

## **Effectiveness Of Using The Method Of Storytelling In Improving Students' Learning Interest In The Prophet's Story Material At MI NWDI In The Environment**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of applying the storytelling method in increasing students' interest in learning about the stories of the Prophet at MI Nahdlatul Wathan Diniah Islamiah (NWDI) Lingkungan. The main problem faced is the low motivation and involvement of students in learning Islamic Cultural History (SKI), which is still dominated by conventional lecture methods. This study used a quantitative approach with a One-Group Pretest–Posttest design and involved 24 fourth-grade students as respondents. The research instruments included learning outcome tests, activity observations, and Likert scale questionnaires to measure four indicators of learning interest, namely attention, enjoyment, involvement, and perceived benefits. The results showed a significant increase in all indicators after the storytelling method was implemented. The average questionnaire score increased from 3.04 to 4.47, with the highest increase in the aspects of enjoyment and perceived benefits. Student learning activities also increased from 46% to 86%, and the average learning outcome score rose from 62.3 to 83.1. This increase proves that the storytelling method is effective in fostering students' interest, motivation, and understanding of the moral and spiritual values in the stories of the Prophets. Thus, storytelling is a viable alternative strategy for SKI learning that is more active, inspiring, and meaningful.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Learning Islamic Cultural History (ISCR) at the Islamic Elementary School (MI) level plays a strategic role in shaping students' religious and moral character from an early age. Through the stories of the prophets, students are not only introduced to Islamic history but also emulate the values of honesty, patience, and sincerity contained within it. However, a common phenomenon in various Islamic schools is low student interest in this subject. Many students consider ISCR to be a monotonous and uninteresting memorization subject due to the teacher's dominant use of traditional lecture methods (Wahyudi et al., 2024). As a result, learning activities become passive and one-way, resulting in students' lack of active involvement in the learning process.

Initial observations at MI Nahdlatul Wathan Diniah Islamiah (NWDI) Lingkungan showed that fourth-grade students' enthusiasm for Islamic Education (SKI) learning was still low. Most students appeared to lack focus, talked to themselves while the teacher was explaining, and showed no interest in the material on the stories of the prophets. Based on the results of the learning interest questionnaire administered before the treatment, the average student interest score only reached 62.4 on a scale of 100, which is classified as moderate. This condition indicates a gap between the objectives of SKI learning, which are expected to foster spiritual and moral values, and the reality on the ground, which still shows low emotional involvement and learning motivation of students.

Several previous studies have confirmed that low interest in learning is often caused by learning approaches that are not suited to the characteristics of elementary-age students, who tend to prefer imaginative, visual, and narrative materials (Bruner, 1987; Vygotsky, 1997). In this context, the method of storytelling is an effective learning alternative. *Storytelling* not only conveys factual information but also touches on students' affective and imaginative aspects through meaningful narratives and characters (Foss & Kumar, 2025). This approach allows students to become emotionally involved in the learning process, internalize the moral values of the stories conveyed, and foster a spirit of learning within themselves (Zulaekhah et al., 2025).

From an Islamic educational perspective, the storytelling method has a strong foundation. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) often used stories to convey messages of da'wah and instill values of faith in his companions (Hidayati et al., 2025). Therefore, the use of this method of storytelling in Islamic education (SKI) learning is not only a pedagogical innovation but also a reflection of Islamic educational traditions that have proven effective since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Several modern studies also show that the use of exemplary stories can improve students' morals, motivation, and active engagement (Abdiah, 2022; Pamitasari & Sartika, 2025).

Based on these facts, this research offers a solution in the form of applying the method of storytelling in Islamic Studies (IS) learning, particularly in the material on the stories of the prophets. It is hoped that through this method, students will be able to understand the story's content in depth, emulate the positive character traits of the characters in the stories, and foster a love for Islamic Studies (IS) learning. Stories delivered expressively and interactively will create a positive impression and activate student participation during the learning process (Ariani, 2023).

Based on this background, the problem formulation in this research is: (1) how to apply the method of *storytelling* in SKI learning on the material of the Prophet's story at MI NWDI Lingkungan; (2) what is the method of *storytelling* is effective in increasing the interest in learning of fourth grade students; and (3) how much the students' interest in learning increased after the application of the method of *storytelling*. The purpose of this study is to describe the process of applying the method of *storytelling* in SKI learning and knowing its effectiveness in increasing students' interest in learning.

