with peers, thereby fostering emotional intelligence as an integral component of the learning process.

Teachers reported that reflective learning environments encourage students to become more aware of their own emotional states as well as the emotional experiences of others. One teacher explained how reflective practices shape students' emotional awareness:

> "When I create space for reflection in the classroom, students begin to think more deeply about their feelings and reactions. They become more aware of how their emotions influence their behavior during discussions. Over time, I notice that students become more patient and considerate when interacting with their classmates, because they understand that everyone has different emotional experiences." (T2).

Classroom observations confirmed that reflective activities were frequently embedded in instructional practices, particularly at the beginning and during transitions between learning activities. During one observed session, the teacher asked students to reflect on how they would feel if they were placed in a moral dilemma involving honesty and fairness. This reflective exercise prompted students to pause, think deeply, and respond thoughtfully during subsequent group discussions, demonstrating increased emotional awareness. Another teacher emphasized that collaborative learning environments provide essential opportunities for students to develop empathy through social interaction and shared experiences:

> "In cooperative learning, students are not only exchanging ideas but also learning to understand each other's feelings. When students listen to their peers' experiences, they begin to realize that everyone has different perspectives shaped by their own lives. This process helps them develop empathy and respect for others." (T4).

Observational data supported this claim by showing that students frequently engaged in meaningful dialogue during group discussions, where they listened attentively to one another and responded with sensitivity to differing viewpoints. In several instances, students acknowledged their peers' ideas before expressing their own opinions, indicating a growing awareness of respectful communication and emotional consideration. Teachers also highlighted that a supportive and non-judgmental classroom atmosphere is essential for fostering emotional expression and empathy among students. One participant explained:

> "Students need to feel safe in the classroom in order to express their thoughts and emotions honestly. If they feel judged or criticized, they will hesitate to participate in discussions. That is why I always encourage respectful communication and remind students to appreciate different opinions." (T7).

Classroom observations revealed that teachers actively facilitated such an environment by establishing clear norms for respectful interaction. For example, teachers frequently reminded students to listen without interrupting, to respond politely, and to avoid negative judgments during discussions. These practices contributed to the creation of a classroom climate where students felt comfortable sharing their ideas and emotions. Another teacher explained that reflective dialogue plays a key role in connecting emotional awareness with interpersonal understanding:

> "During discussions, I encourage students to not only focus on the content of what is being said but also to think about how their classmates might feel. This helps them develop empathy and become more sensitive in their communication." (T10).

Observational findings demonstrated that such reflective dialogue often led to deeper and more meaningful discussions. Students were observed asking clarifying questions, expressing agreement or appreciation for others' perspectives, and demonstrating active listening behaviors, all of which are indicators of empathetic engagement. Teachers further reported that collaborative learning environments encourage students to practice emotional support and mutual understanding within their peer groups. One participant noted:

> "In group work, students often help each other, especially when someone is struggling to express their ideas. This creates a sense of togetherness and emotional support among students." (T13).

This observation was supported by classroom data showing that students frequently encouraged quieter group members to participate, offered assistance when peers encountered difficulties, and provided positive feedback during discussions. These interactions suggest that collaborative learning environments foster not only academic engagement but also emotional connection among students. Another teacher reflected on the long-term impact of reflective and collaborative learning environments on students' emotional development:

> "Over time, I see that students become more aware of their behavior and how it affects others. They start to think before they speak and consider whether their words might hurt someone's feelings. This is an important aspect of emotional intelligence that develops through reflection and collaboration." (T16).

Observations across multiple sessions confirmed that students demonstrated increasing levels of emotional maturity, particularly in their ability to manage disagreements and maintain respectful dialogue during discussions. Finally, teachers emphasized that integrating Islamic values into reflective and collaborative learning environments strengthens students' emotional awareness and empathy. One teacher explained:

> "When we connect reflective activities with Islamic teachings about compassion, patience, and respect, students begin to understand that these values are not only theoretical but must be practiced in their daily interactions. This helps them develop both emotional intelligence and moral character." (T19).

Overall, the findings indicate that reflective and collaborative learning environments play a crucial role in nurturing students' emotional awareness and empathy in Islamic Religious Education. Through structured reflection, supportive classroom climates, and meaningful peer interaction, students develop the ability to understand their own emotions, appreciate others' perspectives, and engage in respectful and empathetic communication. These results suggest that the integration of reflective mindfulness practices and cooperative learning environments provides a powerful pedagogical framework for fostering emotional intelligence within the context of Islamic education.

