

IMPLEMENTATION OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING MODEL IN DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING (EVALUATION STUDY AT MAN 9 EAST JAKARTA)

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Abstract

The development of 21st century education demands that students have critical thinking skills to face various complex social and moral issues, including in the learning of Akidah Akhlak which has tended to be oriented towards mastering normative concepts rather than developing analytical, problem-solving, and argumentative skills. This study aims to evaluate the implementation of the collaborative learning model of the Learning Together type in the Akidah Akhlak subject for class X at MAN 9 East Jakarta based on the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model, analyze how the implementation facilitates the development of critical thinking for students, and identify supporting and inhibiting factors for its implementation. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of Learning Together has taken place in accordance with the principles of collaborative learning and is able to develop students' analytical, problem-solving, and argumentative skills through a case study of discrimination, although it still faces constraints such as time constraints and unequal participation among students. This study concludes that the success of developing critical thinking is influenced by the interaction between input readiness, process consistency, and madrasa contextual support.

Keywords: CIPP Evaluation, Collaborative Learning, Critical Thinking



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INTRODUCTION

The advancement of science and digital transformation in the 21st century has significantly changed the way students interact with information. Ease of access to various sources of knowledge does not necessarily translate into the ability to select and evaluate the accuracy of that information (Susanto, 2024). This situation places critical thinking skills as a fundamental competency that students must possess to be able to act rationally amidst the complexity of social issues. The Independent Curriculum policy reinforces this orientation through student-centered learning principles and the concept of Deep Learning, which demands meaningful understanding, not simply rote mastery of material (Zhang, 2025).

The subject of Aqidah and Akhlak has a strategic position in this framework because it is not only oriented towards normative religious understanding, but also towards the ability of students to connect Islamic values with the realities of everyday life. (Taridi, 2024) Issues such as intolerance, bullying, social media ethics, and declining social awareness are phenomena that require analytical and reflective skills based on Islamic teachings, not just a textual understanding of concepts. These characteristics make Akidah Akhlak an appropriate space for fostering students' critical thinking skills contextually (Cui, 2024).

Critical thinking ability is conceptually understood as a complex cognitive skill, encompassing the ability to interpret information, analyze problems, evaluate evidence, draw conclusions, provide explanations, and self-regulate one's own thinking processes. Facione, as reviewed by Luo, (2024), formulated six main indicators of critical thinking, namely interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation Xia, (2022) strengthen the framework by showing that the indicators can be operationalized in real life in the classroom learning process, so that critical thinking skills are not just theoretical constructs, but can be observed and developed through appropriate learning designs.

Collaborative learning is known as a theoretically relevant approach to developing critical thinking skills. Interaction between students in groups allows for the exchange of ideas, the testing of arguments, and the formation of shared understanding, rather than passively receiving information from the teacher Thamrin, (2024) explains that collaborative learning is based on social constructivism, constructivism, social learning, and cooperative learning theory, which places social interaction at the heart of the knowledge construction process. This understanding emphasizes that group dynamics are not merely complementary social activities but rather mechanisms that directly stimulate the development of students' thinking skills.

Learning Together is a type of collaborative learning that has quite clear operational characteristics, namely an emphasis on positive interdependence, individual responsibility within the group, and shared reflection on the learning process Tong, (2022) in English learning Package C shows that the implementation of Learning Together has an influence on student learning outcomes, while Chang, (2024) found a similar pattern in economics learning at the high school level. These findings demonstrate that this model empirically has the potential to create more participatory learning than conventional, one-way learning.

Empirical evidence regarding the relationship between collaborative learning and critical thinking skills has also been found in various other subject contexts Zhang, (2025) found a significant difference in critical thinking abilities between students who received STSE-based collaborative learning and students in the comparison class Al-Quran, (2025) also showed that students' collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity skills were in the good category and improved through problem-based learning. These two findings reinforce the

understanding that a learning environment that encourages interaction and collaborative problem-solving is a crucial supporting factor for the development of students' higher-order thinking skills.

