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Improving Learning Outcomes through the Problem Based Learning Model in Islamic Education Subjects in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to improve the learning outcomes of grade IV students in the learning of Islamic Religious Education and Ethics, especially the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13, through the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model. This Class Action Research (PTK) is carried out in two cycles, each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. The subjects of the study were 28 students at SD Negeri Balerejo 3, Dempet, Demak. Data collection is carried out through written tests, observation sheets, and documentation, then analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to evaluate the improvement of student activities and learning outcomes. The results showed that the average score of students in the first cycle was 65 with a completeness of 36%, while in the second cycle it increased to 77 with a completeness of 89%. These findings prove that PBL is effective in improving learning outcomes, critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and student activeness during learning. The contribution of this research provides an alternative learning model that is effective in associating religious values with the context of daily life in Islamic Religious Education subjects.

KEYWORDS

learning outcomes,
Islamic religious
education, problem
based learning

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A. Introduction

Education has a strategic role in shaping individual character and competence, especially through learning that is relevant to the real-life context (Arikunto, 2008). In the context of basic education, learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI) not only aims to teach religious values, but also encourages students to understand and apply Islamic teachings in daily life. However, facts in the field show that PAI learning is often still monotonous, dominated by lecture methods, and minimal activities that actively involve students (Sanusi, 2021). At SD Negeri Balerejo 3, Dempet, Demak, the low activity and learning

outcomes of students in PAI subjects are challenges that need to be overcome immediately. This condition reflects the gap between the learning potential of PAI as a medium for character formation and the reality of learning that is not optimal. Therefore, there is a need for learning model innovations that can increase student participation and bring the subject matter closer to the real-life context. One of the approaches that is considered appropriate is Problem Based Learning (PBL), which focuses on problem solving and active involvement of students in the teaching-learning process.

The main problem found in learning in grade IV of SD Negeri Balerejo 3 is the lack of variety of learning methods used. This causes students to tend to be passive, feel bored, and less motivated to engage in the learning process. As a result, the average score of student learning outcomes has not reached the Minimum Completeness Criterion (KKM) of 70 (Sidiq, 2019). This phenomenon shows the need for the implementation of innovative learning models that are able to increase student involvement, one of which is the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model. The PBL model offers a learning approach based on real problems, so that students are encouraged to think critically and solve problems collaboratively (Sanjaya, 2010). In addition, this model provides a space for students to connect religious concepts with everyday experiences, which is very relevant in PAI learning. Thus, it is important to conduct research to examine the effectiveness of PBL in improving student learning outcomes and making learning more meaningful and contextual.

In the literature, the PBL model has been shown to be effective in a variety of learning contexts. Previous research has shown that PBL improves student learning outcomes through the integration of scientific approaches and real-world problem-based learning (Hasan, 2019). In the context of PAI, the application of PBL to the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 has great potential because this verse contains important messages about diversity, tolerance, and piety that are relevant to the daily lives of students (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2005). Therefore, it is important to examine the effectiveness of PBL in PAI learning to improve learning outcomes and instill religious values. This study aims to apply the PBL model in the learning of PAI grade IV at SD Negeri Balerejo 3 with a focus on the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13. This study wants to answer the question of whether the application of PBL can improve student learning outcomes. In addition, this study aims to find out how PBL can encourage students' active involvement in the learning process, as well as its relevance in building a deep understanding of religious values. The results of this research are expected to make a real contribution to improving the quality of PAI learning in elementary schools and become a reference for teachers and other researchers in the development of problem-based learning.

B. Theoretical Studies

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centered learning model that

uses real problems as a context to develop critical thinking skills, solve problems, and acquire new knowledge and skills (Arends, 2012). In PBL, students are actively involved through a series of systematic steps such as problem orientation, independent investigation, information organization, and solution development. This model is very relevant applied in the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), because it encourages students to understand the values of Islamic teachings and integrate them into daily life through a contextual problem-solving approach (Sanjaya, 2010). According to Syah (2013), PBL is effective in increasing student involvement in the learning process because it provides opportunities for them to discuss, collaborate, and create solutions based on personal experiences. In this study, PBL is used as a learning strategy to increase students' understanding of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13. Through this approach, students are not only invited to understand the content of the verse, but also reflect on it in the form of real actions in the school and home environment.

Learning outcomes refer to behavioral changes that include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects after students follow the learning process (Bloom, 1956). The theory of constructivism states that learning outcomes will be more optimal if students are actively involved in learning situations that are challenging and relevant to their life experiences (Vygotsky, 1978). In this study, the increase in learning outcomes was measured from the increase in the average final test score in cycle I and cycle II. Hasan's research (2019) shows that problem-based learning such as PBL can improve learning outcomes because students are more motivated to understand the material in depth and relate it to real-life contexts. In the context of PAI, a deep understanding of religious values is important to form an attitude of tolerance and appreciation for diversity, as conveyed in Surah Al-Hujurat paragraph 13 (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2005). Therefore, the application of PBL in PAI learning is expected to increase mastery of the material as well as internalize religious values in students.

Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 contains a universal message about the importance of recognizing diversity, knowing each other among fellow humans, and piety as the basis of glory in the sight of Allah SWT (al-Qur'an and Its Translation, 2005). The moral messages in this verse have high relevance in the formation of students' character, especially in building an attitude of tolerance and respect for differences. According to Majid (2006), the integration of Qur'an values in learning will be more meaningful if it is conveyed through an interactive approach such as PBL. This model allows students to explore the meaning of the verse in depth through discussion, collaboration, and application in real-life situations. In this study, Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 is used as the focus of learning to increase students' awareness of the importance of unity, respect for diversity, and its implementation in daily life. Thus, PAI learning not only aims to improve academic achievement, but also to form individuals who have faith, noble character, and high social awareness.

