

The Role of Prayer in Facing Life's Pressures from a Religious Psychology Perspective

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Abstract

Background: The current moral crisis, manifested through problematic behaviors, indicates a weak internalization of religious values and a lack of synergy between educational institutions, families, and society. Therefore, this study analyzes the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in shaping the character of the Muslim generation amidst modernization and identifies the challenges arising from digital technology.

Method: This study employs a library research methodology by reviewing relevant academic literature, including journals, books, and scientific reports. This approach facilitates a deep understanding of the research topic, theoretical analysis, and the formulation of logical conclusions regarding the function of PAI in character formation.

Results: Research findings indicate that PAI plays a central role in shaping Islamic character through the internalization of values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and tolerance. PAI also functions as a moral fortress protecting youth from the negative impacts of technology, including diminished empathy and spiritual degradation. However, there are obstacles in the form of weak application of moral values in learning and a lack of synergy between schools, families, and society. Although digital technology offers opportunities through virtual platforms, uncontrolled use remains at risk of causing a moral crisis, thus requiring wise integration that maintains alignment with Islamic values.

Conclusion: PAI has an essential role in forming Muslim personalities with a deep spiritual understanding while protecting students from the negative impacts of the modern era through comprehensive Islamic teachings. Despite facing challenges related to the lack of ethical approaches and environmental influences, PAI must adapt to contemporary developments to maintain Islamic identity and cultivate a faithful generation with noble character.

Keywords: teacher collaboration; integrated learning; cross-level coordination; curriculum coherence; collaborative planning; school leadership, learning sustainability;

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INTRODUCTION

Changes in the world of education have shifted the perspective on teaching, moving from a focus on separate subjects to an emphasis on providing a holistic learning experience for students. Students progress through primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary levels carrying memories, understandings, and learning habits formed through their encounters with various teachers. However, in practice, this journey often feels fragmented because each subject and grade level appears to stand in isolation (Kang, 2025). This underscores the importance of understanding organizational behavior principles to ensure that collaboration between school elements can function more cohesively (Darmawan, 2013). Teachers of mathematics, language, science, art, and other fields often work based on their own individual plans without structured conversation regarding how a child's learning experience is organized continuously. Consequently, students must repeatedly adjust to shifting patterns of demand, while the potential for strengthening the meaning of learning through interdisciplinary connections remains poorly managed. School leaders have an ethical responsibility to ensure that managerial practices support the broader interests of students (Rojak & Darmawan, 2021). This situation prompts a reflection on the need for planned collaborative management among teachers across disciplines and grade levels.

In daily school activities, teacher cooperation actually occurs in simple forms. They share stories in the staff room, ask each other about the behavior of certain students, or occasionally combine activities for special holiday commemorations. Nevertheless, such interactions are generally not bound within a deliberate collaborative structure intended to support integrated learning. Effective educational communication between teachers is highly necessary to avoid misunderstandings in instruction (Lembong et al., 2015). Lesson planning is still primarily conducted within the scope of individual subjects, without a map to guide how concepts from one field can be reinforced or illustrated through another (Cohen et al., 2024). Similarly, relationships between teachers at the primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary levels often proceed through informal channels for example, when a student is deemed problematic rather than through a vertical coordination system designed to ensure continuity of goals, approaches, and learning achievement standards. Transformational leadership is critically needed as a driver for value change within school organizations (Rojak et al., 2022).

The need for integration becomes even more apparent when curricula push for the development of competencies that cross disciplinary boundaries. Skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and collaboration are difficult to cultivate if a student's learning experience consists only of a collection of standalone subjects (Kuwar & Acharya, 2024). Multidisciplinary education has proven highly effective in enhancing children's social competence from an early age (Hariyani et al., 2021). To hone these skills, students must be presented with learning tasks that link various fields of knowledge and require cooperation with peers from diverse interest backgrounds. This is where cross-disciplinary teacher collaboration gains strategic importance. Through joint planning, teachers can design projects, themes, or series of activities that connect concepts from several subjects simultaneously. The right leadership strategy from the school principal

will largely determine the success of improving education quality (Ismaya et al., 2023). However, for this to function consistently, collaborative management is required to regulate teaching team structures, meeting patterns, and authority in joint curricular decision-making.