4.4. Pedagogical factors supporting the implementation of mindfulness and cooperative learning

The fourth theme emerging from the thematic analysis concerns the pedagogical factors that support the effective implementation of mindfulness and cooperative learning approaches in Islamic Religious Education classrooms in Madrasah Aliyah. Based on in-depth interviews with teachers and supported by classroom observations, the findings indicate that successful implementation depends on several interrelated factors, including teachers' pedagogical competence, their ability to model emotional awareness, the integration of Islamic values, classroom management strategies, and the creation of a supportive learning environment. Teachers emphasized that these factors are not isolated but interact dynamically in shaping how mindfulness and cooperative learning practices are enacted in real classroom contexts.

One of the most significant factors identified by participants is the role of teachers as facilitators and role models of emotional awareness and reflective behavior. Teachers reported that their own attitudes, communication styles, and emotional expressions strongly influence students' behavior during classroom interaction. One teacher explained:

> "As a teacher, I realize that students observe not only what I teach but also how I behave. If I respond calmly and respectfully during discussions, students tend to imitate that behavior. Therefore, I try to demonstrate patience, empathy, and self-control in my interactions with students so they can learn these values directly." (T1).

Classroom observations confirmed that teachers consistently modeled respectful communication by listening attentively to students' responses, acknowledging their ideas, and providing constructive feedback. In observed sessions, teachers avoided interrupting students and instead encouraged them to elaborate on their thoughts, thereby creating a respectful and emotionally supportive classroom atmosphere. Another important pedagogical factor identified in the study is teachers' ability to design structured learning activities that effectively integrate mindfulness and cooperative learning. Teachers explained that careful planning is necessary to ensure that reflective practices and group activities are aligned with learning objectives. One participant stated:

> "Integrating mindfulness and cooperative learning requires careful lesson planning. I need to think about when to include reflective moments and how to organize group discussions so that students remain engaged and focused on both the academic content and their emotional experiences." (T4).

Observational data showed that teachers often structured lessons into distinct phases, including reflective opening activities, collaborative group discussions, and reflective closing sessions. This structured approach allowed students to move seamlessly between individual reflection and social interaction, thereby reinforcing both cognitive and emotional learning processes. Teachers also emphasized the importance of classroom management in supporting the implementation of these pedagogical approaches. Effective management strategies were considered essential for maintaining a positive learning environment and ensuring that cooperative activities remain productive. One teacher explained:

> "In cooperative learning, it is important to establish clear rules and expectations so that students know how to interact respectfully. Without clear guidelines, group discussions can become chaotic or dominated by certain students." (T7).

Classroom observations supported this finding, as teachers frequently reminded students of discussion norms such as listening without interruption, respecting different opinions, and sharing speaking opportunities equally among group members. These practices helped create a structured and inclusive learning environment that supported both collaboration and emotional development. Another key factor highlighted by teachers is the integration of Islamic values into mindfulness and cooperative learning activities. Participants explained that connecting reflective practices with Islamic teachings enhances the meaningfulness of learning and strengthens students' moral and emotional development. One teacher stated:

> "When mindfulness activities are connected with Islamic values such as patience (*sabr*), compassion (*rahmah*), and respect, students understand that these practices are not only part of learning but also part of their religious identity. This makes the learning experience more meaningful for them." (T10).

Observations confirmed that teachers frequently linked classroom discussions to Islamic ethical principles, encouraging students to reflect on how these values should guide their behavior in real-life situations. This integration appeared to deepen students' engagement and reinforce the connection between emotional intelligence and moral development. Teachers further identified students' readiness and participation as important factors influencing the effectiveness of mindfulness and cooperative learning. Some participants noted that not all students initially feel comfortable engaging in reflective activities or group discussions. One teacher explained:

> "At the beginning, some students are hesitant to express their thoughts or reflect on their emotions. However, as they become more familiar with the learning process, they gradually become more confident and open." (T13).

Classroom observations supported this statement, showing that students' participation increased over time as they became more accustomed to reflective and collaborative learning practices. Students who were initially passive began to contribute more actively to discussions and demonstrate greater confidence in expressing their ideas. Another pedagogical factor identified in the study is the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive classroom climate. Teachers emphasized that students are more likely to engage in reflective and cooperative learning when they feel safe and respected. One participant stated:

> "Students need to feel that their opinions are valued and that they will not be judged for expressing their thoughts. When the classroom environment is supportive, students are more willing to participate and share their experiences." (T16).