Most research on collaborative learning, including Learning Together, focuses on measuring learning outcomes such as improved grades, motivation, or social skills. Studies on how the model actually works in the classroom, including discussion dynamics, interaction patterns between students, and how students construct and defend arguments, remain relatively limited. This disparity in research focus has left a limited understanding of the true mechanisms behind the success or failure of collaborative learning implementation.

Research that specifically examines the Learning Together type, such as that conducted Abel, (2025) as well as Sinrungtam, (2023), limited to learning outcomes in general subjects such as English and Economics. The relationship of this model to the development of critical thinking skills, particularly in subjects containing religious values such as Aqidah and Akhlak, has not been the focus of separate studies. This gap indicates that the potential of Learning Together in fostering critical thinking skills in the context of Islamic education remains understudied.

Research on collaborative learning in Islamic education also tends to be conducted on Islamic Religious Education subjects in general or at the elementary and junior high school levels, as seen in the study Lu, (2023) which examines the Jigsaw Learning Together model in Akidah Akhlak, but with an influence-oriented approach, not an implementation process. Studies specifically targeting the Madrasah Aliyah level, with its distinct student characteristics and 21st-century competency demands, are still rare. The limited scope of this previous research opens up space for studies that focus more on the Madrasah Aliyah context.

Ideally, learning program evaluation should assess not only the final outcome but also the context, input, process, and product aspects comprehensively to determine the alignment between design and implementation in the field. The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam provides a systematic framework for assessing an educational program from the planning stage to achieving outcomes, allowing for comprehensive identification of supporting and inhibiting factors in program implementation. The application of this evaluation framework to the implementation of Learning Together, particularly in relation to the development of critical thinking, has not been widely implemented, so information regarding the model's complete implementation is not yet available (Zhai, 2024).

Preliminary observations at MAN 9 East Jakarta revealed a gap between the 21st-century competency demands that the madrasah aims to achieve and the ongoing classroom learning practices. The learning process for Akidah Akhlak in a number of materials is still dominated by lectures, Q&A sessions, and individual assignments, while opportunities for students to engage in in-depth discussions, provide rebuttals, and solve problems collaboratively have not been optimal. This field condition has not been systematically verified through evaluative studies, so it is not yet known with certainty the extent to which the implementation of Learning Together if implemented is truly capable of facilitating the development of students' critical thinking skills in the madrasah context.

The gap between 21st-century competency demands and learning conditions that are still oriented towards one-way delivery of material demonstrates the need for studies that can capture the implementation of collaborative learning holistically, not just from the perspective of

learning outcomes. A program evaluation approach is deemed appropriate because it can trace the alignment between the Learning Together learning design and its implementation in the classroom, while also identifying factors that support and hinder the process. The information generated from this type of evaluation provides an important basis for teachers and madrasas to continuously improve learning (Lee, 2024).

The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model was chosen as the analytical framework because it provides a comprehensive assessment structure, encompassing environmental conditions and learning needs (context), teacher readiness and learning tools (input), the dynamics of classroom learning implementation (process), and students' critical thinking skills (product). This framework allows researchers to examine not only whether Learning Together has an impact, but also how and why that impact occurs or does not occur, something that has not been widely uncovered by previous studies that tend to stop at measuring influence or correlation (Yoshany, 2025).