Beyond interdisciplinary collaboration within a single grade level, vertical continuity between educational levels is an equally critical aspect. Often, secondary school teachers complain that incoming students have not mastered the basic skills they expect, while teachers at the previous level feel they have worked hard to reach the targets (Li, 2025). Comprehensive educational evaluation can serve as a solution to monitor student development at every stage (Hutomo et al., 2012). This perception gap frequently arises due to a lack of systematic conversation regarding what is taught, how it is taught, and to what extent the assessed achievements are considered sufficient at the previous level. Well-managed vertical coordination allows teachers from primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary schools to construct a tiered overview of students' ability development in a field. Well-planned education also plays a significant role in assisting the social mobility of children in urban environments (Hartono & Sulisty, 2022). Thus, learning demands can be organized gradually and realistically, while content overlap can be minimized.

Collaboration among teachers across disciplines and grade levels is not just about occasional meetings; it requires a managerial framework that organizes the structure of cooperation. This structure includes the establishment of collaborative teaching teams with clear mandates, routine joint planning schedules, procedures for reviewing integrated lesson plans, and mechanisms for information exchange between levels (Minna & T., 2025). Novice teachers also need support to build the readiness and resilience to adapt to this collaborative work culture (Liwak et al., 2023). Without careful management, collaboration easily falls into being a ceremonial activity or becomes dependent solely on the initiative of a few enthusiastic individuals. If these key members transfer or suffer from burnout, the cooperative activities fade. Therefore, collaborative management must be positioned as part of the curriculum governance and teacher development in schools, rather than as a standalone extracurricular activity. The effectiveness of a school organization is highly dependent on how these supportive factors for cooperation are distributed evenly (Darmawan, 2024).

The primary problem that often arises in efforts to develop interdisciplinary collaboration is the lack of a strong structural foundation. In many institutions, cooperation between teachers is left to develop spontaneously without clear policy support. Heavy teaching schedules and the distribution of administrative tasks make space for interdisciplinary meetings extremely limited. Teachers tend to be tied to their individual workloads, causing the idea of cooperation to be perceived as an additional burden rather than a planned part of their professional duties (Saks et al., 2025). Issues of access and educational disparity in various regions also frequently hinder the equity of this cooperation quality (Rojak & Khayru, 2022). Furthermore, school organizational structures often arrange coordination based on narrow subject-matter clusters, meaning forums between disciplines are poorly facilitated. This condition creates the impression that collaboration is a voluntary activity performed after the main work is finished,

whereas producing meaningful integrated learning requires serious time management and institutional support.

Another problem relates to the discontinuity between educational levels that often occurs in practice. Elementary, junior high, and senior high schools may be under the same foundation or authority, but they lack standard procedures to align the curriculum and learning experiences. Meetings between teachers from different levels typically occur during student handover or special events, not for the purpose of developing a learning continuity map. Consequently, each level develops its own work plan based on its own interpretation of the national curriculum documents, without dialogue on how students' learning experiences will continue as they transition between levels (Hasitana et al., 2025). This can lead to excessive repetition of basic material at the start of a new level, or conversely, jumps in demands that are too high. The absence of a managed vertical coordination system reduces opportunities for students to enjoy a truly continuous learning flow.

In such an atmosphere, conceptual studies on cross-disciplinary and cross-level teacher collaboration management become urgent to develop. Educational institutions require a framework that explains how collaborative structures among teachers can be designed sustainably, how integrated learning planning can be arranged without sacrificing the depth of scientific disciplines, and how vertical coordination systems can be built to make students' learning journey from elementary to senior high school smoother. Without an adequate theoretical framework, collaboration risks being understood as a short-term project dependent on budget support or external programs, while changes to teachers' daily work practices remain untouched. This study is expected to provide a foundation for schools to plan, implement, and maintain cross-disciplinary and cross-level collaboration more systematically.

