

Improving Understanding of Islamic Cultural History Subjects Through Discussion Methods

Sodikin¹,

MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih Central Lampung, Indonesia¹

ABSTRACT

Based on the results of observations and interviews with students and teachers of Islamic Cultural History at MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih Central Lampung, it was identified that one of the main problems is the lack of focus in learning. In response to this problem, the researcher plans to apply the discussion method as a new approach in the learning process. This study uses a classroom action research approach, focusing on improving student learning outcomes measured through grades. The research process is divided into three cycles, each consisting of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection, with each cycle involving one meeting. In the first cycle, out of a total of 36 students who took the test, there were 10 students who had not completed the test. Considering that there are still students who have not reached completion, the researcher continues the research to cycle II. If the results in cycle II are also not satisfactory, the research will be forwarded to cycle III to ensure that the discussion method can effectively improve students' focus and learning outcomes in the subject. This approach is expected to provide significant solutions to existing learning problems and help students achieve better outcomes.

KEYWORDS

islamic cultural history, through, discussion methods

CONTACT: sodikin10@gmail.com

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A. Introduction

Education, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, is an integral effort that aims to develop children's ethics, mind, and physical health in order to achieve perfection in life. He believes that education should help children to live and interact in harmony with nature and the society around them, so that they can advance the quality and potential of children as a whole. Ade Imelda, 'Implementation of Value Education in Islamic Religious Education', 8 (2017). In his view, education is not just a transfer of knowledge, but a process that shapes a child's character and emotional intelligence, making him a complete and harmonious individual. Meanwhile, Ruminiati views education as a process and method that aims to educate students to become more mature and virtuous

individuals. He emphasized that education must follow the philosophy of life adhered to, so as to produce individuals who are not only intelligent in thinking but also have good ethics. These two views, although different in emphasis, both emphasize the importance of education in the formation of children's character and personality, with the ultimate goal of creating individuals who are in harmony with their environment and society. Education is defined as a continuous process, which contributes to the overall development of children, both in moral, intellectual, and social aspects.

Madrasah Tsanawiyah is one of the important parts of nine-year basic education in Indonesia, which serves as a means to equip students with various sciences. One of the subjects taught is Islamic Cultural History (SKI), which has a significant contribution in shaping students' character and understanding of Islam. SKI not only provides knowledge about the history and development of Islamic civilization, but also serves as a motivation for students to love their religion. By learning and understanding the teachings and values contained in SKI, students can further apply Islamic principles in their daily lives. SKI serves as an important historical source to understand the journey of Islam and also serves as an *uswah*, which is a good example to follow (Asriyanti: 2016). Through SKI learning, it is hoped that students can obtain strong life guidelines and make them a foundation for behaving and interacting with others. In this way, Madrasah Tsanawiyah not only equips students with academic knowledge, but also shapes their personalities in accordance with the true teachings of Islam. Based on the results of observations and interviews that have been conducted at MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih Central Lampung, there are still obstacles that occur in the learning process. The learning process in the classroom has obstacles, namely monotonous learning methods, lack of interest in learning Islamic Cultural History which results in students not paying attention to learning and the learning outcomes of some students in SKI subjects are relatively low. The solution to answer the problems encountered is to use the learning discussion method. Through the learning discussion method, the learning process in the classroom will be more varied so that it can improve student learning outcomes and it is hoped that students will be much more enthusiastic in participating in the learning process in class.

The application of the discussion method in teaching Islamic Cultural History in grade IX MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih Central Lampung has shown a significant increase in students' understanding of the material. Structured discussions allow students to explore and delve deeper into important concepts in Islamic history (Siti Mahmudah, 2018). In group discussions, students can exchange ideas, ask questions, and discuss various perspectives that enrich their knowledge. This method also encourages students to actively participate, which contributes to the improvement of their critical and analytical thinking skills. By sharing views and discussing various topics, students can more easily remember and understand the historical information taught. As a result, the level of mastery of Islamic cultural history materials increased significantly compared to traditional teaching methods that were less interactive.

In addition, the application of the discussion method also has a positive impact on overall student learning achievement (Affan Mustoffa and Ahmad, 2019). Through active interaction in discussions, students not only better understand the subject matter but also improve their communication and cooperation skills. This is reflected in the results of the evaluation which shows an increase in value and a better understanding of the topics discussed. With direct feedback from peers and teachers during discussions, students can quickly identify and correct their misunderstandings. This discussion method also builds a more dynamic and fun learning environment, which in turn increases students' motivation and interest in Islamic Cultural History lessons. Thus, the learning achievement of students at MTs Assa'adah is increasing and showing satisfactory progress in terms of their understanding and academic achievements.