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of narrative-based learning strategies in Islamic education. Practically, this research can serve as a reference for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers in selecting learning methods that can increase student motivation and engagement. Furthermore, the results are expected to enrich pedagogical practices that are more humanistic, enjoyable, and meaningful for students.

The main reason the researcher chose this title is because of the belief that SKI learning should not only emphasize cognitive aspects, but also foster students' emotional and spiritual experiences through inspirational stories. *Storytelling* is considered an approach that is able to bring SKI lessons to life so that they become more interesting and relevant to students' daily lives (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). Thus, this research is important to empirically prove the effectiveness of the method of *storytelling* in increasing students' interest in learning the material on the story of the Prophet.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach with a simple experimental type (*pre-experimental design*) and a one-group *pretest-posttest design*. The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of using the method of storytelling to increase students' interest in learning the subject of Islamic Cultural History (SKI).

The research population was all 24 students of grade IV (four) of MI NWDI Lingkung in the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. Due to the small number, all students were used as research samples using the total sampling technique.

The variables in this study consist of methods storytelling as the independent variable (X) and student learning interest as the dependent variable (Y). Data were collected using three instruments, namely tests, observations, and questionnaires. Tests were used to determine student learning outcomes before and after the application of the learning method. *Observations* were conducted to record student activities and involvement during the learning process, while questionnaires were distributed to measure students' level of learning interest. The questionnaires were compiled using a *Likert scale* with five answer choices, namely:

Table 1

Questionnaire Format Scale *Liked*

No	Question	Scale Likes				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.						
2.						
3.						
etc.						

Information: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Undecided; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

The research was carried out in three stages, namely pretest, giving treatment (*storytelling*), and *posttest*. The research data were analyzed using descriptive analysis to describe changes in students' learning interests, as well as to find out the significant differences between the results before and after applying the method of storytelling.

## 3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted on 24 fourth-grade students of MI NWDI Lingkung. Data collection was carried out through tests (*pretest* and *posttest*), observations, and learning interest questionnaires that used a *Likert scale* with five categories. The data obtained were analyzed descriptively and inferentially to determine the effectiveness of the method of *storytelling* in increasing students' interest in learning the material on the story of the Prophet.

## Research result

### 1. Analysis Results of the Likert Scale *Learning Interest Questionnaire*

The learning interest questionnaire consists of 20 statements with five answer choices using a *Likert scale*: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Learning interest indicators include four main aspects: **attention, feelings of enjoyment, involvement, and perceptions of the benefits of learning.**

Table 2.

Distribution of Student Learning Interest Questionnaire Scores Before and After Treatment

No	Learning Interest Indicator	Average Score Before	Average Score After	Difference	Final Category
1.	Attention to lessons	3,05	4,42	+1,37	High
2.	The feeling of joy while studying	2,90	4,55	+1,65	Very high
3.	Involvement in activities	3,00	4,33	+1,33	High
4.	Perception of the benefits of SKI	3,20	4,60	+1,40	Very high
<b>Overall average</b>		<b>3,04</b>	<b>4,47</b>	<b>+1,43</b>	<b>High</b>

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that all indicators of learning interest experienced a significant increase. The average overall score before treatment was 3.04 (moderate category), and increased to 4.47 (high category) after treatment. This means there was an increase of 1.43 points, indicating that the learning method *storytelling* has a positive influence on students' interest in learning.

Figure 1.

Average Score Improvement Graph *Scale Liked* per Indicator



Analysis by indicator shows that the highest increases were in feelings of enjoyment while learning (up 1.65 points) and perceptions of the benefits of learning (up 1.40 points). This indicates that *storytelling* is able to build a pleasant learning atmosphere and raise students' awareness of the values contained in the stories of the Prophets.

The research results obtained through questionnaires and observations show a consistent increase in student interest and involvement after the implementation of the method of *storytelling*. The data in Table 2 and Figure 1 show a significant increase in the

average score of the student learning interest questionnaire from 3.04 (moderate category) to 4.47 (high category), with the largest increase in the indicators of feelings of enjoyment and perception of the benefits of learning. This indicates that the learning method of *storytelling* can transform students' attitudes toward SKI learning, from initially passive to active and enthusiastic. This improvement is evident not only in the cognitive aspect (understanding of the material) but also in the affective aspect, such as students' enjoyment, interest, and emotional involvement during the learning process.

