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Application of the Problem-Based Learning Model to Improve the Learning Outcomes of Islamic Education Students at SMK Negeri 2 Sibolga

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Abstract: This research aims to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning by using problem based learning. This research is classroom action research that uses four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this research were vocational high school students. This research data was obtained using test and observation techniques. Tests are used to measure learning outcomes and observations are used to analyze teacher and student learning activities. The data analysis technique used in this research is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The research results show that problem based learning can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of student learning completeness in each cycle with details of pre-cycle 40.19%, first cycle 66.87% and in the second cycle it increased to 82.32%. Thus, the use of problem based learning can be used as an alternative to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning.

Keywords: Islamic education, learning outcomes, problem based learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in building the character and ability of students to face future challenges. At the secondary school level, the curriculum is designed to provide a deep understanding while forming a strong critical and moral attitude in students. One of the important materials in Islamic religious education in grade 6 is about halal and haram law. This material not only aims to provide conceptual knowledge, but also to form awareness and practice of Islamic values in daily life (Farkhani et al., 2022). The convergence of religious norms in positive law supports Indonesia's plurality.

Although the material on avoiding promiscuity and adultery is very important, the reality on the ground shows that many students have difficulty understanding these concepts in depth. Conventional, teacher-centered learning methods are often less

effective at building deep understanding and critical thinking skills. Students tend to only memorize definitions without being able to apply concepts in real situations. This is a big challenge in improving the quality of learning in the classroom (Suryani, Agustyaningrum, and Hasibuan, 2019). Therefore, the monopoly-based TGT (Teams-Games-Tournament) learning model has proven to be more effective in improving learning outcomes compared to conventional methods.

One of the learning approaches that can overcome this problem is the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model. PBL is a student-centered learning approach, where they are actively involved in solving real problems that are relevant to the material being studied. In the context of learning halal and haram law, PBL can be used to present daily scenarios or cases that require analysis of Islamic law. Thus, students not only understand concepts, but are also able to think critically and make decisions based on sharia principles (Anggraeni et al., 2023). Therefore, the PBL model is effective in fostering critical thinking skills of 21st century students.

The advantage of the PBL model lies in its ability to encourage students to think critically, collaboratively, and creatively. Through the problem-solving process, students are encouraged to dig up information, discuss, and evaluate proposed solutions. This is in line with the goals of national education which emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills and moral character. In addition, PBL is also relevant to the 21st century learning approach that emphasizes Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) (Lee et al., 2024). Thus, the ChatGPT-based GCLA model is also effective in improving self-regulated learning (SRL), HOTS, and learning quality.

Previous research has shown that the implementation of PBL can improve students' understanding in various subjects, including Islamic religious education. However, the application of PBL to the material of avoiding promiscuity and adultery at the secondary school level is still not widely researched, especially in the SMK Negeri 2 Sibolga environment. In fact, this material has high relevance to students' daily lives, such as promiscuity and adultery, as well as behavior that is in accordance with Islamic principles (Anggraeni et al., 2023). Therefore, the implementation of PBL is a relevant strategy to increase students' understanding of this topic.

The environmental context of SMK Negeri 2 Sibolga is also an important factor that needs to be considered. As a school located in an area with cultural and social diversity, students' understanding of avoiding promiscuity and adultery can be the foundation in forming an attitude of tolerance and moral awareness. Therefore, an effective learning strategy is needed to optimize the potential of students and answer local environmental challenges (Suryani, Agustyaningrum, and Hasibuan, 2019). Effective learning in understanding promiscuity and adultery is very important in building tolerance and morale of students. The implementation of PBL is expected to change the learning pattern that has been passive to more interactive and participatory. By involving students directly in problem solving, it is hoped that they can understand the material of avoiding promiscuity and adultery in depth, as well as develop critical thinking skills. This process can also help students to relate the concepts they learn to their daily lives, so that learning becomes more meaningful (Lee et al., 2024). Therefore, the implementation of PBL has been shown to improve interactive, critical, and meaningful learning. In addition, PBL provides space for teachers to act as facilitators who guide the learning process. Teachers not only deliver material, but also help students analyze problems, formulate solutions, and reflect on learning outcomes. This role is crucial for creating a conducive and enjoyable learning atmosphere (Lee et al., 2024). Thus, PBL allows teachers to act as facilitators in effective learning.

