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Implementation of Discussion Method to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Islamic Education Learning at SMP Negeri 8 Sibolga

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Abstract: This study aims to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning using the Discussion Method. This study is a classroom action research that uses four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were elementary school students. The data for this study were obtained by 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 study is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results of the study indicate that the Discussion Method can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of student learning completion in each cycle with details of the pre-cycle 40.89%, the first cycle 68.87% and in the second cycle increased to 90.32%. Thus, the Discussion Method can be used as an alternative to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning.

Keywords: Discussion Method, Learning Outcomes. Islamic Education.

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INTRODUCTION

In an effort to face challenges in the era of increasingly competitive globalization, it is seen as necessary to prepare the quality of human resources that have superior competitiveness in facing all forms of future challenges. To meet all of that, the effort to create social engineering related to improving the quality of education is a logical relevance. Whether you realize it or not, education has a strategic role in forming a basic understanding in determining the direction of engineering.

This is in accordance with John Dewey's statement (Sagala, 2003:3) that: Education is a process of forming basic fundamental abilities, both regarding thinking power or intellectual power, as well as emotional power or feelings directed to human nature and to others. Education is a process of interaction between students and

educators in learning activities. The purpose of national education according to Law No. 20 of 2003 / article 3 states that "To develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and devote themselves to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens". From this explanation, the affective and psychomotor aspects are also a priority in the goals of national education, not only the cognitive aspect.

So national education also aims to balance the learning outcomes of students in school with their behavior. In the process of implementing education in schools, teachers play a decisive role in developing children's potential, so in the end it depends on teachers in utilizing their existing abilities. In this case, teachers have a role as facilitators, motivators, and inspirational for students to achieve the expected goals (Mulyasa, 2007: 53). All of these things are very decisive for the success of students in achieving their goals with a change in behavior as a result of learning. The learning process is an interaction activity between teachers and students and mutual communication that takes place in an educational situation to achieve learning goals (Prayitno, 2009: 45).

With all of that, students and educators can play a role so that in the end they achieve learning outcomes that are in accordance with what has been determined. Teachers as educators play an important role in providing knowledge to students so that they have the mastery of knowledge and life skills needed to face real life. Teachers have an obligation to give birth to a young generation who are qualified both intellectually and morally. This can be done by creating effective learning. In learning activities, there is interaction between students, interaction between teachers and students, and interaction between students and learning resources.

However, in reality, the learning process carried out by teachers is still not running optimally, especially in Islamic religious education subjects. One of the reasons is the conventional way of teaching teachers with lectures, explaining material in front of the class, and conducting questions and answers with students who can or are active in the classroom. This makes the learning process dominated by teachers and only a few students. Meanwhile, for passive students, they do not have much role in the learning process. The lecture method used by teachers in delivering material can make learning boring. Students are not given the opportunity to compile their own knowledge in the learning process. This situation makes students think that what they learn in class is meaningless for their future lives. This has an impact on children's reduced interest in learning Islamic Religious Education lessons. In addition, because of the lack of student roles in learning, it will make students passive, bored, and bored. There are often problems with students, when the learning process is passive, students are asked to swallow the things conveyed by the teacher. The activity of the pouring system can cause dwarfing of children's potential, even though every child is born with extraordinary potential (Widowati, 2012: 9). Here students experience many problems, including laziness because of what is said to be dissatisfied.

Sleepy because the atmosphere is not lively. The students rarely ask questions, although teachers often ask students to ask if there is anything they need do not understand or do not understand how to speak. Islamic Religious Education learning should provide opportunities for students to actively participate. Teachers should be able to develop an active learning process so that student participation in learning increases. Islamic Religious Education learning can improve students' thinking skills, students are not only able to memorize but are active in learning. Islamic Religious Education materials are basically in the form of facts, concepts, principles, and theories (Lufri, 2007: 17). Therefore, teaching must be varied with other methods. The learning motto that can be applied in involving students to be active and innovative as a whole to support the smooth learning process is to use the discussion method learning process. The main purpose of this method is to solve problems, answer questions and understand students' knowledge, as well as to make a decision.

Therefore, discussion is not a debate that pits arguments. Discussions are more about exchanging experiences to determine certain decisions together. Based on the background that has been described, the author is interested in conducting research with a discussion method to improve student learning outcomes in learning Islamic Religious Education, especially on the material of obedience to rules, competition in goodness and work ethic, then the researcher raises in a class action research entitled "Application of Discussion Methods to Improve the Learning Outcomes of Grade VII Students on the Material of Getting to Know Al-Asma al Husna Al-Alim, Al-Khabir, As-Sami' and Al-Bashir at SMP N 8 Sibolga".