B. Theoretical Framework

Understanding, which comes from the word "understand" with the suffix "pe-an," refers to the process, way, or act of understanding something. According to Herry Agus Susanto, understanding is the ability to explain knowledge or information that has been known in one's own words. In this case, a person is expected to be able to translate or re-express the information that has been heard using his own language. Benjamin Bloom, an education expert, put forward six categories in the cognitive realm that are the goals of education: knowledge, understanding, application, (Siti Marqiyah, 2011). analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This category of comprehension is important because it reflects the extent to which a person not only memorizes information but can also articulate and explain that information effectively. Through this category of comprehension, a person can show that they truly understand the material being studied, not just know or memorize it. Thus, understanding plays an important role in education because it underlies the ability to apply, analyze, and evaluate information in depth.

Discussion is a form of communication interaction involving two or more people, where they exchange ideas and information on a specific topic to reach a deeper understanding. This process generally focuses on the delivery and exchange of basic knowledge, which allows participants to gain a broader and more accurate perspective on the topics discussed. Armai Arif defines discussion as a process of verbal interaction between two or more individuals who share opinions with each other and try to maintain each other's views (self-maintenance) in order to solve certain problems (problem solving). In this context, discussion is not just an exchange of ideas, but also a collaborative effort to understand and solve problems in a constructive way. Through discussions, participants can hone critical thinking skills, improve understanding, and reach better agreements or solutions (Ahmad Masrukin and Ahmad Arba'i, 2018). In addition, discussions allow for more effective learning, as the process encourages active engagement and deep reflection on various perspectives. Thus, discussion becomes an important tool in the process of education and individual development, because it can enrich knowledge and improve thinking and decision-making.

History, which comes from the Arabic word "Syajaratun" which means tree, refers to the structure and development of events from the past. In the Western language, the term history is known by various designations such as "Histoire" in French, "Geschiedenis" in Netherlands, and "History" in United Kingdom (Sukmana, 2021). All of these terms have their roots in the Greek language, "Istoria," which means science or science, suggesting that history is a field of study that relies on research to find evidence and facts. History not only records various past events, but also tells important stories in the life of mankind. In the context of Islamic civilization, the term used is "Al-Hadharah Al-Islamiyah," which refers to the development of culture and civilization based on Islamic teachings. History, as such, serves as a detailed and structured record of humanity's journey, allowing us to understand how past events shaped the world as we know it today.

The word "history" in Arabic comes from the word "syajarah," which means tree. This term encompasses the entire journey from the beginning of the tree's growth to everything it produces (Zamzam Mustofa, 2023). In other words, history or "syajarah" can be interpreted as a detailed record of everything related to the tree. In this context, the history of Islamic culture in madrasah ibtidaiyah includes several important aspects. First, the history of pre-Islamic Arab society, including the birth and apostolate of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Second, the da'wah of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his companions, which includes their steadfastness and patience in spreading the teachings of Islam, the personality of the Prophet, migration to Habasyah, and the Isra'

Mi'raj event. Third, the migration of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH to Yastrib (Medina), the heroism of the Prophet, the conquest of Makkah (Fatkhul Makkah), and the final event of the life of the Prophet PBUH. Fifth, the events during the Khulafa'urrasyidin period. Finally, the history of the struggle of Islamic religious leaders in various regions. All of these aspects form an integral part of the historical understanding of Islamic culture and provide a comprehensive picture of the development of Islamic religion and society from the beginning.

C. Method

This research was carried out in the odd semester of the 2022/2023 academic year at MTs Assa'addah, Gunung Sugih, Central Lampung. The selection of this location is based on the consideration that this school is a good representation to research students' understanding of the subject of Islamic Cultural History. This research aims to identify and improve students' understanding of the material through planned methods. During the research period, MTs Assa'addah serves as a hub of activity, with an environment conducive to data collection and interaction between researchers and research subjects. The existence of a supportive environment is essential to ensure that the data collected is accurate and relevant to the research objectives.

The research subjects consisted of grade IX students of MTs Assa'addah, which amounted to 36 students, with details of 14 male students and 12 female students. This grouping provides a representative picture of class dynamics and differences in understanding between male and female students. With this large and diverse group, the data obtained is expected to provide in-depth insights into the effectiveness of the methods applied in improving their understanding of Islamic Cultural History. Gender differences within student groups also provide an opportunity to analyze how teaching methods affect the understanding of each group differently.