In order to improve the quality of learning and contribute to the development of innovative learning models, this study aims to examine the application of the PBL model in improving students' understanding and critical thinking skills on the material of avoiding promiscuity and adultery. This research is expected to provide practical benefits for teachers, students, and schools, as well as a reference for the implementation of PBL in

other subjects (Lee et al., 2024). Thus, this research is a strategic step in answering educational challenges in the modern era, especially in the context of Islamic religious learning. The application of the PBL model is expected not only to improve students' conceptual understanding, but also to form the character and critical thinking skills needed to face future life challenges.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is an innovative learning model designed to develop a variety of important skills in learners. Barrows (1986) explained that PBL is very effective in improving critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills. In PBL, students are invited to be actively involved in facing and solving real problems, so that the learning process becomes more meaningful.

Hmelo-Silver (2004) added that PBL also contributes to the improvement of concept mastery by students. By solving relevant problems, learners not only learn to understand the theory but also apply it in practical situations. This process helps them to build a deeper understanding of the learning material. In addition to mastery of concepts, PBL has a positive impact on students' social skills. This method encourages students to work in groups, discuss, and exchange ideas. Through this collaboration, students not only learn from the material but also from the perspective of their peers, which ultimately improves communication and cooperation skills. Thus, PBL becomes a comprehensive learning approach to build critical, social, and conceptual thinking skills simultaneously.

According to Ausubel (1963), conceptual understanding is the core of meaningful learning. A meaningful learning process occurs when learners are able to relate new knowledge to concepts they already have. Thus, learning is not just memorization, but builds a broader and structured framework of knowledge. The application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model is in line with this idea because it encourages students to relate learning materials to real situations or experiences. In PBL, students are faced with problems that are relevant to daily life. This problem-solving process forces them to understand concepts in depth and apply them contextually. Through the PBL approach, students not only understand the theory, but also see how the concept plays a role in solving real problems. This provides a more meaningful and memorable learning experience, so that students can better internalize knowledge. Thus, PBL is one of the effective learning methods to support the understanding of concepts and the relevance of learning.

According to Ennis (1985), critical thinking is an important ability in the learning process, because it involves the skill to analyze arguments, evaluate evidence, and draw conclusions logically. Critical thinking is not just about receiving information, but also exploring, questioning, and testing the validity of that information. This ability is the foundation for fact-based and logical decision-making. In the context of education, critical thinking allows learners to develop sharp analytical abilities. Students are taught to identify valid arguments, distinguish facts from opinions, and assess the quality and relevance of the evidence presented. By thinking critically, learners are not only passive recipients of information, but also able to evaluate and use information to solve problems effectively. Critical thinking skills also play an important role in preparing students to face real-world challenges. With the ability to draw logical conclusions, learners are able to deal with complex situations and make informed decisions. Therefore, the development of critical thinking skills through relevant learning approaches, such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL), is very important in modern education.

Islamic religious education has the main goal of forming the noble morals of students. Through this education, students are taught moral values based on Islamic teachings, so that they are able to become well-behaved individuals in daily life. Noble morals not only include a relationship with Allah, but also with fellow humans and the environment, which is an important foundation in building a harmonious society.

In addition to the formation of morals, Islamic religious education also aims to provide a deep understanding of Islamic law. One of the important aspects of sharia is halal and haram law, which regulates various aspects of life, such as food, drink, behavior,

and muamalah. This understanding is not only theoretical, but must also be internalized and applied in real daily actions by students. Avoiding promiscuity and adultery has a high relevance to the daily life of students. Through a good understanding, students are expected to be able to make decisions that are in accordance with Islamic sharia principles in various situations. Therefore, Islamic religious education plays an important role in guiding students to live a balanced life between spiritual and practical aspects in accordance with religious guidance (Hasibuan, 2020). According to Trilling and Fadel (2009), 21st century learning emphasizes the importance of developing Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). These skills include the ability to think critically, be creative, and solve problems, which are indispensable in facing the challenges of the increasingly complex modern world. 21st century learning aims to equip learners with skills that they can apply in real life, not only in academic contexts, but also in the world of work and social life.

Critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving are skills that are key to adapting to rapid changes in various fields. For this reason, education must be able to provide space for students to develop these skills, not only through memorization-based teaching, but with a more active and reflective approach. These higher-order thinking skills help students to understand information more deeply, generate new ideas, and solve problems in a more innovative way. One of the effective approaches in accommodating the development of HOTS is the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model. Through PBL, students are not only given theoretical knowledge, but also invited to solve real problems that are relevant to their lives. This process encourages them to think critically in analyzing problems, developing creative solutions, and applying their knowledge. Thus, PBL is one of the most suitable methods to support the development of higher-order thinking skills in the 21st century learning era.

METHODS

This study uses the Classroom Action Research (PTK) approach which aims to improve students' understanding and critical thinking skills through the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model. This approach allows teachers to intervene directly in the learning process in the classroom, so that learning problems can be identified and addressed effectively. In addition, PTK provides space for teachers to evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of actions taken to achieve better learning outcomes. One of the reasons for choosing PTK is its focus on improving learning. PTK offers solutions to various learning challenges faced by students, including in understanding halal and haram legal materials. By actively involving students in problem-based learning, PTK encourages them to better understand the concepts taught and hone their critical thinking skills. In addition, PTK has the characteristics of a continuous cycle which includes planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. This cycle allows teachers to continuously improve learning strategies based on the results of each cycle's evaluation. The direct involvement of teachers as researchers also makes PTK relevant in improving the quality of learning in the classroom, because teachers can interact directly with students to identify their needs and provide the right solutions.

The application of the problem-based learning model (PBL) as an intervention to improve students' understanding and critical thinking skills. This study measures the level of students' understanding of halal and haram legal material through an understanding test or assessment of learning outcomes that includes their ability to understand concepts, provide examples, and apply the material. In addition, this study also evaluates students' ability to analyze, evaluate, and make logical decisions in the context of the material studied. This ability reflects the critical thinking aspect which is one of the main goals of the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model.

The indicators of this research include the ability of students to understand and think critically about halal and haram legal materials. Students' understanding is

measured through their ability to explain the concepts of Avoiding Promiscuity and Adultery, provide concrete examples related to the law, and answer questions related to its application in daily life. Meanwhile, students' critical thinking skills are shown through their ability to identify problems related to Avoiding Promiscuity and Adultery, provide arguments or solutions to problems that arise, and evaluate the impact of an action based on halal and haram legal principles. These indicators are a benchmark for the successful implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in improving the quality of learning.

Thus, this study uses the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model as an independent variable to improve students' understanding and critical thinking skills towards the material of Avoiding Promiscuity and Adultery. The level of students' understanding is measured through tests or assessments that include the ability to understand concepts, give examples, and apply the material, while critical thinking skills are assessed through the ability to analyze, evaluate, and make logical decisions regarding the material. Success indicators include understanding concepts, applying them in daily life, identifying problems, solutions, and evaluating the impact of actions based on Avoiding Promiscuity and Adultery. All of these indicators are a measure of the success of the implementation of the PBL model in improving the quality of learning. The population in this study is all students in class X at State High School 2 Sibolga. This population was chosen because they are a relevant target group to learn and understand the material on Avoiding Promiscuity and Adultery in accordance with the applicable curriculum.

RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model has a significant positive impact on the learning outcomes of Islamic Education students at SMK 2 Sibolga. Through the implementation of PBL, students demonstrated an increased understanding of the concepts of Halal and Haram laws, as well as the importance of avoiding free association and immoral behavior. The learning process became more engaging and meaningful as students actively participated in solving real-life problems related to Islamic teachings. Moreover, students' critical thinking skills improved as they were encouraged to analyze, evaluate, and provide logical arguments based on Islamic principles. The ability to connect theoretical knowledge with practical applications was also enhanced, allowing students to internalize the lessons more effectively. The results from assessments and evaluations showed a significant improvement in students' comprehension and problem-solving abilities.