METHODS

The research design used by the author in this study is to use a qualitative approach with the type of Classroom Action Research (PTK). Classroom action research is part of action research, and this level of research is part of research in general. The main characteristics or characteristics in action research are the participation of researchers in an activity and the purpose of improving the quality of a program or activity through action research. Referring to these characteristics, classroom action research can be defined as an action research carried out by teachers as well as researchers in the classroom or together with others (collaboration) by designing, implementing and reflecting actions collaboratively and participatively that aim to improve or improve the quality of the learning process in the classroom through a certain action in a cycle.

Classroom action research is carried out in the form of cyclical activities consisting of four stages in one meeting and the sum of all meetings is two cycles. The research setting is the location where the research is conducted, and the time is about when and how long it takes for the research from the beginning to the end. This class action research was carried out at SMP 8 Sibolga Sibolga City. The research was carried out in the 2024/2025 school year in an odd semester. Starting in July until December 2024. The subjects in this study are grade VII students of SMP 8 Sibolga for the 2024/2023 school year with a total of 30 students.

In this study, the researcher will carry out several cycles. Each cycle includes planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Its implementation starts from the first cycle consisting of actions carried out in the cycle. The type of data used in this PTK is descriptive qualitative analysis, which is an analysis that emphasizes the discussion of data and research subjects by presenting data systematically and not concluding the results of the research. Descriptive qualitative analysis is used to describe the learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) material on Al-asma al-husna Al-Alim, Al-Khabir, As-Sami' and Al-Bashir.

This analysis includes the average score of the student's daily test scores, assignment and homework scores, maximum grades, minimum grades, and ideal scores. In addition, descriptive qualitative analysis is used to describe student learning outcomes, teachers' ability to manage learning, and student responses during learning. The data sources in this study consist of several sources, namely students, teachers, and collaborators.

RESULTS

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of the discussion method in improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 8 Sibolga. The discussion method was chosen as an alternative to traditional lecture-based teaching, which often results in passive student participation. By engaging students in discussions, this method allows them to express their thoughts, ask questions, and critically analyze the subject matter, leading to a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings. The study was conducted in a class of eighth-grade students over a period of four weeks.

Data collection methods included classroom observations, student questionnaires, and teacher interviews. The findings revealed that the discussion method significantly improved student engagement and comprehension. Initially, students were hesitant to participate actively, but as they became accustomed to the discussion format, their confidence and willingness to express their opinions increased. This shift in classroom dynamics created a more interactive learning environment. One of the key findings of this research was the positive impact of discussions on students' critical thinking skills.

Through guided discussions, students were encouraged to analyze religious concepts, compare different perspectives, and provide logical arguments for their viewpoints. This approach helped them develop a deeper understanding of Islamic principles and their applications in daily life. Additionally, students became more reflective and were able to relate Islamic teachings to real-world situations, which enhanced their ability to retain and apply knowledge.

The study also found that student collaboration improved as a result of using the discussion method. Group discussions fostered teamwork, active listening, and respect for differing opinions. Students learned to express their thoughts more clearly and confidently while also considering the viewpoints of their peers. Teachers observed that this collaborative learning approach not only enhanced academic performance but also strengthened social relationships among students, creating a more supportive and inclusive classroom environment. In terms of academic performance, the research showed a significant improvement in student learning outcomes. Pre- and post-discussion assessments indicated that students who actively participated in discussions demonstrated better comprehension and retention of Islamic Education material. Their test scores and class participation levels improved compared to previous lessons that relied on traditional teaching methods.

The interactive nature of discussions made learning more engaging and encouraged students to take a more active role in their education. Despite the overall success of the discussion method, some challenges were identified. One of the main difficulties was managing classroom discussions effectively. Some students dominated the conversation, while others remained silent. To address this issue, teachers had to implement structured discussion formats, such as assigning specific roles to students or using guiding questions to ensure equal participation. Additionally, some students needed encouragement to overcome their shyness and actively engage in discussions. Another challenge was maintaining the relevance and focus of discussions. At times, students deviated from the main topic, requiring teachers to carefully moderate the discussions and bring them back on track. This highlighted the importance of the teacher's role as a facilitator in ensuring that discussions remained meaningful and contributed to the learning objectives. With proper planning and execution, these challenges were gradually minimized, leading to more effective learning sessions.