MAN 9 East Jakarta was chosen as the research location because this madrasah has demonstrated a commitment to developing 4C competency-based learning through literacy programs and project-based learning, thus having a relevant environment to study the application of collaborative learning in more depth (Tanglumlert, 2025). This study aims to evaluate the implementation of the collaborative learning model Learning Together in the subject of Akidah Akhlak for class X based on the aspects of context, input, process, and product, while also analyzing how this implementation facilitates the development of students' analytical, problem-solving, and argumentative skills. The results of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for teachers and madrasas in designing more participatory Akidah Akhlak learning and capable of forming students who think critically according to the demands of 21st-century education (Syam, 2025).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model evaluation study method to examine the implementation of the Learning Together collaborative learning model in developing students' critical thinking skills in the Aqidah Akhlak subject at MAN 9 East Jakarta. The qualitative approach was chosen because of its ability to explore educational phenomena holistically through an in-depth understanding of the experiences and meanings constructed by participants in their natural context (Pan, 2023). The evaluation focused on four components: context, input, process, and product, ensuring that the assessment did not stop at the final result but rather explored the entire implementation process. The research was conducted from April to June 2026 at MAN 9 Jakarta, Jl. H. Dogol No. 54, Pondok Bambu, Duren Sawit, East Jakarta. This location was chosen due to the availability of data access, the relevance of the phenomenon, and the full support of the madrasah.

Research Target/Subject

The subjects of this study included grade X students of MAN 9 Jakarta in the 2025/2026 academic year who participated in Akidah Akhlak learning using the Learning Together model, Akidah Akhlak subject teachers, the principal, the deputy head of curriculum, and official madrasah documents as supporting data. Students and teachers became the main informants because they were directly involved in the implementation of learning, while the principal and the deputy head of curriculum were involved to obtain an overview of the policy and institutional

context. The research objects covered three things, namely the implementation of the Learning Together model, the development of students' critical thinking skills in the aspects of analysis, problem solving, and argumentation, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. The determination of informants was carried out purposively by considering direct involvement and the richness of information that could be provided. Teachers and active students became key informants, while the principal and the deputy head of curriculum acted as supporting informants to strengthen data triangulation.

Research Procedure

The research procedure was carried out through four interconnected stages. The pre-fieldwork stage included the preparation of research instruments, purposive selection of informants, and obtaining permits from MAN 9 Jakarta. The fieldwork stage included observation of the learning process, in-depth interviews with teachers, the principal, curriculum representatives, and students, and the simultaneous collection of supporting documents. The data analysis stage was carried out from the time data collection took place in the field until all data were collected, including reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The final stage was the report preparation stage, containing a summary of findings, a synthesis with theoretical studies, and practical recommendations for teachers and madrasas.

Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

Triangulation of data collection techniques was used through interviews, observation, and documentation to obtain credible and comprehensive data. Interviews were conducted semi-structured with guidelines covering learning planning, manifestations of critical thinking indicators, and reflections on model implementation, assisted by a recorder and field notes (R. Huang, 2024). Observations were conducted passively, with the researcher acting as a non-participant observer, documenting the appropriateness of the Learning Together syntax, discussion dynamics, and the teacher's role as facilitator through observation guide sheets. Documentation was used to review planning, implementation, evaluation, and madrasah profile documents to verify consistency between learning design and practice. These three techniques complement each other, producing credible and accountable data (Frazier, 2023).

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis refers to an interactive model Kamilia, (2023) This was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and simultaneous and continuous drawing of conclusions and verification. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and simplifying data from interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents according to critical thinking indicators and CIPP components. Data presentation was arranged in narrative form and a thematic matrix based on context, input, process, and product to clarify patterns and relationships between findings. Conclusions were drawn through a synthesis of findings, linked to relevant theories, and then verified through triangulation, member checks, and peer discussions. Data validity was checked based on credibility, transferability, dependability, and certainty, with a primary emphasis on credibility testing through source and technique triangulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Secondary data in this study were obtained from official documents of MAN 9 East Jakarta, including the madrasah profile, data on the number of students, data on educators and education staff, and learning tools for Akidah Akhlak for class X. These documents were collected as

supporting data to strengthen the findings of observations and interviews regarding the implementation of collaborative learning using the Learning Together type. Secondary data provide an objective picture of the institutional conditions that form the context for implementing learning. Each document was reviewed thematically to see its suitability with the research focus. Document review was conducted before and during the observation process.

The population of class X students is the main subject involved in the Akidah Akhlak learning based on the Learning Together model in the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The distribution of the number of students at each class level is presented in the following table to illustrate the scale of the madrasah population as a whole.