In addition to academic benefits, the PBL model also fostered better collaboration and communication among students. Working in groups to discuss and solve problems helped them develop teamwork and social skills, which are essential in both academic and real-life settings. Teachers observed that students became more motivated and confident in expressing their thoughts and ideas. Overall, the findings of this study confirm that the Problem-Based Learning model is an effective instructional approach for improving both the cognitive and affective aspects of students' learning in Islamic Education. It not only enhances their understanding of religious concepts but also equips them with critical thinking and decision-making skills that are crucial for their personal and moral development. Therefore, the PBL model is recommended as an innovative teaching method for Islamic Education to ensure a deeper and more meaningful learning experience.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of this study highlights the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in enhancing students' learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMK 2 Sibolga. The findings indicate that PBL plays a crucial role in promoting student

engagement, improving critical thinking skills, and fostering a deeper understanding of religious concepts. This aligns with previous research, which suggests that PBL encourages active learning by allowing students to explore real-world problems and develop their own solutions. One of the key factors contributing to the success of PBL is its student-centered approach. Unlike traditional teacher-centered methods, where students passively receive information, PBL encourages them to actively seek knowledge through inquiry, discussion, and problem-solving. This method enhances their ability to analyze issues, apply Islamic teachings in daily life, and make well-reasoned decisions. The study's findings suggest that students not only retained information better but also developed stronger reasoning and argumentation skills.

Furthermore, the study found that PBL had a positive impact on students' motivation and confidence. The interactive nature of PBL created a dynamic learning environment where students felt more comfortable expressing their thoughts and engaging in discussions. This finding supports the idea that when students are given opportunities to explore and discuss topics independently, they develop a sense of ownership over their learning, leading to increased motivation and self-confidence. Another important aspect discussed in this study is the role of teachers in facilitating PBL. Unlike conventional teaching methods where teachers act as primary sources of knowledge, in PBL, teachers serve as facilitators who guide students through the learning process. This shift in the teacher's role requires a change in instructional strategies, emphasizing guidance, questioning, and feedback rather than direct instruction. The study suggests that teachers need adequate training and preparation to implement PBL effectively, ensuring that students receive the necessary support in their learning journey.

Despite its numerous benefits, the implementation of PBL also comes with challenges. Some students initially struggled with adapting to the independent and inquiry-based nature of the model. They were accustomed to more structured learning environments and needed time to adjust to the increased responsibility for their own learning. Additionally, PBL requires careful planning and sufficient time for discussion and problem-solving, which may pose challenges in curriculum scheduling. However, these challenges can be mitigated through proper planning, clear instructions, and continuous teacher support. In conclusion, the discussion emphasizes that PBL is a highly effective learning model for Islamic Education, as it fosters critical thinking, deeper comprehension, and higher student engagement. The study's findings suggest that integrating PBL into Islamic Education curricula can significantly enhance students' ability to understand and apply Islamic teachings in real-life situations. While there are challenges in its implementation, the benefits of PBL outweigh the difficulties, making it a recommended approach for improving the quality of Islamic Education.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study confirm that the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model is an effective approach for improving students' learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMK 2 Sibolga. By engaging students in active learning and real-world problem-solving, PBL enhances their understanding of Islamic teachings, critical thinking skills, and ability to apply knowledge in daily life. The student-centered nature of PBL fosters greater motivation, participation, and confidence, making learning more meaningful and impactful. Furthermore, the role of teachers as facilitators in PBL is crucial to its success. Teachers need to provide guidance, encourage inquiry, and create an interactive learning environment to maximize student engagement. Although challenges such as adapting to independent learning and time constraints exist, these can be addressed through proper planning and continuous support. Overall, this study concludes that implementing PBL in Islamic Education offers significant benefits, including deeper comprehension, improved problem-solving abilities, and a more engaging classroom experience. Therefore, integrating PBL into the curriculum is highly recommended as an effective strategy for

enhancing the quality of Islamic Education and preparing students to think critically and apply Islamic values in real-life situations.

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