Based on the description above, the main question posed in this paper is formulated sharply as follows: how can a management design for cross-disciplinary and cross-level teacher collaboration be structured to organize cooperation frameworks, integrated learning planning, and vertical coordination systems across elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels in order to create learning continuity for students? This formulation deliberately focuses attention on structural management aspects, planning processes, and inter-level relationships, rather than on assessing numerical outcomes of specific programs.

In line with this problem formulation, the purpose of this paper is to develop a structured conceptual description of cross-disciplinary and cross-level teacher collaboration management within the school education system. This paper aims to explain the principles for forming and managing collaborative teaching teams, describe ways to organize integrated learning planning involving various subjects, and detail the key elements of a vertical coordination system across levels that supports the continuity of student learning experiences. Theoretically, this paper is expected to enrich the discourse on curriculum management and teacher professional development. Practically, this description is expected to provide guidance for school leaders and education policymakers to design policies and procedures for teacher collaboration more systematically, measurably, and sustainably.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative literature review approach to construct a description of teacher collaboration management across disciplines and grade levels. This decision aligns with the perspective of Patel and Patel (2019), who emphasize that methodological design must be aligned with the type of scientific question posed. The question in this paper is conceptual-normative; therefore, the primary sources are derived from scholarly literature discussing teacher collaboration, curriculum management, and cooperation between grade levels. To organize the workflow, the study follows the six stages of review for knowledge synthesis outlined by Barry et al. (2022), starting from the formulation of objectives and the establishment of source selection criteria, through to the integration of findings into an argumentative framework. Snyder's (2024) views on the importance of review design to ensure clear scientific contribution serve as an additional foundation, ensuring this study does not merely stop at data collection but organizes ideas systematically. Matos et al. (2023) demonstrate how research methodology in education can be taught through systematic review.

To position teacher collaboration within the dynamics of school organization, the study refers to the foundations of management and organizational behavior. Khasanah et al. (2010), through their discussion on business management, provide insights into structural design, task division, and work process management, which are relevant to viewing schools as learning organizations. These concepts are interpreted within the educational realm by treating collaborative teacher teams as work units requiring clarity of purpose, authority, and coordination patterns. Meanwhile, Darmawan's (2013) discussion on the principles of organizational behavior helps explain how values, perceptions of justice, and communication patterns influence individual readiness to cooperate in interdisciplinary and cross-level teams. To maintain the order of the study process, the paper relies on the insights of Smela et al. (2023) regarding rapid reviews, which demand clarity of focus and selection procedures, ensuring the literature search remains directed even when it is not exhaustive. By integrating methodological perspectives from these various sources, a literature search was conducted based on keywords related to teacher collaboration, integrated learning, curriculum coordination, and educational level continuity. Selected sources were read critically and synthesized into themes that serve as the basis for the argumentation constructed in this paper

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion on teacher collaboration management across disciplines and grade levels should begin by asserting that collaboration must be positioned as part of the formal work structure, rather than merely an individual initiative. To this end, schools or groups of schools within the same cluster of grade levels need to form collaborative teams with clear mandates. Good educational management demands organized coordination so that institutional goals can be achieved effectively (Akmal et al., 2015). This team may consist of representative teachers from various subjects and from every involved grade level. The mandate includes formulating common themes, aligning competency achievements, and reviewing student learning experiences over time. The existence of a team with a formal assignment basis facilitates the scheduling of meetings,

the division of tasks, and accountability to leadership (Wisnurat & Wasliman, 2025). In this way, teacher cooperation shifts from sporadic activities into a process that is maintained continuously. Furthermore, a school environment supported by a religious climate can strengthen teachers' honesty and dedication to carrying out such mandates (Darmawan & Mahbubah, 2026).

The structure of cross-disciplinary collaborative teams needs to be designed in such a way that it facilitates, rather than dominates, teachers' work. One approach is to group teachers into teams based on major themes that the school wishes to develop (Termaat, 2023). Examples include themes related to the environment, citizenship, or information literacy. Situational leadership should be applied to adjust management styles to the readiness and needs of these diverse teams (Gardi et al., 2024). Within each team, teachers from different subjects work together to design integrated learning activities. The team coordinator's task is to maintain the workflow, ensure meeting agendas are met, and connect the team with school leadership. The coordinator is not a supervisor, but a facilitator who helps team members translate ideas into concrete plans. With such a structure, collaboration receives an organized space while still providing teachers with professional autonomy to design lesson content. Active teacher involvement in such teams has been proven to trigger higher work motivation (Musthofa & Darmawan, 2024).