Table 1. Number of Students at MAN 9 East Jakarta for the 2025/2026 Academic Year

Class	Man	Woman	Amount
X	82	121	203
XI	88	119	207
XII	88	122	216
Amount	258	362	620

The data in Table 5.1 illustrates the relatively even distribution of students at each grade level, with a higher proportion of female students than male students. The 10th grade class, the focus of this study, comprised 203 students spread across several study groups. This population scale indicates that implementing collaborative learning requires careful group management, given the relatively large number of students per class. This condition is one of the teacher's considerations in determining the number of members in each discussion group. Student number data also serves as the basis for the researcher in determining the scope of the class observations studied.

The large number of students in grade 10 indicates a unique challenge in managing collaborative learning based on group discussions. The Akidah Akhlak teacher needs to form heterogeneous groups with a proportional number of members so that each student has an equal opportunity to express their opinions. Class density also affects the duration of each group's presentation because the limited lesson time must be divided evenly. This condition explains why some groups do not always have the opportunity to present in depth in a single meeting. This quantitative data reinforces the qualitative findings regarding time management constraints that emerged during the observations.

The predominantly female gender distribution of students also explains the interaction patterns observed during the study in group discussions. The communication characteristics of groups with this composition tend to be more collaborative, cooperative, than competitive. Teachers capitalize on this characteristic by emphasizing clear role allocation within each group. This role allocation helps ensure that each group member, both male and female, has equal responsibility. This pattern aligns with the principle of individual accountability in the Learning Together model.

Secondary data on the number and composition of students provides context that explains the various qualitative findings from the observation and interview stages. Large class sizes require teachers to develop more planned group division strategies to ensure collaborative learning objectives are achieved. These data also explain why teachers chose case studies that varied across groups to prevent monotonous discussions despite the large number of groups. The

link between quantitative data and qualitative findings strengthens the validity of the research results through data triangulation. This explanation confirms that the student population is also a contextual variable that influences the implementation of collaborative learning.

The competency of teaching staff is one of the secondary data components analyzed to determine the readiness of human resources to support the implementation of collaborative learning. The Akidah Akhlak teacher who was the subject of this study is one of the 39 teaching staff at MAN 9 East Jakarta in the 2025/2026 academic year. Teachers' educational background and employment status are also important in assessing readiness for implementing 21st-century competency-based learning. Data on teacher qualifications were obtained from madrasah personnel documents. An overview of this data is presented in the following table.

Table 2. Qualifications and Employee Status of Educators at MAN 9 East Jakarta

Category	Amount	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree Qualification	33	85%
Master's Degree Qualification	6	15%
Civil Servant Status	27	69%
PPPK Status	8	21%
Honorary Status	4	10%

The composition of teacher qualifications in Table 5.2 shows that the majority of educators have a bachelor's degree, while teachers with master's degrees are still limited to 15 percent of the total teaching staff. Employment status is dominated by civil servant teachers, indicating long-term stability of the teaching staff. The Aqidah Akhlak teacher who was the subject of this study is included in the category of civil servant educators with sufficient teaching experience. This data serves as the basis for assessing teacher readiness in the input aspect of the CIPP model evaluation. The proportion of these qualifications also explains the level of variation in pedagogical competence among teachers in madrasahs.

The dominance of teachers with bachelor's degrees explains the pattern of learning strategy implementation, which tends to rely on teaching experience rather than in-depth theoretical study of collaborative learning models. The Akidah Akhlak teacher, who was the subject of this study, demonstrated good mastery of collaborative learning practices despite not having a master's degree. This situation explains why the implementation of Learning Together in the classroom is largely based on training and ongoing professional development facilitated by the madrasah. Stable civil servant employment status also explains the teachers' consistency in implementing the same learning strategies over time. This qualification data strengthens the understanding of human resource readiness as part of the input component.