Observational findings indicated that teachers actively fostered such an environment by encouraging positive feedback, acknowledging students' contributions, and addressing conflicts in a constructive manner. These practices contributed to the development of trust and mutual respect among students. Teachers also highlighted the importance of continuous reflection and evaluation of their teaching practices as a factor supporting effective implementation. One teacher explained:

> "After each lesson, I reflect on what worked well and what needs improvement. This helps me refine my approach and better integrate mindfulness and cooperative learning in future lessons." (T18).

Finally, teachers emphasized that the integration of mindfulness and cooperative learning is most effective when it is consistently applied across different learning activities rather than treated as a one-time strategy. One participant concluded:

> "These approaches need to become part of the classroom culture. When students regularly practice reflection and collaboration, they gradually develop emotional awareness and empathy as part of their everyday behavior." (T21).

Overall, the findings indicate that the successful implementation of mindfulness and cooperative learning in Islamic Religious Education is influenced by a combination of pedagogical factors, including teachers' role modeling, instructional design, classroom management, integration of Islamic values, student readiness, and the creation of a supportive learning environment. These factors work together to create meaningful learning experiences that nurture students' emotional intelligence and moral development in Madrasah Aliyah.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the integration of mindfulness and cooperative learning creates a transformative pedagogical framework that significantly enhances students' emotional intelligence within Islamic Religious Education contexts (Roeser et al., 2022; Gillies, 2021). This result confirms that reflective awareness and collaborative interaction are not isolated pedagogical practices but mutually reinforcing processes that contribute to holistic student development (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Durlak et al., 2022). In contemporary Islamic education, such integration aligns with the concept of *tarbiyah*, which emphasizes the balanced development of cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of learners (Sahin, 2020; Tambak, Sukenti, & Firdaus, 2024; Halstead, 2021). The findings further suggest that emotional intelligence is nurtured not only through instructional content but also through structured learning experiences that engage students in reflection and social interaction (Keefer et al., 2022; Jones & Kahn, 2021). This supports recent scholarship arguing that socio-emotional learning must be embedded within pedagogical practices rather than treated as an additional component of the curriculum (Brackett et al., 2021; Durlak et al., 2022). In the context of Islamic education, such an approach reflects the integration of knowledge (*ilm*) and character (*akhlaq*), which are central to the philosophy of holistic education (Tan, 2020; Yasin et al., 2025; Abdullah, 2022). Therefore, the findings contribute to contemporary debates on how Islamic education can remain relevant by incorporating innovative pedagogical approaches that foster both intellectual and emotional development (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020).

The results related to teachers' instructional practices indicate that mindfulness-based reflection plays a crucial role in fostering students' emotional awareness and self-regulation during learning activities (Roeser et al., 2022; Klingbeil et al., 2022). Teachers who implemented reflective pauses and guided emotional reflection enabled students to regulate their emotions more effectively during classroom interactions (Zenner, Herrnleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). This finding aligns with contemporary research suggesting that mindfulness practices enhance students' capacity for emotional regulation, attentional control, and reflective thinking (Roeser et al., 2022; Muhajir et al., 2025; Schonert-Reichl, 2022). Within Islamic educational traditions, such reflective practices resonate with the concept of *muhasabah*, which encourages individuals to engage in continuous self-evaluation and moral reflection (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). The integration of mindfulness in Islamic Religious Education thus represents a contextual adaptation of reflective practices rooted in Islamic spirituality (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). Furthermore, this finding reinforces the argument that modern pedagogical approaches can be harmonized with Islamic values without compromising their authenticity (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020). Consequently, mindfulness-based learning can be understood as a pedagogical bridge between contemporary educational psychology and Islamic moral philosophy (Roeser et al., 2022; Tan, 2020).

The findings also reveal that cooperative learning significantly contributes to the development of empathy and interpersonal competence among students (Gillies, 2021; Tambak & Sukenti, 2024; Abdullah et al., 2025; Rasyidi et al., 2025; Slavin, 2021). Through structured group interactions, students were able to engage in dialogue, negotiate meaning, and develop mutual understanding of diverse perspectives (Johnson & Johnson, 2021; Gillies, 2021). This supports existing research indicating that cooperative learning environments promote social interaction, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving skills (Slavin, 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). In the context of Islamic education, these practices reflect the principles of *shura* (consultation) and *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation), which emphasize collective decision-making and social responsibility (Sahin, 2020; Gusrianto et al., 2025; Halstead, 2021). The study therefore highlights that cooperative learning is not only pedagogically

effective but also culturally and religiously relevant within Islamic educational settings (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). Moreover, the development of empathy through collaborative interaction aligns with the broader objectives of Islamic education in cultivating compassionate and socially responsible individuals (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020). This finding suggests that cooperative learning provides a practical mechanism for translating Islamic ethical values into everyday classroom practices (Gillies, 2021; Tan, 2020).