Cross-level collaboration demands the presence of a vertical coordination forum that brings together teachers from primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary schools (Yamamoto, 2023). This forum can take the form of a tiered curriculum board that meets periodically to review the map of student ability development in specific fields. Inclusive communication within the forum is essential so that interdisciplinary and cross-level collaboration is not hindered by differences in backgrounds (Sajjapong et al., 2025). For instance, in the field of literacy, teachers from all three levels work together to construct a picture of the expected reading, writing, and critical thinking skills at the end of each stage. That overview then serves as a reference for each level to design learning plans. Coordination does not end with the drafting of documents but continues with reflective meetings to discuss teaching experiences, review the appropriateness of expectations, and adjust the map if necessary. This helps prevent excessive overlap as well as unnatural leaps in demands. Openness to input from the community can also assist schools in reconstructing a future of education that is more inclusive (Warin, 2022).

Integrated learning planning requires a slightly different process compared to single-subject planning (Kuwar & Acharya, 2024). Teachers need to identify the intersection points between competencies from various fields, then design activities that allow students to perform tasks requiring the application of several concepts simultaneously. Teachers with strong pedagogical competence will find it easier to integrate various subject materials to improve student learning outcomes (Romli & Darmawan, 2025). For example, a project that combines science, mathematics, and language in the form of a simple investigation reported in writing. In collaboration management, schools need to establish clear stages for integrated planning, ranging from theme selection, competency mapping, and activity scheduling, to the design of assessments that reflect the contribution of each field. These stages should be documented so they can be repeated and refined in subsequent cycles. Innovations in teaching like this are a demand for teacher professionalism in the modern era (Sinambela et al., 2014).

Time coordination becomes a specific challenge in cross-disciplinary collaboration. Busy teaching schedules are often cited as the reason why teacher meetings are difficult to hold, especially when involving many subjects. To overcome this, school management needs to place collaborative meetings as part of the official work calendar, rather than as an additional activity to be squeezed in after all other tasks are completed. For instance, a collaborative meeting session could be set every few weeks specifically for joint planning. The utilization of digital technology can be a driver of an innovative culture and facilitate creative engagement despite having busy schedules (Rojak, 2025). Furthermore, communication between teachers can be facilitated through digital media, allowing for document alignment and the exchange of ideas without always requiring long face-to-face meetings (Merki et al., 2022).

In managing collaboration, it is important to organize the roles and responsibilities of each team member so that cooperation does not blur accountability. Each teacher retains primary responsibility for learning achievements in the subjects they teach (Balakrishnan, 2017). However, in the collaborative space, they share responsibility for the success of integrated activities. Clear roles and good communication between teachers will increase their job satisfaction (Putra & Sinambela, 2021). To maintain clarity, teams can establish agreements that explain who handles task design, who manages assessment, who maintains documentation, and who acts as a liaison with parents or other parties. These written agreements help prevent confusion and encourage a balanced distribution of workloads. Commitment to these tasks will ultimately contribute positively to teacher performance (Darmawan, 2014).

Management of cross-disciplinary and cross-level collaboration must also pay attention to the dynamics of relationships between individuals. Teachers come with diverse educational backgrounds, experiences, and pedagogical beliefs. These differences can enrich ideas, but they also have the potential to spark tension (Saks et al., 2025). An organizational culture based on mental health needs to be developed to maintain teacher performance (Rojak et al., 2025). Collaborative meetings need to be facilitated with principles of respectful communication that provide space for all voices and guide discussions toward mutual decisions. School leaders or team coordinators should possess the skills to moderate dialogue, manage divergent views, and ensure that discussions remain focused on the interests of student learning, rather than on the interests of any specific field.