The limited percentage of teachers with master's degrees highlights the need to continuously strengthen the academic capacity of educators, particularly regarding their understanding of innovative, research-based learning models. Teachers with higher qualifications tend to demonstrate the ability to design more varied learning activities, based on supporting interview results. This qualification gap explains the variation in the quality of discussion facilitation found between classes during observations. Madrasahs should consider programs to improve teachers' academic qualifications as part of strengthening the input components of collaborative learning. This explanation is relevant to the findings regarding the need to strengthen teachers' abilities to design more in-depth collaborative activities.

The relationship between employee status and consistent implementation of the learning model explains why Akidah Akhlak teachers are able to systematically implement the Learning Together stages, from planning to evaluation. Civil servant teachers with longer tenure tend to have a deeper understanding of the characteristics of students at the madrasah. This understanding explains the teachers' accuracy in selecting discrimination case studies relevant to the students' social experiences. This personnel data also explains the madrasah's institutional capacity to support the sustainability of the collaborative learning program. This explanation strengthens the argument that human resource readiness is a significant input factor in the successful implementation of the model.

The relationship between the stages of the Learning Together model implementation and critical thinking indicators is the focus of the data relationship analysis in this section. Each learning stage, from group formation to reflection, is linked to specific aspects of critical thinking skills developed in students. These relationships were identified through triangulation of observations, interviews, and learning documentation. Mapping these relationships is important to demonstrate that successful critical thinking development does not occur in isolation but is formed through a series of structured learning activities. An overview of these relationships is presented in the following table.

Table 3. Relationship between Learning Together Stages and Critical Thinking Indicators

Learning Together Stages	Student Activities	Developing Critical Thinking Indicators
Formation of heterogeneous groups	Division of responsibilities	Self-regulation
Case study delivery	Identifying the problem	Analysis
Group discussion	Exchange opinions, arguments	test Arguing
Formulating solutions	Considering solutions	alternative Solution to problem
Presentation and reflection	Responding to questions, concluding	Evaluation and inference

The mapping in Table 5.3 shows that each stage of Learning Together consistently provides space for the development of different critical thinking indicators. The case study presentation stage is closely related to analytical skills because students are required to identify discrimination issues from the beginning of the discussion. The group discussion stage is strongly related to argumentation skills because students challenge each other's ideas through questions and answers. The presentation and reflection stage shows a relationship with evaluation skills because students reassess the thinking of other groups. This relationship pattern strengthens the argument that the structure of the Learning Together model inherently supports the development of the critical thinking aspects that are the focus of this research.

The teacher chose a case study of reprehensible morals regarding discrimination as the context for implementing collaborative learning in the 10th grade material. The selection of the case study was based on its relevance to social phenomena that are close to the students' daily experiences. Each group received a different variation of discrimination cases so that the results of the discussions between groups were not uniform. The cases provided included situations of

discrimination based on economic, physical, and social backgrounds in the school environment and the community. A detailed description of the variations of the case studies and the focus of analysis for each group is presented in the following table.

Table 4. Variations in Case Studies of Discrimination in Class X Group Discussions

Group	Case Study Theme	Focus Group Analysis
Group 1	Economic discrimination in the school environment	Social causes and impacts
Group 2	Physical discrimination between peers	Forms of treatment and moral solutions
Group 3	Discrimination based on family background	The value of justice in Islam
Group 4	Gender discrimination in group activities	The principle of brotherhood and equality

The variety of case studies in Table 5.4 demonstrates that teachers design learning by considering the diverse social contexts students may encounter. Each group demonstrates a different analytical focus based on the given case theme, but still adheres to Islamic moral principles as the basis for resolution. Groups discussing economic discrimination tend to emphasize social impacts, while groups discussing gender discrimination emphasize the principle of equality. This variation enriches classroom discussions because each group presents a different perspective. The diversity of case studies is one factor that encourages students to develop their ability to analyze problems from multiple perspectives.

The differences in case study themes between groups explain the varying depth of analysis found in each discussion group. Groups discussing cases with contexts closer to students' personal experiences tended to exhibit more lively and argumentative discussions. This explains why the teacher deliberately chose a variety of cases that covered various dimensions of discrimination, ranging from economic, physical, family, to gender. This diversity of cases explains the high level of student participation in expressing opinions because each student had experiences or observations relevant to their group's theme. These case study data reinforce the understanding of the importance of contextualizing material in teaching Aqidah Akhlak.