Another important finding concerns the role of reflective and collaborative learning environments in shaping students' emotional awareness and empathy (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Tambak et al., 2022; Durlak et al., 2022). The study demonstrates that when students are placed in supportive environments that encourage reflection and respectful dialogue, they are more likely to develop emotional sensitivity and interpersonal understanding (Jones & Kahn, 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). This finding is consistent with research emphasizing that classroom climate plays a critical role in fostering socio-emotional learning outcomes (Brackett et al., 2021; Durlak et al., 2022). In Islamic education, such environments reflect the concept of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and the importance of maintaining harmonious relationships within the learning community (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). The findings further suggest that emotional intelligence development is facilitated by pedagogical environments that integrate reflection, dialogue, and ethical engagement (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Tan, 2020). This reinforces the view that learning environments must be intentionally designed to support both cognitive and emotional development (Jones & Kahn, 2021; Tambak & Sukenti, 2020; Keefer et al., 2022). Therefore, reflective and collaborative environments represent a key component of effective Islamic pedagogy in contemporary educational contexts (Halstead, 2021; Abdullah, 2022).

The study also highlights the importance of pedagogical factors such as teacher modeling, classroom management, and the integration of Islamic values in supporting the implementation of mindfulness and cooperative learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Avalos, 2021). Teachers who demonstrated empathy, patience, and respectful communication were able to create learning environments that encouraged similar behaviors among students (Brackett et al., 2021; Keefer et al., 2022). This finding aligns with research emphasizing that teachers play a central role in shaping students' socio-emotional development through both instruction and modeling (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Tambak & Sukenti, 2024). In Islamic education, teachers are viewed not only as knowledge transmitters but also as moral exemplars who guide students' character development (*uswah hasanah*) (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). The integration of Islamic values into pedagogical practices further enhances the relevance and effectiveness of learning experiences (Tan, 2020; Abdullah, 2022; Zins, & Elias, 2021). This finding underscores the importance of aligning instructional practices with cultural and religious contexts in order to maximize their impact on students' development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Halstead, 2021). Consequently, teacher professionalism and ethical commitment are essential for the successful implementation of innovative pedagogical approaches in Islamic education (Avalos, 2021; Sahin, 2020).

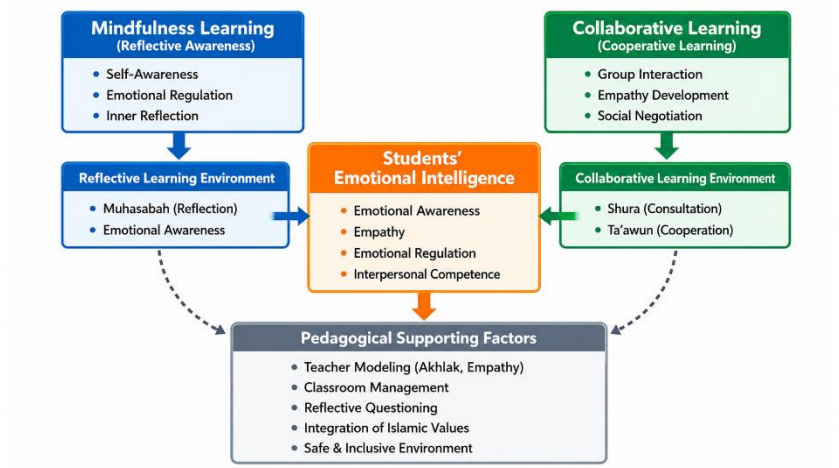

Figure 1: An integrative model of nurturing students' emotional intelligence through mindfulness and cooperative learning in Islamic religious education

