

Implementation of Cooperative Learning Methods in Fiqh Subjects to Build Students' Critical Thinking at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the implementation of the Cooperative Learning method in Fiqh learning and how its implementation can shape the critical thinking of students at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of two Fiqh teachers and three students in grades 2 and 3. The results of the study show that the Cooperative Learning method is effective in increasing students' active participation, analytical skills, argumentation, and understanding of Fiqh materials. Strategies such as small group formation, discussions, presentations between groups, and the use of jigsaw and brainstorming approaches have been proven to encourage students to think critically. Despite obstacles such as differences in individual abilities and material characteristics, these were successfully overcome through a differential approach and the role of the teacher as a facilitator. The findings suggest that the implementation of cooperative learning methods significantly enhances both understanding of Fiqh material and the development of critical and collaborative thinking, aligning with the demands of 21st-century learning. This study contributes to the pedagogical approach in Islamic education, particularly in fostering critical thinking and collaboration among students.

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INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking skills are essential in the educational context, as they enable students to reason logically, analyze problems, and make informed decisions. These skills not only enhance students' ability to answer questions more accurately but also help them to solve problems efficiently and develop their full potential. Furthermore, critical thinking is vital in students' social lives, and therefore, it is crucial to cultivate these skills from an early age. Developing critical thinking is accompanied by improvements in other skills and attitudes, as noted by (Nadhiroh S, 2023).

The role of teachers is pivotal in fostering critical thinking among students. Teachers can employ various teaching strategies that are engaging and not centered solely on the teacher or restricted to textbooks and worksheets. In an ideal learning environment, students should be actively involved in the learning process, allowing them to develop their knowledge and thinking abilities (Aulia, H., Nurhalimah, A., Mandailina, V., Mahsup, Syaharuddin, Abdillah, 2023). Learning

management that prioritizes critical thinking helps students to recognize their potential, analyze problems, and explore new information, which in turn strengthens their skills for tackling real-life challenges (Liwaul Liwaul, Mubaroqah, S., Pairin Pairin, 2022).

Fiqh, a core component of Islamic Religious Education, demands not only rote memorization but also a deep understanding of sharia law provisions. Fiqh encourages students to think critically and engage with concepts that are relevant to modern societal changes. As noted by Ibrahim (2019), Fiqh in its essence involves understanding and reflection. Therefore, critical thinking is indispensable for mastering Fiqh, especially in today's dynamic world. Teachers can employ cooperative learning methods to enhance active participation and foster critical thinking, thereby promoting a deeper understanding of Fiqh material. This approach encourages students to engage in group work, learn from their peers, and find information from various sources, thus increasing their confidence and analytical skills (Najmina, 2017).

However, in Indonesia, education often remains teacher-centered, with students merely listening while the teacher explains concepts. This approach limits students' opportunities to develop critical thinking (Dewi, M. R., Mudakir, I., & Murdiyah, 2016). To develop critical thinking, teachers must transform their role from being the sole source of knowledge to that of facilitators who manage diverse learning resources for students. According to Law No. 14 of 2005, teachers are tasked with educating, guiding, and evaluating students, which emphasizes their responsibility to foster independent thinking and problem-solving (Afsari, S., Safitri, I., Harahap, S. K., & Munthe, 2021).

SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping is committed to quality education, producing a generation with noble character and competitive knowledge. One of the school's core missions is to implement PAIKEM (Active, Creative, Effective, and Fun Learning) through the 6C framework, which includes critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, compassion, and computational skills. According to Anugerahwati (Montessori, V. E., Murwaningsih, T., 2023), these 21st-century soft skills are integral to fostering well-rounded students. Cooperative learning is highly aligned with the 6C principles, as it emphasizes collaboration, communication, empathy, and shared responsibility, all of which are necessary for the development of critical thinking.