The different analytical focuses of each group illustrate the varying development of students' argumentative skills, depending on the complexity of the cases discussed. The group discussing the principle of gender equality demonstrated a longer argumentation process because the topic triggered differing views among group members. This situation suggests that the level of case complexity also influences the intensity of the critical thinking process. The teacher utilized these differences to enrich the class presentation session by asking other groups to provide responses across themes. This pattern illustrates how varied case study designs can stimulate more dynamic class discussions.

The relationship between case study variations and learning outcomes explains the effectiveness of teachers' strategies in designing contextualized learning materials. Students who received cases with a higher level of emotional closeness demonstrated more active engagement than those in the group with more abstract cases. This explanation strengthens the argument that the success of collaborative learning is also determined by the suitability of the material to students' life experiences. Teachers need to consider the level of contextual closeness when

designing case study variations in subsequent learning. This explanation emphasizes the importance of careful material planning as part of the input component of collaborative learning.

The relationship analysis in this final section links supporting and inhibiting factors in implementation with the overall achievement of students' critical thinking development. This relationship is crucial to demonstrate that collaborative learning outcomes are inextricably linked to the contextual conditions that influence its implementation in the field. Supporting factors, such as curriculum support and facilities, positively contribute to the smoothness of the process, while inhibiting factors, such as time constraints, impact the depth of achievement. The mapping of the relationships between contextual factors and critical thinking achievement is presented in the following table as a final summary of the research results.

Table 5. Relationship between Supporting and Inhibiting Factors to Critical Thinking Achievement

Factor	Type	Influence on Critical Thinking
Madrasah policy support	Supporters	Expanding the space for teacher discussion and innovation
LCD facilities and classrooms	Supporters	Supporting presentation and delivery of arguments
Teacher competence as a facilitator	Supporters	Directing student analysis and evaluation
Limited time allocation	Inhibitor	Limiting the depth of reflection and presentation
Differences in student self-confidence	Inhibitor	Hindering the equal distribution of argumentative abilities

The relationships in Table 5.5 indicate that supporting and inhibiting factors operate in opposite directions but mutually influence students' critical thinking achievement. Madrasah policy support and teacher competency have been shown to strengthen the analysis and evaluation process during learning. Time constraints and differences in student self-confidence actually limit the optimization of outcomes, particularly in the areas of reflection and equitable participation. This relationship pattern confirms that the successful development of critical thinking is the result of a complex interaction between institutional supporting factors and operational constraints in the classroom. These relationship findings provide an important basis for recommendations for improving the implementation of collaborative learning in the next discussion stage.

This study found that the implementation of the collaborative learning model of the Learning Together type in the subject of Aqidah Akhlak for class X MAN 9 East Jakarta has been carried out in accordance with its basic principles, including positive interdependence, individual responsibility, and promotive interaction in groups. Teachers systematically prepare learning plans through the selection of contextual discrimination case studies, the formation of heterogeneous groups, and the preparation of media and evaluation instruments. The implementation of learning shows a shift in the role of teachers from conveying information to facilitators, while students show increased participation in discussions, expressing opinions, and group presentations.

The evaluation results based on the CIPP model show that the four components context, input, process, and product indicate conditions that generally support the program's success. The context evaluation revealed a clear need for strengthening critical thinking, the input evaluation demonstrated teacher readiness and adequate learning tools, the process evaluation demonstrated implementation according to the stages despite time constraints, and the product evaluation demonstrated the development of three critical thinking indicators: analytical skills, problem-solving skills, and argumentation skills. These three indicators developed gradually through a series of discussions, presentations, and group reflection activities (Asy'Ari, 2025).