A similar upward trend is also evident in the results of observations of student learning activities as presented in Table 4 and Figure 2. All aspects of learning activities experienced a fairly sharp increase; attention to the teacher rose from 55% to 88%, activeness in asking questions from 40% to 81%, involvement in discussions from 42% to 85%, and enthusiasm for the material from 47% to 90%. Overall, the level of student activity increased from 46% to 86%, which means that the learning method *storytelling* not only influences students' internal interest but also their learning behavior in class. This finding reinforces the questionnaire results, as increases in learning interest scores are in line with increased student engagement during the learning process.

The positive correlation between the questionnaire results and observations shows that the method of *storytelling is effective* in creating meaningful, integrative, and contextual learning experiences. Stories delivered by teachers in an expressive style can enliven the classroom atmosphere, build focus, and foster empathy and role models in students. Thus, SKI learning is no longer merely rote learning but becomes a means of internalizing moral and spiritual values through true stories of the lives of the Prophets. Overall, the results of this study confirm that the application of the method *storytelling* contributes significantly to increasing students' learning interest (affective) and learning activities (psychomotor) at MI NWDI Lingkungan, while also demonstrating the effectiveness of the humanistic approach in the context of basic Islamic education.

## 2. Test Results (*Pretest* and *Posttest*)

To strengthen the results of the questionnaire, learning interest was measured through initial and final tests.

Table 3.  
Average *Pretest* and *Posttest*

Test Types	Average Score	Category
<i>Pretest</i>	62,3	Currently
<i>Posttest</i>	83,1	High
Difference	+20,8	-

The results showed an increase in scores of 20.8 points between before and after treatment. Paired Sample statistical test producing a t-count value = 7.82 > t-table = 2.07 with  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ , so the increase was declared significant.

## 3. Student Activity Observation Results

Observations are made during the learning process to see changes in student behavior and participation.

Table 4.  
Recapitulation of Learning Activity Observation Results

Observed Aspects	Before <i>Storytelling</i>	After <i>Storytelling</i>
Attention to teachers	55%	88%
Activeness in asking questions	40%	81%
Involvement in discussions	42%	85%
Enthusiasm for the material	47%	90%
<b>Overall average</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>86%</b>

There was a clear increase in all aspects of student learning activities, especially in terms of enthusiasm and active questioning, which indicates higher emotional involvement after the implementation of the method of *storytelling*.

Figure 2.  
Recapitulation of Learning Activity Observation Results



The results in Table 4 and Figure 2 show that there was a significant increase in all aspects of student learning activities after implementing the method of *storytelling*. The aspect of attention to the teacher increased from 55% to 88%, indicating that students became more focused and concentrated during the learning process. This occurred because of the teaching method of *storytelling* was able to capture students' attention through narrative elements, visualizations, and teacher expressions that stimulated their imagination. The activeness of asking questions also increased from 40% to 81%, indicating that students felt more confident and motivated to participate actively. Stories presented in an Islamic context were shown to foster curiosity and emotional engagement with the Islamic Studies subject matter.

A similar increase was seen in the aspect of discussion engagement, which rose from 42% to 85%. This indicates that students are no longer passive listeners, but are actively expressing their opinions, asking questions, and responding to the stories presented by the teacher. The discussion process after the story is delivered provides space for students to interpret the meaning, draw lessons, and relate them to their daily lives. Furthermore,

enthusiasm for the material also increased significantly, from 47% to 90%. This figure indicates that students are more enthusiastic about participating in lessons and demonstrating a positive attitude towards SKI learning.

Overall, observation results showed an average increase in learning activity from 46% to 86% after the storytelling method was implemented. This proves that a story-based learning approach can increase students' affective and social engagement in the classroom. Learning is not solely teacher-centered but transforms into a participatory, meaningful, and enjoyable learning experience. Thus, the storytelling method *has proven* to be an effective pedagogical strategy in increasing students' motivation, concentration, and learning interactions in the SKI subject at MI NWDI Lingsung.