This research procedure is designed in three cycles that include planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. With this cycle approach, it is hoped that changes in students' understanding can be seen from one cycle to the next. Data collection techniques involve qualitative and quantitative methods, such as observation, interviews, written tests, and documentation. Observation aims to monitor student activities and interactions during the learning process, interviews are used to obtain students' subjective views, written tests measure their learning outcomes, and documentation records all activities and developments that occur during the research. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of how teaching methods affect students' understanding.

D. Research Results

The learning process in cycle 3 was attended by grade IX students of MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih Central Lampung with a total of 36 students consisting of 15 boys and 21 girls. The actions carried out in cycle 3 are as follows:

a. Planning Stage

At the planning stage, the lesson plan is prepared, preparing evaluation sheets, teacher activity observation sheets and student activity observation sheets used during learning activities.

b. Stage of Implementation of Actions

The researcher carried out actions in the form of a cycle on Wednesday, December 15, 2022 and held 1x meeting with a total of JP 2x35 minutes or 70 minutes. Learning activities are carried out in accordance with the RPP, namely three stages of activities, namely; 1) initial/preliminary activities, 2) core activities, 3) closing activities.

c. Observation Stage

After carrying out the learning, the author continued the research by carrying out observations on learning activities in the classroom in cycle 1 based on observation sheets of teacher activities and student activities

d. Reflection Stage

In the reflection stage of cycle I, the analysis of learning outcomes in cycle I there are still some students who have not completed learning, but the learning outcomes in cycle I have increased student learning outcomes which in the initial condition to cycles II and third, even though there are still some students who are not complete in learning, the author continues to cycle II by applying learning discussion media.

In a study conducted at MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih, Central Lampung, the application of learning discussion media showed positive results in improving student learning outcomes in the subject of Islamic Cultural History for grade IX. During the process carried out through cycle 1, where each cycle consists of four stages, there was a significant increase in students' understanding of the subject matter. Learning discussion media has proven to be effective in replacing the previous method and encouraging students to be more active in the learning process (Nia Atikah Rahma et al., 2022). The application of this media makes students pay more attention to the lesson, dare to ask questions about material they have not mastered, and show an improvement in their activeness during class discussions.

However, despite the increase in student activity and understanding, the results of the study show that student achievement has not fully met the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM). The use of video media in the learning process contributes to increasing students' confidence and courage, but to achieve optimal results, follow-up through cycles II and III is required. This aims to continue to improve and adjust learning methods to be more effective,¹ with the hope that student learning outcomes can be further improved and meet the set standards. With the implementation of the additional cycle, it is hoped that there will be further progress in students' academic understanding and achievement in the future.

In the second cycle of the application of discussion media in learning to improve learning outcomes in the subject of Islamic Cultural History in grade IX MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih, Central Lampung, the results showed significant development. The discussion media implemented aims to deepen students' understanding of Islamic Cultural History material by involving them in active and interactive discussions. Syarnubi and others, 'Application of Discussion Learning Methods to Increase Student Learning Activity in SKI Subjects', 2024. The assessment of students' understanding of the material is carried out through a learning test that has been prepared and carried out by the author. The results of this test reveal the progress in the student's understanding, which can be seen in the table provided. The table shows an increase in student learning outcome scores from the first cycle to the second cycle. The application of this discussion method has been proven to be effective in increasing students' engagement and understanding of the material, with better results seen in the second cycle compared to the first cycle. Through this method, students not only understand the theory but can also apply their knowledge more deeply in group discussions. Thus, the application of discussion media in learning Islamic Cultural History shows great potential to significantly improve student learning outcomes. If you need any further customization or additional details, please let us know:

¹ Hendra, M. (2022). The Use of Various SKI Learning Methods at MA Zainul Hasan 1 Genggong. *Journal of Education and Counseling (JPDK)*, 4(4), 4422-4427.

Tabel 2: Results of student understanding

No	Data	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	Student Grade Point Average	77 (Enough)	84.25 (Good)
2	Learning Completion Percentage	72.22% (adequate)	83.33% (good)
3	Number of students who complete	26	30

Based on the table above, in the first cycle, the results of student understanding were fairly sufficient with an average score of 77 (adequate) with a learning completion percentage of 72.22% (adequate) and the number of students who completed 26 students out of 36 students. In cycle II, the average score was 84.25 (good) with a learning completion percentage of 83.33% (good) and the number of students who completed 30 students out of 36 students.