Various factors contribute to the lack of critical thinking skills among students, including the use of unvaried learning models that do not suit student characteristics (Zain, U. N. I., Affandi, L. H., & Oktaviyanti, 2022). Anisa also found that ineffective teaching methods hinder the development of students' talents, interests, and thinking abilities. This issue results in lower learning outcomes, as students fail to engage in deep analytical thinking (Anisa, A. R., Ipungkarti, A. A., & Saffanah, 2021). Research by Susilawati, indicated that a significant percentage of students fall into lower categories of critical thinking skills, with only a small portion exhibiting adequate or high-level critical thinking (Susilawati, E., Agustinasari, A., Samsudin, A., & Siahaan, 2020).

This situation highlights the need for educational reforms that focus on enhancing critical thinking abilities, which are essential for students to succeed both academically and in life. Critical thinking skills enable students to solve problems, analyze issues, and make reasoned conclusions, as described by Cahyono (Cahyono, 2016). Furthermore, critical thinking is integral to the Competency Standards for Graduates in junior and senior high schools, as it empowers students to evaluate and prioritize information and make informed decisions. In today's competitive job market, the demand for individuals who can think critically and solve complex problems is growing, and such skills are crucial for students' future success (Astutik, P., & Hariyati, 2021).

This study aims to bridge the gap in the literature by examining how the implementation of cooperative learning in Fiqh education at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping can enhance students' critical thinking skills. This research is significant not only for developing active learning strategies but also for providing practical insights for teachers and educational institutions on designing methods that foster collaboration, deep understanding, and critical thinking in the context of Islamic education. Through this approach, schools can better prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century by cultivating high-level thinking competencies that are essential for success in modern life (Syafitri, E., Armanto, D., & Rahmadani, 2021). Critical thinking also nurtures creativity, problem-

solving skills, and self-confidence, enabling students to face life's challenges with greater resilience and competence.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, which is considered appropriate for exploring complex social phenomena such as the implementation of Cooperative Learning and its effect on students' critical thinking in Fiqh subjects. This method allows researchers to capture natural interactions, learning dynamics, and the cognitive processes of students in context (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping with purposive sampling involving two Fiqh teachers and three students from grades 2 and 3, who were actively involved in Cooperative Learning sessions.

Data were collected over a period of four weeks through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis (such as lesson plans and student worksheets). Interviews were designed to be flexible yet guided, ensuring rich data collection. To analyze the data, this study used the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, consisting of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles, M. B., & Huberman, 2020).

To enhance the credibility and validity of findings, the study employed triangulation of data sources (teachers, students, and documentation), methods (interview, observation, documentation), and analyst perspectives by involving peer debriefing and expert validation. This approach ensures a deeper understanding and minimizes researcher bias in interpreting the impact of Cooperative Learning on students' critical thinking development.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Implementation of Cooperative Learning in Fiqh Subjects at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping

The cooperative learning method is the right method to be applied to students, it aims to train and build their critical thinking. This method not only focuses on the end result of a learning, but also focuses on the learning process itself, especially in terms of social interaction, teamwork, and the development of students' communication skills. In this cooperative learning method, students develop a positive attitude of interdependence, which allows group work to take place effectively. This situation encourages each member of the group to actively learn and take responsibility seriously so that all tasks, both individual and group, are completed well. This critical thinking is formed when students conduct discussions in small groups that are able to encourage analysis activities, students also learn to exchange ideas from different perspectives, they are also faced with solving problems together, not only that, students are also required to play an active role in explaining the material that has been learned from their small group to other groups. Critical thinking in the learning process aims to help students develop a structured and intelligent mindset in connecting various concepts to solve a problem (Umam, 2018). This statement is in accordance with what was expressed by RYA, one of the Fiqh teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping:

"Of course, the implementation of this method is able to build students' critical thinking, especially for Fiqh lessons, but there is something that needs to be underlined, learning using the cooperative learning method is not applied every time learning, because in my personal opinion the use of the cooperative learning method itself cannot be used in every discussion, it can only be applied in certain discussions, which if the material can be discussed by students." (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

Indeed, this cooperative learning needs to be adjusted to the material to be taught, because it is considered that not all materials in Fiqh subjects in junior high school are suitable for the implementation of this cooperative learning method. Similar views and opinions were also experienced and felt by AU as a Fiqh teacher at the school, he also said the same thing that:

"Cooperative learning in fiqh learning is quite effective, because it is able to increase the activeness of students, train students to cooperate and interact with their classmates, but the implementation of cooperative learning cannot be applied to all fiqh materials, such as the practice of prayer,

ablution which prioritizes practice. For materials that can be used using this cooperative learning method, such as about the laws of fiqh which are indeed very suitable for discussion and question and answer.” (AU Interview, April 25, 2025)

As for the interviews conducted by the researcher with several 3rd and 2nd grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping named ANH, KSH and DP, they argued that the cooperative learning method is considered more fun, exciting and not boring:

“We find it more exciting, feel new and easier like that, and we also find it easier to understand the material.” (ANH interview, May 3, 2025)

“It’s fun, we are also told to learn the material ourselves and we can also teach other friends.” (KSH interview, May 7, 2025)

“I think with this method it is easy to understand the material, because it may be the explanation from other groups that is quite difficult to understand.” (DP interview, May 7, 2025)

What is interesting about the implementation of the cooperative learning method in Fiqh subjects at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping is, this method is only given to students in grades 2 and 3 of junior high school while for grade 1, it only uses ordinary small group work, this policy is taken considering the age of the different students, in other words adjusting to the capacity of the students themselves. Of course, with the hope that the material taught will be absorbed to the maximum, the two fiqh teachers are of the same opinion on this matter, AU revealed that *“if the 1st grade of junior high school is still fairly difficult to condition, maybe because they are in the transition phase from elementary to junior high school”* (AU interview, April 25, 2025). With the right approach, teachers can guide students in facing various challenges and encourage their growth holistically or comprehensively (Sianturi, N. P., Diarang, A., Loho, H., Rasjid, A., Agama, I., & Manado, 2024). Studies show that teachers who understand the stages of students' cognitive development are able to develop more optimal learning strategies, for example through the implementation of problem-solving methods and group discussions to encourage critical thinking skills (Santrock, 2020).

The cooperative learning method was chosen by AU in Fiqh learning because by using this method it becomes easier for teachers to convey material thoroughly. The cooperative learning method is also considered to make the classroom more lively and the students become more active and are considered able to play a good role, they are also considered able to learn independently by analyzing the material provided using this method. This is in line with RYA's view as a Fiqh teacher that:

“What is clear is that this cooperative learning method makes the class more lively, of course it is different when the students only listen to me speak or use the lecture method, with the cooperative learning method I can create a more lively learning atmosphere, even though with a longer duration, but students become more active and play a role both in their own group² and when explaining to other groups.” (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

As for the responses from ANH, KSH, and DP students who took the Fiqh subjects taught by RYA and AU showed a positive attitude towards their teacher's statement, the three stated that they justified the statement made by their teacher:

“Of course, we feel more active when teachers apply this cooperative learning method.” (ANH interview, May 3, 2025)

“Being active, we can move instead of us continuing to sit, we can also explain to other groups, so we don’t feel sleepy.” (KSH interview, May 7, 2025)

“Of course, we feel more active, we are required to be able to master the material and explain the material to other groups.” (DP interview, May 7, 2025)

The steps to apply the cooperative learning method to Fiqh subjects at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping generally show similarities in their implementation. Both RYA and AU as educators have almost similar views and responses regarding the process of implementing the method, namely:

- a. Divide the class into small groups.
- b. Each group studied a different sub chapter but still in the same chapter.

- c. Choosing the role of the chairman in each group.
- d. Study the material in each group.
- e. When they feel that they understand, students can report to the teacher.
- f. After the teacher makes sure that each group member really understands, each group can teach the other group about the material that has been learned.
- g. The teacher re-discusses the material more lightly.

The selection of the role of the chairman in each group can be chosen randomly and can also be determined by the teacher himself, The difference between the implementation of RYA and the AU is when the group leader is elected. The two teachers have different views in this regard, RYA conducts a random selection of the chairman in the hope of fostering the spirit of *leadership* of the selected students. The spirit of *leadership* should be instilled in students from an early age, so that students can prepare themselves well to face modern times (Hidayatul Ula, n.d.). Meanwhile, the AU chooses group leaders from students who have above-average scores, with the hope that they will be able to teach their group members, so that there will be more effective discussions.