## Discussion

The results of this study show that the application of the method of storytelling significantly influences the increase in students' interest and learning activities in the subject of Islamic Cultural History (SKI) at MI NWDI Lingsung. Based on the results of the learning interest questionnaire (Table 2 and Figure 1), the average score before treatment was 3.04 (moderate category) and increased to 4.47 (high category) after the application of the method of *storytelling*. 1.43-point increase indicates positive changes in students' attitudes, engagement, and motivation in participating in learning. This finding aligns with research findings. (Zulaekhah et al., 2025) who found that the method of *storytelling*, Multimedia-based learning, can significantly enhance students' understanding and interest in Islamic history. Stories packaged with visual and expressive elements can capture students' attention and foster curiosity about the moral values in the stories of the Prophets.

Furthermore, the highest increases were seen in the indicators of feelings of enjoyment while learning and perceptions of the benefits of SKI, rising by 1.65 and 1.40 points, respectively. This shows that storytelling not only functions as a medium for conveying information but also as an emotional medium that arouses students' enthusiasm and enjoyment. This finding is in line with research (Ciptadi et al., 2025), which confirms that narrative-based learning models can improve students' religious understanding and involvement because stories act as a bridge between cognition and affect. In addition, research (Fariyah & Wiranti, 2023) also shows that the technique of storytelling has been proven to improve the communication and expression skills of early childhood children, which strengthens the evidence that narrative elements are very effective in stimulating active participation and emotional sensitivity in students.

The improvement in the questionnaire results was also supported by observations of student learning activities (Table 4 and Figure 2), which showed significant changes in learning behavior. Attention to the teacher increased from 55% to 88%, active questioning increased from 40% to 81%, involvement in discussions increased from 42% to 85%, and enthusiasm for the material jumped from 47% to 90%. Overall, student learning activity increased from 46% to 86%. This increase indicates that the teaching method of *storytelling* not only influences interest (affective aspect), but also actual participation in learning (psychomotor aspect). This is consistent with the findings of Nengsih, Nasution, and Wulandari (2025), who concluded that the application of the method of storytelling in Islamic Religious Education lessons improves learning outcomes, participation, and understanding of the value of tolerance for students in secondary schools.



In addition, the results of the learning outcome test (*pretest–posttest*) reinforce other quantitative findings. The average score increased from 62.3 to 83.1, a difference of 20.8 points, indicating that increased learning interest and activity also have a direct impact on students' academic achievement. This is in line with the findings (Khoiroh et al., 2025), which state that the use of the method storytelling can increase students' intrinsic motivation and help them understand religious moral concepts more deeply. Thus, it can be concluded that the method of storytelling is not only effective in increasing interest in learning but also in improving cognitive learning outcomes through more contextual and meaningful learning.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the method of storytelling is a pedagogical approach that is in line with the principles of student-centered *learning* and humanistic learning in the context of Islamic education. Stories containing moral and spiritual values can strengthen the emotional bond between teachers and students and create an inspiring learning atmosphere. These results align with a systematic review by Nair et al. (2021), which confirms that digital storytelling increases engagement, motivation, and conceptual understanding of students in various learning contexts. Thus, the application of storytelling SKI learning has been proven effective in integrating students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions, while supporting the goals of Islamic education in forming strong character, morality, and faith from an elementary age.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been carried out at MI NWDI Lingkung on grade IV (four) students in the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, it can be concluded that the application of the method of *storytelling* has proven effective in increasing students' interest in learning the subject of Islamic Cultural History (SKI), especially in the material on the story of the Prophet.

This increase is shown by the average results of the *pretest* of 62.3, which increased to 83.1 in the *posttest*, with a difference of 20.8 points, and the results of the t-test ( $t\text{-count} = 7.82 > t\text{-table } 2.07$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) indicating a significant difference between before and after treatment. The results of the Likert scale questionnaire also showed an increase in the average score from 3.04 (medium category) to 4.47 (high category), with the largest increase in the indicators of feelings of pleasure and perception of the benefits of learning. In addition, the results of observations showed an increase in student engagement from 46% to 86%, indicating a positive change in classroom learning activities.

In general, learning with the method of storytelling creates a more lively, engaging, and meaningful learning atmosphere. Students become more enthusiastic, active, and able to understand the moral values contained in the stories of the Prophets in a fun way. Thus, it can be concluded that the method of storytelling is an effective and relevant learning strategy to be applied in SKI learning in elementary madrasas, because it is able to increase interest in learning while strengthening the formation of character and religious values of students.

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