In relation to professional development, interdisciplinary collaboration can be viewed as a learning vehicle for teachers. Through dialogue with colleagues from other fields, teachers have the opportunity to understand different perspectives on students and learning. They can learn about active learning strategies used in other subjects and adapt them to their own fields. An organizational learning culture allows teachers to continue developing both psychologically and professionally (Hariani & Mardikaningsih, 2026). Well-managed collaboration will link joint planning activities with professional development agendas, for instance, by inserting reflection sessions regarding what teachers learn from the collaborative process (Lo, 2020). Collaboration not only produces integrated learning plans but also enriches the teachers' own competencies. Such training and competency development significantly influence the improvement of teacher performance in the field (Mardikaningsih et al., 2022).

The involvement of school leadership is decisive for the sustainability of interdisciplinary and cross-level collaboration (Gonzalo & Johanna, 2023). Principals and their deputies need to demonstrate clear support, such as by providing meeting time, organizing workloads, and recognizing team results in performance appraisal policies. Effective and supportive leadership is proven to have a significant impact on teaching performance (Mardikaningsih, 2023). Leadership also functions as a bridge between the decisions of the collaborative team and broader regulations, such as national curriculum policies or education authority rules. On one hand, they ensure that teacher cooperation does not deviate from the applicable official framework. On the other hand, they provide creative freedom as long as collaborative ideas support learning goals and remain accountable.

Vertical coordination between educational units requires special attention to the flow of information regarding students. Each level holds data on student achievements, strengths, and areas for development. In cross-level collaboration management, this data can be utilized more meaningfully, rather than just as administrative records (Wulandari et al., 2026). The use of appropriate learning evaluations greatly helps teachers understand the student's position of achievement (Gunawan et al., 2016). For example, when students transition from primary to junior secondary school, teachers at the new level can receive summaries regarding literacy and numeracy skills, as well as interest tendencies, compiled in a language that assists in learning planning. This kind of information exchange requires procedures that maintain confidentiality while remaining sufficiently detailed to be useful in designing learning activities. Continuous evaluation of learning outcomes is key to ensuring a smooth student transition (Darmanto et al., 2014).

One of the primary goals of interdisciplinary and cross-level collaboration management is to ensure that student learning experiences feel interconnected. To that end, collaborative teams can construct what may be called thematic learning pathways that span across levels (Holley, 2024). This pathway illustrates how a major theme is raised repeatedly with depth and perspectives that develop with age. For example, the environmental theme is discussed in primary school through introduction and appreciation of the surrounding nature, in junior secondary school through observation of the impact of human activities, and in senior secondary school through the study of policies and citizen responsibility. Public awareness through education like this is highly effective for encouraging sustainable behavior change (Gautama & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Collaboration management is tasked with maintaining the consistency of such pathways, while simultaneously providing room for adaptation according to the character of each school.

Monitoring and reflection are critical components in the management of collaboration. Each integrated activity cycle should conclude with a reflection session involving teachers and, if possible, student representatives (Lambalgen, 2023). In this session, the team discusses what went well, what needs improvement, and how students responded to interdisciplinary activities. Feedback from students is also important to support their socio-emotional development within school interactions (Gani, 2025). The results of the reflection are recorded and used as a basis for improvements in the next cycle. Thus, collaboration is viewed as an evolving process, rather than a package of activities considered finished after a single implementation. Periodic monitoring also

helps assess the extent to which vertical coordination between levels has impacted the smoothness of student transitions.

Aspects of recognition and incentives must not be overlooked in collaboration management. Teachers who are actively involved in collaborative teams invest additional time and energy into planning, coordination, and reflection (Wullschleger et al., 2023). Strengthening the organization's social capital and team collaboration becomes the main foundation for supporting the success of total quality management in schools (Putra et al., 2021). To ensure participation is maintained, schools need to provide adequate recognition, whether in the form of performance appraisals, professional development opportunities, or public appreciation within the school environment. This recognition sends a message that collaborative efforts are viewed as valuable and expected. Although not all rewards must be material in nature, the attitude of managers who openly value collaborative work will strengthen teacher motivation and their sense of ownership toward the program.