In every implementation of a policy, there must be challenges, not only the challenge of policy decisions in government, in education there are also often many obstacles and obstacles that need to be found to find solutions, the implementation of cooperative learning also experiences several obstacles and challenges. The following are the challenges and solutions that the researcher got through interviews from RYA and AU as Fiqh teachers, the challenges that are often experienced by the two teachers include:

- a. Classes that are less active will still be asked to discuss in their respective groups as much as possible, then at the end the teacher can add individual assignments.
- b. Teachers must be facilitators of students, in order to maintain conduciveness.
- c. Teachers can go around to each group to make sure they have a good discussion.
- d. Teachers can request summaries from each group to ensure each group is working on the assignment that has been given.

However, every problem must have a solution to overcome the problem. The following solutions can maintain the effectiveness of the implementation of cooperative learning in Fiqh subjects, including:

- a. Classes that are less active will still be asked to discuss in their respective groups as much as possible, then at the end the teacher can add individual assignments.
- b. Teachers must be facilitators of students, in order to maintain conduciveness.
- c. Teachers can go around to each group to make sure they have a good discussion.
- d. Teachers can request summaries from each group to ensure each group is working on the assignment that has been given.

As for the challenges felt by students in the implementation of the cooperative learning method tend to be different when compared to the views of their teachers, the challenges experienced by ANH, KSH and DP are:

"Challenges do not come from teachers, challenges come from friends who are not able to explain the related material, our level of understanding depends on how other groups explain, but if there are students who have difficulties or feel that they are lacking in explaining the material, usually the teacher guides and asks to repeat to explain" (ANH interview, May 3, 2025)

"When other groups explain it's hard to understand." (KSH interview, May 7, 2025)

"When there is a foreign language or it is difficult to understand, it becomes a challenge for us" (DP interview, May 7, 2025)

Not only to Fiqh teachers, SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping also provides full support to each subject teacher to apply the cooperative learning method when learning takes place, as conveyed by RYA as a Fiqh teacher that:

"There is indeed a demand from the school for the creation of lesson plans so that every time teaching to use a cooperative method, or small groups for discussion, but in reality not every time"

learning uses the discussion, group or cooperative learning method" (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

Of course, this adjusts to the material being taught. Meanwhile, the form of support that AU feels as Fiqh teachers in addition to making lesson plans, is in the form of adequate facilities, in the form of TV and audio in each class, which are able to support the implementation of this cooperative learning method. The advancement of information technology and globalization requires teachers to develop competencies that are relevant to the 21st century, These competencies include critical thinking skills, creativity, collaboration, communication, and digital literacy (Manik, 2024). AU added that:

"In today's modern era, students are required to be more active and teachers are only facilitators." (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

The cooperative learning method does require a lot of students to discuss, this makes them feel more valued for their opinions, discussions are also able to build students' critical thinking. The group discussion method focuses on the active involvement of students, so that it can encourage increased participation, critical attitudes, mastery of knowledge, material understanding, and learning completeness (Pradika, 2019). Some success indicators related to changes in student behavior according to RYA and AU in Fiqh subjects during the implementation of cooperative learning include:

- a. The students are more enthusiastic and active in the discussion.
- b. The students do not sleep from the beginning to the end of the lesson.
- c. Students are encouraged to focus on learning and find solutions on how to explain the material to other groups.