The findings also revealed supporting factors in the form of madrasah policy support, learning facilities, and teacher competence, which went hand in hand with inhibiting factors such as time constraints, the density of the religious curriculum, and variations in student self-confidence. This combination of factors suggests that Learning Together's success in developing critical thinking is not the result of a single variable, but rather the interaction of various contextual components, inputs, and processes that influence each other in the field (Muqorobin, 2022).

The findings of this study strengthen the results of the study Modarres, (2022) which shows that the implementation of the collaborative learning model of the Jigsaw Learning Together type has a significant influence on critical thinking skills and mastery of the concept of Akidah Akhlak. The similarity between the two lies in the context of the same subject, namely Akidah Akhlak, and the conclusion that collaborative learning is able to stimulate students' critical thinking skills. The fundamental difference lies in the research approach, where the previous study used an influence-oriented quantitative design, while this study uses an evaluative-qualitative approach that traces the implementation process in depth, not just measuring the significance of the final results.

Comparison with research Knott, (2022) as well as Shao, (2024) showed a similar pattern, namely that collaborative and problem-based learning both support the development of students' collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills. Both studies were conducted in science and chemistry subjects, so the characteristics of the material are more structured and experimental-based compared to the normative-reflective material on Aqidah Akhlak. This difference in material characteristics explains why the argumentation process in this study emphasizes the dimensions of values and morals, rather than solely on empirical logic as in the field of science.

Compared to research Wang, (2023) as well as Liang, (2024) which examined the impact of Learning Together on English and Economics learning outcomes, this study demonstrates a significant difference in focus. Both studies measured the model's impact on cognitive learning outcomes alone, while this study evaluates the entire implementation process through the CIPP framework and explores how critical thinking dimensions are formed through discussion dynamics. This distinction emphasizes that this study fills a largely unexplored gap: examining the process, not just the end result, of collaborative learning.

The development of students' analytical, problem-solving, and argumentative skills through the discrimination case study indicates that the teaching of Aqidah Akhlak (Islamic Creed) is shifting from a normative-memorization approach to a reflective-contextual approach. This shift indicates that students are no longer positioned as passive recipients of Islamic values, but as active subjects constructing understanding through the experience of analyzing real-life

problems. This sign is important because it shows that the goals of religious education, previously considered difficult to measure at a high level of cognitive level, can actually be facilitated through appropriate learning design.

The gap in participation among students still found during observations indicates that the process of internalizing critical thinking skills is not uniform, influenced by differences in character, self-confidence, and initial abilities of each individual. This condition indicates that even the best learning model still requires additional intervention from teachers to ensure equitable learning experiences. This sign also reflects that the success of collaborative learning cannot be separated from teachers' sensitivity to the diverse characteristics of students within a class (Li, 2024).

The recurring constraints of time constraints indicate a structural tension between the ideals of collaborative learning design and the reality of a dense madrasa curriculum. This phenomenon indicates that learning innovation in madrasa environments cannot be planned separately from time allocation policies and the overall curriculum structure. This sign points to the need for a broader policy evaluation, not only at the level of classroom learning methods but also at the level of madrasa curriculum management (Duan, 2023).

The theoretical implications of these findings reinforce the relevance of the social constructivist framework in explaining the process of knowledge formation through group interactions, particularly in the context of Islamic religious education, which has rarely been studied through this lens. These findings broaden the scope of the Learning Together model, previously tested primarily in general subjects, to the realm of learning religious values and morals. These implications open up opportunities for further research on the integration of collaborative learning models with Islamic values-based character education approaches.

Practical implications for Akidah Akhlak teachers lie in the importance of selecting case studies that are close to students' social experiences as triggers for critical thinking, rather than relying solely on conceptual explanations. Teachers need to consider group management strategies that ensure equitable participation, for example through explicit role assignments and stricter individual accountability mechanisms. These implications also emphasize the importance of ongoing training for teachers in designing more varied and in-depth collaborative activities (Suryanto, 2024).