Figure 1 illustrates the integrative pedagogical model derived from the findings of this study, highlighting the interaction between mindfulness-based reflective practices and cooperative learning environments in fostering students' emotional intelligence within Islamic Religious Education. The model demonstrates that mindfulness learning contributes to reflective awareness and emotional regulation, while cooperative learning promotes empathy and interpersonal competence through collaborative interaction. These processes are further strengthened by pedagogical supporting factors, including teacher modeling, classroom management, and the integration of Islamic values such as *muhasabah*, *shura*, and *ta'awun*.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that the integration of mindfulness and cooperative learning contributes to the development of holistic education that encompasses cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions (Roeser et al., 2022; Durlak et al., 2022). This aligns with contemporary educational frameworks that emphasize the importance of educating the whole person rather than focusing solely on academic achievement (Schonert-Reichl, 2022; Sukenti & Tambak, 2023; Chapakiya et al., 2025; Keefer et al., 2022). In Islamic education, this holistic approach reflects the concept of *insan kamil* (the complete human being), which emphasizes the integration of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development (Sahin, 2020; Halstead, 2021). The findings therefore support the argument that innovative pedagogical approaches can enhance the relevance of Islamic education in addressing contemporary educational challenges (Tan, 2020; Tambak & Sukenti, 2020; Abdullah, 2022). Moreover, the integration of emotional intelligence into Islamic Religious Education contributes to the development of students who are not only knowledgeable but also emotionally mature and ethically responsible (Brackett et al., 2021; Sukenti & Fauzan, 2024; Keefer et al., 2022). This reinforces the need for educational reforms that prioritize holistic development in both secular and religious educational contexts (Durlak et al., 2022; Halstead, 2021). Therefore, the study contributes to ongoing discussions about the transformation of Islamic education in the twenty-first century (Sahin, 2020; Tan, 2020; Niemiec, Rashid, & Spinella, 2020).

Finally, the findings of this study provide important implications for the future development of Islamic education, particularly in relation to the integration of contemporary pedagogical approaches with traditional educational values (Halstead, 2021; Sukenti & Tambak, 2025; Tan, 2020; Cavanagh, & Vogt, 2022). The study demonstrates that mindfulness and cooperative learning can be effectively adapted to Islamic educational contexts, thereby enhancing students' emotional intelligence and moral development (Roeser et al., 2022; Gillies, 2021). This suggests that Islamic education has the potential to evolve by incorporating evidence-based pedagogical practices while maintaining its philosophical foundations (Sahin, 2020; Sukenti et al., 2025; Abdullah et al., 2025). Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of teacher training and professional development in supporting the implementation of innovative teaching strategies (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Avalos, 2021). By equipping teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to integrate mindfulness and cooperative learning, educational institutions can enhance the quality of teaching and learning in madrasah settings (Brackett et al., 2021; Fischer, Malycha, & Schafmann, 2022; Keefer et al., 2022). Ultimately, this study contributes to the advancement of Islamic education by providing a pedagogical framework that integrates emotional intelligence development with Islamic values and contemporary educational practices (Halstead, 2021; Sahin, 2020).

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that the integration of mindfulness-based learning and cooperative learning in Islamic Religious Education plays a significant role in fostering students' emotional intelligence, particularly in enhancing emotional awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal competence. The findings demonstrate that teachers' instructional practices, which combine reflective awareness with collaborative learning activities, create meaningful learning experiences that support both emotional and moral development. Reflective and collaborative classroom environments further strengthen this process by encouraging respectful interaction, dialogue, and ethical engagement among students. This study lies in its integrative pedagogical framework that bridges mindfulness and cooperative learning within Islamic educational contexts, linking contemporary pedagogical approaches with Islamic concepts such as *muhasabah*, *shura*, and *akhlaq al-karimah*, thereby contributing to the development of holistic and contextually relevant Islamic education. However, this study is limited by its qualitative scope and its focus on a specific context of Madrasah Aliyah in Indonesia, which

may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research is recommended to incorporate broader contexts, longitudinal designs, and quantitative measurements to strengthen empirical validation. Despite these limitations, the study offers important theoretical and practical implications by proposing an integrative model that supports holistic education through the alignment of cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Practically, it highlights the need for teacher professional development, curriculum innovation, and policy support to integrate reflective and collaborative pedagogies within Islamic education. Ultimately, this study contributes to the transformation of Islamic education by promoting a balanced approach that prepares students not only intellectually but also emotionally and ethically for contemporary societal challenges.

Author Contribution Statement

Contributions of the authors in this article: Umi Khusnul Miratunisa, and Suwarnee Mohd Solah, contributed as concepts, drafters, analyzers, interpreter and revising of the article; Al-Alawi Hisham Abdullah Ahmed Abdulrahman, contributed as data analyzers and interpreters; Ade Imelda Frimayanti, and Kiki Cahya Muslimah, as the drafter of the manuscript and critically revising the article. All authors agree to take responsibility for all aspects of this work.

Disclosure of Interests

We have no conflict of interest to declare.

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