Managing interdisciplinary and cross-level collaboration is also related to resource management. Integrated planning activities, coordination meetings, and reflections require space, time, and sometimes support from technological facilities. School management needs to account for these needs in budget planning and scheduling (Xu, 2025). The utilization of digital communication can help schools manage resources more efficiently (Hariyani et al., 2025). For example, providing shared workspaces that can be used by collaborative teams, or facilitating the use of digital platforms to share documents and host remote meetings when face-to-face schedules are difficult to align. Investment in such support demonstrates that collaboration is not just discourse, but a real part of the school's life.

In the realm of relationships with parents and the community, interdisciplinary and cross-level collaboration management can provide added value. When explaining learning programs to parents, schools can demonstrate how specific topics are handled in an integrated manner, so that parents understand that their children are not learning in isolated segments (Rahmi, 2025). Similarly, schools can involve external partners relevant to the learning theme, allowing integrated activities to gain support from the real world. Teacher collaboration to design relationships with external parties needs to be managed so that the messages received by students are consistent across various levels.

The success of managing interdisciplinary and cross-level teacher collaboration depends on the readiness of all parties to view teaching as a collective endeavor. The shift from individual work patterns to team work patterns demands adjustments in ways of thinking, habits, and expectations. This process is not without friction, but with the support of clear structures, open communication, and consistent leadership, collaboration has the potential to become a source of strength for schools to organize a more unified learning experience for students. At this stage, robust managerial design finds its meaning, becoming a support for the growth of sustainable collaborative practices.

The results are an exposition of data obtained from research or field observations. This section can be written in the form of tables, text, or images. Tables, graphs, images, and/or photos (if any) should be numbered, titled, and provided with complete

descriptions as well as cited within the text. The results and discussion must answer the research problems and objectives. The discussion should be linked to theories relevant to the problems. This section should take the largest proportion, reaching a range of 50%. This section can be divided into several sub-chapters, but it is not necessary to include numbering.

CONCLUSION

The discussion in this paper demonstrates that the management of interdisciplinary and cross-level teacher collaboration is a strategic necessity in the effort to construct a continuous learning experience for students. Structured collaboration requires the formation of collaborative teaching teams with clear mandates, procedures for integrated lesson planning, as well as vertical coordination forums between primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary school levels. This conceptual exposition emphasizes the importance of organizing roles, managing time, utilizing student achievement data, and fostering communication that respects diverse professional viewpoints. Supportive school leadership, recognition of teamwork, and the provision of adequate resources emerge as prerequisites to ensure that collaboration does not remain mere discourse. With proper management, interdisciplinary and cross-level teacher cooperation can become the foundation for developing thematic learning pathways that are consistent and adaptive, making the students' journey through various grade levels feel smoother and more meaningful.

The implications of this study point toward the necessity of policies at the school and educational authority levels that explicitly position interdisciplinary and cross-level collaboration as part of curriculum governance and teacher professional development. Schools are advised to develop guidelines regarding collaborative team structures, integrated planning procedures, vertical coordination schedules, and mechanisms for periodic reflection. Training programs for teachers and leaders that emphasize teamwork skills, discussion facilitation, and integrated lesson design need to be crafted to ensure that the implementers' capacities align with structural demands. For researchers, this normative study opens opportunities to conduct field research on collaboration management practices in various types of schools, allowing the proposed conceptual framework to be tested, modified, and enriched. Thus, the development of interdisciplinary and cross-level teacher collaboration can move from the realm of ideas toward practices that are deeply embedded in school life.

Based on the findings, further research is encouraged to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and the practical implementation of collaboration in diverse school contexts. Future studies should focus on empirical investigation into the challenges of institutionalizing these collaborative structures within varying school environments, particularly those with significant resource constraints. Furthermore, it is suggested that educational authorities develop standardized yet flexible modules for collaborative management that can be adapted by schools to their specific cultural and organizational needs. Refining these mechanisms will ensure that collaborative practices become a sustainable and integrated aspect of school quality management rather than an isolated administrative requirement.

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