The cooperative learning method used in Fiqh learning is very helpful in shaping students' critical thinking. From the observations made by the researcher, the teacher required the students to first discuss concepts that were difficult to understand in the group before asking the teacher. With this, students are trained to think critically to find answers independently and not always depend on teachers. The results of the observation made by the researcher are in line with RYA's response as a Fiqh teacher:

"If there are unfamiliar words or words that are difficult to understand, I am obliged to discuss them in their own group, only when one group does not understand, then it is allowed to ask the teacher." (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

This encourages them to find solutions together, strengthen teamwork, and build a sense of responsibility for the learning process. Meanwhile, the Air Force added:

"Presentation activities and question and answer sessions between groups also encourage students to express their opinions, formulate meaningful questions, and respond to the views of other groups logically and openly." (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

Discussions like this enrich students' understanding of the material, practice argumentation skills, and open their horizons to various viewpoints. Thus, this method not only fosters the ability to think critically, but also strengthens the understanding of Fiqh material in a more in-depth and contextual manner. The implementation of active, innovative, creative and effective Fiqh learning strategies helps students form their critical thinking, without using good and appropriate strategies, students will have difficulties in learning Fiqh.

B. The Effectiveness of Cooperative Learning Builds Students' Critical Thinking in Fiqh Subjects at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping.

The ability to think critically in Fiqh subjects is indeed very necessary, this is considering the Fiqh material in junior high school which discusses a lot of laws that occur in daily life. Fiqh is the result of ijtihad of mujtahidin scholars, which allows for changes and differences of opinion in a number of issues (Komarudin, P., & Hidayat, 2019). Fiqh is often considered as the result of thinking that arises from the interaction and dynamics of human life in Latin from Cicero expressed *Ubi societas ibi ius*, meaning; where there is a society there are laws (Hilal, 2012). The ability to think critically is very important, especially in Fiqh learning, this is because Fiqh science

is dynamic, diverse and tends to keep up with the times. Fiqh is a human work that can change, is fundamental, the law can change, has many varieties, comes from the Ijtihad of jurists as a result of human understanding formulated by the Mujtahid (Nurhayati, 2018). As stated by RYA as a Fiqh teacher:

"Critical thinking is not only necessary in Fiqh, but also in all subjects as well as daily life, Without critical thinking skills, a person tends to simply receive information without analyzing or understanding its meaning and context well." (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

Meanwhile, AU as a Fiqh teacher said the importance of critical thinking in fiqh lessons is: *"It is very important, especially for contemporary fiqh materials that require students to think about how to solve problems using fiqh law in the modern era, so it is very important for students to think critically."* (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

In the context of Fiqih, critical thinking becomes even more important, this happens because humans are dynamic creatures, always experiencing development along with the passage of time, learning from this matter, humans, Muslims in particular need to develop Islamic law that is relevant to the changing times, especially in dealing with contemporary issues that develop in today's society. Fiqh is not only limited to classical texts, but must also be able to respond to the development of the times, new problems, and modern situations that require relevant legal solutions. Therefore, various contemporary problems need to be solved through ijtihad activities. Ijtihad, as a result of human reasoning of revelation on the one hand and social reality on the other, has demonstrated the elasticity and dynamics of Fiqh (Mustofa, 2019). Therefore, critical thinking helps students to analyze problems in depth, find solutions that are in accordance with the principles of Fiqih, With this approach, students will be better prepared to face real-world challenges, both in understanding religious law and in solving problems analytically, based on the values in Fiqih.

In the implementation of a learning method, of course, a qualified classroom strategy or management is needed to increase the effectiveness of the learning method. According to Syamsuar in (Sholeh, 2023) With the right education strategy and management, it can create a supportive environment, encourage innovation, and increase learning effectiveness. In cooperative learning, there are various effective strategies to trigger students' critical thinking. The two teachers put forward two effective strategies in cooperative learning. RYA as a Fiqh teacher suggests the use of *the Jigsaw* approach, where students are divided into small groups and each group is given a different piece of material to learn. Afterwards, they gather to share their understanding with other groups. *The jigsaw method* is one of the models in the cooperative learning method, this method encourages students to be active and help each other in mastering the subject matter (Asda, Y., Madrasah, G., Negeri, A., Banda, M., Pocut, 2022). This approach requires that each student not only take responsibility for the material they are studying, but must also be able to communicate information clearly to their peers, which encourages them to think critically and analyze the material more deeply. Meanwhile, AU as a Fiqh teacher suggested the use of *Brainstorming* as an effective approach strategy. In this method, teachers ask trigger questions designed to open up discussions and stimulate students' critical thinking. Aytac Gogus in (Al-Samarraie, H., & Hurmuzan, 2018) *Brainstorming* is one of the techniques to foster group creativity where ideas and thoughts are shared among the members spontaneously to achieve a solution. AU as a Fiqh teacher explained:

"The first question asked will trigger new questions from other learners, prompting them to dig deeper and think more critically about the material being discussed." (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

The methods or strategies used by these two Fiqih teachers in assessing the effectiveness of cooperative learning methods such as:

- a. Assess the level of understanding of each group related to the material from each sub-chapter that has been studied.
- b. Assess the activeness of each group member in discussing.
- c. The results of the discussion or when students present to other groups.

The argumentation and analysis skills of students when teachers apply the cooperative learning method are greatly developed. In the observations that researchers conducted, students were seen working together in groups to study and discuss material, which allowed them to share their opinions, ask questions, and present their arguments. In the process of implementing this cooperative learning encourages students to think more deeply about the topics discussed, including in terms of Fiqh principles which often require complex understanding and critical analysis. RYA as a Fiqh teacher said:

"This method further increases students to think, and increases curiosity, the cooperative learning method makes students who are usually less focused become more focused, why? Because they are required to be able to convey and explain the material to their friends." (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

Meanwhile, the AU added:

"It is true that this method is quite helpful to improve the critical thinking skills of students, it's just that for junior high school students, in terms of argumentation and analysis are not so deep, this is based on the fact that the fiqh material studied is still simple." (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

The students also felt the same way with the responses of their two Fiqh teachers, ANH and KSH revealing that:

"It was quite helpful, because we were asked to study the material ourselves, then summarize the material, and we were asked to explain it to other groups" (ANH interview, May 3, 2025)

"Yes, of course, we are asked to understand the material more deeply, and we also have to discuss and try to explain to other groups in our own language" (KSH interview, May 7, 2025)

The improvement of students' thinking skills with the cooperative learning method has increased significantly, this is in line with what the researcher found during observations and interviews. When the researcher's observation found that students became more enthusiastic when the teacher divided them into small groups, and the class became more active instantly, this happened because the implementation of the cooperative learning method was more exciting and not monotonous, students became more enthusiastic and active when divided into small groups, and they had quite intense discussions and questions and answers. Active learning is a learning process where students have the opportunity to do more learning activities, through close interaction with the subject matter, so that they are encouraged to build and conclude their own understanding (Imamah, n.d.). Compared to other methods, this cooperative learning method makes students think much more critically, because it involves a lot of learning activities, starting from analyzing the material, reading, then discussing, writing, presentations, and then asking questions. This is in line with the response of the AU as a Fiqh teacher that:

"So this method involves a lot of learning activities, so that critical thinking skills are considered to have improved quite significantly compared to using other methods." (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

The responses of ANH, KSH, and DP as students are also in line with their teachers' responses that:

"All group members are more active, this is because one group is only filled with 3 to 4 people, and each group member must have a role to explain to other groups. This encourages students to master the material that has been shared." (ANH interview, May 3, 2025)

"This method makes me think more critically, because we have to find our own material, then explain it to other groups, and try to understand the explanations from other groups" (KSH interview, May 7, 2025)

"I think this method is enough to make me think critically, because I read more and look for material myself" (DP interview, May 7, 2025)

An indicator of the effectiveness of the cooperative learning method to form students' critical thinking in Fiqh subjects at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping is, The implementation of cooperative learning methods which shows that students become more actively involved in the thinking process. They not only accept and understand the material, but also begin to dig deeper,

ask questions, and relate the material to real-life situations they encounter in everyday life. Critical thinking is a process of exploring, analyzing, combining, and formulating information, in order to expand one's way of thinking, increase creativity, and encourage courage in taking risks (Surya, E., Syahputra, E., Simbolon, M., & Manullang, n.d.).