The application of discussion media in learning has proven to be effective in improving the learning outcomes of Islamic Cultural History subjects in grade IX students of MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih, Central Lampung, through three research cycles that have been carried out. Each cycle consists of four well-structured stages, allowing for an in-depth evaluation of the learning process and outcomes. In this study, the use of discussion media was proven to be significant in increasing student participation and engagement. After implementing the discussion media, positive changes were seen that included increased student activity in the classroom, greater attention to the subject matter, and the courage to ask questions about topics that were not yet understood. The application of discussion media not only helps improve the understanding of the material, but also contributes to increasing students' confidence and activeness. Better learning outcomes are clearly seen from the implementation of learning in cycle I, cycle II, and cycle III. Thus, learning discussion media is an effective tool to improve learning outcomes and improve the quality of education in the subject of Islamic Cultural History at MTs Assa'adah.

E. Discussion

The improvement of student learning outcomes in this study shows the effectiveness of implementing discussion media in the learning process of Islamic Cultural History at MTs Assa'adah. Based on the constructivism theory proposed by Lev Vygotsky, discussion media provides an interactive learning environment, so that students can build knowledge through social interaction with peers and teachers. In cycle I, student learning outcomes were still quite good, with an average score of 77 and learning completeness of 72.22%. However, in cycle II, the average score increased to 84.25 with learning completeness of 83.33%. This shows that with discussion, students have the opportunity to understand the material more deeply through exchanging ideas, clarifying concepts that have not been understood, and improving critical thinking skills. In line with Vygotsky's theory, collaboration in discussion supports the development of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), where students learn better with help from others who are more competent. According to Silberman's active learning theory, students' active involvement in discussions increases their participation in learning, thereby maximizing the process of internalizing knowledge. The application of discussion media in this study showed an increase in students' courage to ask questions and discuss material that they had not understood, especially in cycles II and III. This active attitude not only supports understanding of the material but also increases students' self-confidence. For example, students who were initially passive began to engage in class discussions, indicating that this method creates an inclusive learning atmosphere. This success is in accordance with Silberman's principle, which states that active learning allows students to engage

cognitively, emotionally, and physically, so that the material learned can be remembered longer and understood better. Discussion is the right media to meet students' needs in collaborative learning.

The increase in learning outcomes in the cycles of this study can also be analyzed using Bloom's theory of the cognitive domain. The increase in the average student score from 77 in cycle I to 84.25 in cycle II shows progress in the level of student understanding, from simply remembering information (C1) to analyzing and applying concepts (C4 and C3). Discussion media helps students to analyze material, connect new information with previous knowledge, and apply concepts in certain contexts. In addition, discussion media also contributes to the development of students' social skills, such as the ability to work together and respect the opinions of others. The results of this study reinforce the importance of an interaction-based learning approach to improve the quality of education. As a learning tool, discussion media not only serves to convey material, but also encourages students to think critically and creatively, which are important skills in the 21st century.

F. Conclusion

Based on the results of the Classroom Action Research (PTK) carried out in cycle 3, the plan to implement learning discussions to improve the understanding of the subject of Islamic Cultural History in grade IX MTs Assa'adah Gunung Sugih Central Lampung showed positive results. The application of learning media has proven to be effective in improving student learning achievement. Before the implementation of cycle 2, the observation of teacher activities recorded a score of 80 (adequate), while the observation of student activities in the first cycle recorded a score of 65 (sufficient). The increase in student learning achievement in these subjects was evident after the application of the discussion method. The evaluation of the student's written test showed progress from the previous cycle. In cycle 3, the average score of students reached 80 (adequate) with a percentage of 72.22% (sufficient). These results show that the application of the discussion method in learning has succeeded in improving student learning achievement. In other words, the use of

Improving the understanding of the subject of Islamic Cultural History through the discussion method is a significant topic in an effort to improve the quality of education, however, conducting research on only one study is not sufficient to measure the effectiveness of this method as a whole. Single research often has limitations in terms of generalizing outcomes, considering that variables such as school context, learner characteristics, and the implementation of different methods can affect outcomes. In addition, a one-time study could not capture the long-term dynamics and sustainability of the effects of the discussion method on material understanding. To obtain a more accurate and comprehensive picture, a broader study with diverse samples and in various educational settings is needed. This will allow for the identification of common patterns, differences in context, and factors that influence the success of the discussion method. By involving a variety of studies that take into account a variety of variables and approaches, more consistent and widely applicable results can be achieved. Therefore, to ensure the effectiveness of discussion methods in improving the understanding of Islamic Cultural History optimally, it is important to conduct broader and more diverse research.

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