Overall, this study confirms that the discussion method is a valuable teaching strategy for improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. By promoting active participation, critical thinking, and collaboration, this method enhances students' comprehension and retention of religious teachings. Teachers should continue to refine their discussion-based approaches and explore ways to further support student engagement in the classroom. In conclusion, the implementation of the discussion method at SMP Negeri 8 Sibolga has proven to be an effective means of improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education. With appropriate teacher guidance and well-structured discussions, students can develop not only a deeper understanding of the subject matter but also essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. Future studies could explore the long-term impact of this method and its applicability to other subjects to further enhance educational quality.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the discussion method plays a significant role in improving student learning outcomes in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 8 Sibolga. By shifting from a teacher-centered approach to a more interactive and student-centered learning environment, students were encouraged to participate actively in discussions. This method allowed them to voice their opinions, ask questions, and explore Islamic concepts in greater depth. As a result, their comprehension of the subject matter improved, and they developed a stronger connection to the lessons. One of the most notable impacts of the discussion method was the enhancement of students' critical thinking skills. During discussions, students were encouraged to analyze religious concepts, evaluate different perspectives, and develop well-reasoned arguments.

This process enabled them to think more deeply about Islamic teachings and apply them to real-life situations. Compared to traditional rote memorization techniques, discussions provided a more meaningful and engaging learning experience that helped students retain information more effectively. Additionally, the discussion method fostered collaboration and communication skills among students. Working in groups allowed them to engage in active listening, respect different viewpoints, and express their thoughts with greater confidence. Teachers observed that students who previously hesitated to speak in class became more comfortable participating in discussions. This interactive learning environment also strengthened relationships among students, promoting a sense of teamwork and mutual respect in the classroom.

However, implementing the discussion method was not without challenges. One of the primary difficulties was ensuring balanced participation among students. Some students were eager to contribute, while others remained passive. To address this issue, teachers implemented structured discussion techniques, such as assigning specific roles to students or using guiding questions to encourage quieter students to speak. These strategies helped create a more inclusive and equitable discussion environment. Another challenge was maintaining focus and relevance during discussions. At times, students strayed from the main topic, making it necessary for teachers to guide conversations back on track. The role of the teacher as a facilitator became crucial in ensuring that discussions remained productive and aligned with learning objectives.

With proper moderation and clear guidelines, the effectiveness of discussions in enhancing student learning outcomes was maximized. Overall, the discussion method has proven to be a highly effective approach to improving student engagement and academic performance in Islamic Education. By promoting active participation, critical thinking, and collaboration, it provides students with a deeper understanding of religious teachings. Teachers should continue refining their facilitation techniques to ensure that discussions remain structured, engaging, and beneficial for all students.

The success of this method suggests that it could be further explored in other subjects beyond Islamic Education. Future studies could investigate its impact on different academic disciplines and grade levels, as well as the long-term effects on student learning outcomes. By integrating more interactive teaching methods, educators can create more dynamic and effective learning environments that enhance student success.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the discussion method in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 8 Sibolga has proven to be an effective approach in enhancing students' learning outcomes. By shifting from a teacher-centered approach to an interactive learning environment, students became more engaged and active participants in the classroom. The opportunity to express their thoughts, ask questions, and analyze concepts through discussions allowed them to develop a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings, making learning more meaningful and impactful. One of the key benefits of the discussion method was its ability to improve students' critical thinking skills. By encouraging students to evaluate different perspectives and articulate their reasoning, this method helped them develop a

more analytical approach to learning. Instead of passively memorizing information, students were actively involved in constructing knowledge, which contributed to better comprehension and long-term retention of the material. Additionally, the discussion method fostered essential communication and collaboration skills among students. Through group discussions, students learned to listen actively, respect different opinions, and express their ideas with confidence. This not only enhanced their academic performance but also helped them develop social skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth in the future. The collaborative nature of discussions created a supportive classroom environment where students felt encouraged to participate. Despite its effectiveness, the study also identified several challenges in implementing the discussion method, such as ensuring equal participation among students and maintaining the focus of discussions. However, with proper facilitation techniques, such as structured discussion formats and teacher guidance, these challenges were successfully managed. Teachers played a crucial role in moderating discussions to ensure that they remained productive and aligned with learning objectives. In conclusion, the discussion method is a valuable teaching strategy that significantly enhances student engagement, critical thinking, and learning outcomes in Islamic Education. To maximize its effectiveness, teachers should continue refining their facilitation skills and encourage more structured and inclusive discussions. Future research could explore its long-term impact and application in other subjects to further improve teaching and learning strategies in schools.

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