Policy implications for madrasas point to the need to review the allocation of learning time, particularly for subjects that require in-depth discussion, such as Aqidah and Akhlak. Madrasas should consider adjusting the schedule structure or increasing the duration of certain sessions to optimize the presentation and reflection stages. This implication emphasizes that the success of classroom-level learning innovations requires the support of structural policies at the institutional level.

The development of students' critical thinking skills through Learning Together can be explained by the model's characteristics, which inherently require active interaction, exchange of arguments, and shared responsibility within the group. A learning structure that positions students as active subjects creates conditions that are more conducive to higher-level cognitive processes than one-way expository learning. The selection of contextual discrimination case studies also strengthens this condition by providing real-world stimuli that encourage students to think beyond memorizing concepts.

The ongoing disparities in participation can be explained by differences in individual student characteristics, including varying levels of self-confidence, communication skills, and

social experiences. Students with low self-confidence tend to rely on more dominant group members, resulting in an uneven distribution of active roles in argumentation. This type of psychosocial condition is a common factor in group learning and cannot be fully addressed through changes in the learning model alone (M. Huang, 2025).

Time constraints can be explained by the structure of the madrasah curriculum, which includes more religious subjects than general high schools, resulting in more limited time allocated for each subject. This condition is structural and beyond the control of individual teachers, so adjusting learning strategies at the classroom level alone is not sufficient to fully address it. This structural factor explains why optimizing the presentation and reflection phases in Learning Together still faces obstacles despite well-developed lesson plans.

One follow-up step teachers can take is to develop various role-sharing techniques within groups, such as rotating roles or individual contribution sheets, to ensure each student has an equal opportunity to present their arguments. Teachers also need to design a more detailed process assessment rubric to monitor the progress of each critical thinking indicator individually, rather than simply assessing the results of group discussions collectively. Strengthening teacher capacity through ongoing training on facilitating collaborative discussions also needs to be continuously pursued to improve the quality of classroom mentoring (Cahyadi, 2022).

Madrasahs are advised to consider adjusting the time allocation for teaching Aqidah Akhlak, for example by scheduling blocks of time for materials requiring in-depth discussion, so that presentations and reflections are not always interrupted by limited class time. Madrasahs should also encourage the replication of the Learning Together model in other religious subjects as part of a comprehensive strengthening of 4C competencies, not limited to just one subject. Ongoing support for facilities and academic supervision should be maintained as part of the supporting factors that have proven effective.

Future research is recommended to expand the study to a broader subject area, encompassing more than one class or religious subject, to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the consistency of Learning Together implementation results. Further research could also focus on developing a more standardized critical thinking assessment instrument specifically for the context of learning about religious values and morals. Future research is also recommended to explore specific strategies that are effective in addressing the disparity in student participation in collaborative learning based on Islamic values.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the implementation of the collaborative learning model of the Learning Together type in the subject of Akidah Akhlak at MAN 9 East Jakarta successfully facilitated the development of three indicators of critical thinking, namely analytical skills, problem solving, and argumentation, through a contextual case study mechanism that is different from previous studies that generally only measure the influence of the model on cognitive learning outcomes alone; the unique findings of this study lie in the disclosure of the process of forming critical thinking skills gradually through group interactions that are intertwined with Islamic values, not just the achievement of the final score. The added value of this study lies in its methodological contribution, namely the application of the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation model as a comprehensive analytical framework to trace the implementation of collaborative learning as a whole, as well as a conceptual contribution in the

form of mapping the relationship between the stages of Learning Together with specific indicators of critical thinking in the context of Islamic education, an approach that has not been widely used in similar studies that tend to be oriented towards the influence or learning outcomes of general subjects. The limitations of this research are apparent in the scope of the subject which only involves one class and one learning material, namely reprehensible morals regarding discrimination, so that the generalization of findings in the context of other materials or grade levels still requires caution; this limitation directs further research to expand the scope of the subject to several different classes and materials, develop a more standardized critical thinking assessment instrument for the context of religious values learning, and specifically examine strategies to overcome the inequality of student participation in collaborative learning based on Islamic values.

AUTHORCONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-investigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

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