These activities are one of the signs that this method is able to encourage the development of critical thinking skills. One of the unique and prominent indicators of the effectiveness of the cooperative learning method in shaping students' critical thinking skills that the researchers found is the emergence of follow-up questions that are unique, but still relevant to real life. This phenomenon generally occurs when learners engage in small group discussions, which encourages them to explore the material more actively. There are several examples from RYA related to this indicator, he revealed that:

"When I delivered material about aqiqah, especially about the provision of the number of animals slaughtered for boys and girls, various unique and critical questions arose from the student group, such as; What are the provisions if the child born is twin? If the twins are male and female, are the rules different? What should be done if the parents are not economically able to carry out aqiqah?" (RYA interview, April 22, 2025)

These questions reflect the efforts of students to understand the material contextually and applicatively. Asking questions can be considered a form of concern, active response, and engagement in interaction with the given subject matter (Hariyadi, 2014). This is proof that cooperative learning methods provide space for students to develop critical reasoning through interaction, collaboration, and open discussion between group members.

However, not all students show the same level of participation in the process of implementing the cooperative learning method, some of them still look passive or lack confidence in expressing their opinions. It is this insecurity or feeling of insecurity that ultimately makes a child feel the need to hide his true identity behind a 'mask' so that others cannot see the other side he wants to hide (Andariska, O., & Fitriani, 2022). Therefore, a special strategy is needed from teachers to encourage the active involvement of all students in learning activities. To overcome students who tend to be passive or lack confidence in expressing their opinions, Fiqh teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping usually apply several supportive and gradual approaches, as follows:

- a. For students who feel embarrassed or reluctant to speak in public, they are given the opportunity to be accompanied by their close friends when expressing opinions or making presentations. This assistance is temporary and aims to build confidence slowly. Confidence is a very crucial element in the development of students' personalities, because it is a driving and determining factor in the way students behave and behave (Awaliyani, S., & Ummah, 2021).
- b. In group discussion activities, teachers often group less active students with friends who are more communicative and used to expressing opinions. This strategy aims to create a supportive learning environment, so that passive learners can be encouraged to be actively involved.
- c. If any student seems unfocused or does not show any participation in the discussion, the teacher will approach him directly and ask questions relevant to the material. This personalized approach is expected to arouse curiosity and increase their involvement in the learning process.

The implementation of the cooperative learning method in fiqh subjects makes students more challenged to think critically, this happens because this method indirectly triggers a competitive spirit in each group. In Islam, competitive culture is known as *fastabiqul khoirot* which means competing in goodness. This competitive culture must be possessed by everyone in an institution if they want the institution to develop well (Latif Nawawi, 2021). Through this method, students feel responsible for themselves, and each group thinks to be the best group in obtaining grades from teachers than other groups, from this is where the competitive spirit

between groups is formed, in other words students compete in goodness. AU as a Fiqh teacher explained that:

"Every group wants to be the best group, from the competitive nature between these groups they will be challenged to be superior to other groups, so from here their critical thinking begins to form." (AU interview, April 25, 2025)

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the cooperative learning method significantly contributes to the development of students' critical thinking skills in Fiqh learning at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gamping. Through a collaborative learning approach, students are not only actively engaged in discussions and idea exchanges, but are also trained to analyze information, express opinions logically, and evaluate problems systematically. The effectiveness of this method is evident from increased student participation, the emergence of contextual critical questions, and their ability to connect lesson content with real-life situations. Implementation strategies such as small group formation, sub-topic division, and role rotation provide students with space to strengthen reasoning and higher-order thinking skills.

The contribution of this research lies in reinforcing the theoretical foundation that Islamic studies, particularly Fiqh, can be integrated with 21st-century learning strategies that emphasize collaboration, communication, and problem-solving. Furthermore, this study offers a practical pedagogical model that can be adapted and replicated in other Islamic schools by considering student characteristics and curriculum content. Teachers play a vital role as facilitators in shaping a supportive and adaptive learning climate. Future studies are encouraged to explore the long-term impacts of this method on students' problem-solving abilities and the contextual application of Islamic jurisprudence in contemporary settings.

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