C. Research Methods

This study uses the Classroom Action Research (PTK) method, which aims to improve the quality of the learning process through systematically and measurably planned actions. PTK is a form of reflective research conducted by education practitioners, such as teachers, in order to overcome real problems that arise in the classroom (Arikunto, 2008). In this study, PTK is carried out in two cycles, each cycle consists of four main stages, namely planning, implementation of actions, observation, and reflection. This model refers to the framework developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), which emphasizes the importance of repeating cycles until significant improvements in learning are obtained. The action taken in this study is the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model as an innovative strategy to improve student learning outcomes in the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 in grade IV of SD Negeri Balerejo 3.

Data collection in this study was carried out using three main techniques, namely written tests, observations, and documentation. The written test was used to measure the development of student learning outcomes before and after the application of the PBL model in each cycle. The test instrument is designed to assess the cognitive aspects of students, including understanding and memorization of the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13. Observations were made to record student activities during learning, such as activeness in group discussions, collaboration skills, and problem-solving skills. Documentation in the form of photos, field notes, and student works is also used as supporting evidence to evaluate the process and results of actions (Suharsimi, 2010). In order to make the data collected more valid and reliable, the method triangulates are carried out, namely comparing the results of tests, observations, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2017). In addition, reflection at the end of each cycle helps researchers identify successes and obstacles that arise, as well as formulate improvement steps for the next cycle.

The subjects in this study were 28 grade IV students of SD Negeri Balerejo 3, Dempet, Demak. The classroom teacher plays the role of a collaborator who collaborates with the researcher in carrying out learning actions, while the researcher serves as a facilitator, observer, as well as a recorder of observation results during the learning process. The principal participates in providing supervision to ensure that the actions taken are in accordance with the curriculum standards and learning objectives. All parties support each other so that the implementation of the PBL model can run smoothly and effectively in improving student learning outcomes. Data analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data in the form of student test results were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the average score, maximum, minimum, and percentage of learning completeness. Meanwhile, qualitative data from observations were analyzed using data reduction techniques, data presentation, and conclusion drawing in accordance with the approach of Miles and Huberman (1994). The combination of these two analyses provides a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the

application of the PBL model in improving learning activities and student learning outcomes.

D. Research Results

The results of the study showed a significant increase in student learning outcomes from cycle I to cycle II. In the first cycle, the average student score was 65, with a completion percentage of 36%, which means that the majority of students have not reached the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM). After improvements were made in the second cycle, the average student score increased to 77, with a completion percentage of 89% (25 out of 28 students completed). In addition, there is an increase in student involvement in the learning process, especially in discussion activities, formulating problems, and presenting the results of work. This finding answers the formulation of the problem that the implementation of PBL can effectively improve students' learning outcomes and their involvement in learning (Sanjaya, 2010).

Cycle 1

Range Value	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Average class
85 – 100	Excellent	1	3,57	65
70 – 84	Good	13	46,43	
55 – 69	Enough	7	25	

40 – 54	Less	7	25	
Sum		28	100	

Cycle II

Range Val ue	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Average class
85 – 100	Excellent	6	21,43	77
70 – 84	Good	19	67,86	
55 – 69	Enough	3	10,71	
40 – 54	Less	0	0	
Sum		28	100	

The increase in learning outcomes and student involvement occurs due to the characteristics of PBL that places students at the center of learning. In PBL, students not only passively receive information, but are also challenged to think critically and solve problems relevant to their lives. In the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13, the context of diversity and piety is an interesting topic for students, so that they are more motivated to engage in discussions and exploration of the meaning of the verses. In addition, the use of visual media such as slideshows and worksheets in cycle II helps students understand the material better, as recommended in constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978). This proves that an interactive and contextual approach can overcome the weaknesses of lecture methods that are often considered monotonous and less relevant to the needs of students.

E. Discussion

The findings of this study show that the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model is effective in improving the learning outcomes of grade IV students in the material of Surat Al-Hujurat verse 13 at SD Negeri Balerejo 3. In the first cycle, the average student score was 65 with a completion percentage of 36% (13 out of 28 students). Learning activities are still low, as can be seen from the lack of student participation in discussions and difficulties in formulating problems independently. Based on this reflection, improvements were made in the second cycle by providing more structured guidance, the use of visual media, and additional discussion time. As a result, the average score increased to 77 with completeness reaching 89% (25 out of 28 students). In addition, student activities are better, as seen from the activeness in asking questions, discussing, and presenting group results. The application of PBL not only improves cognitive understanding, but also helps students relate the values of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 such as diversity, tolerance, and piety with real life. The findings of the study stated that PBL was able to improve critical thinking skills and learning outcomes in the context of PAI. Thus, PBL has proven to be a relevant and effective learning strategy to improve the quality of PAI learning in elementary

schools.

Research findings that show an increase in learning outcomes and student activities after the application of the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model can be explained through the theoretical framework of constructivist learning, problem-based learning, and social interaction in the learning process. According to constructivist theory, knowledge is not acquired passively, but is constructed by individuals through experience and reflection (Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of PBL, students are actively involved in solving real problems so as to strengthen their understanding of the material of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13. In addition, the principles of problem-based learning emphasize the importance of authentic context in increasing student engagement and critical thinking skills (Arends, 2008). In cycle II, with a better guidance structure and the provision of visual media, it is easier for students to relate religious values to daily life situations, so that understanding becomes more deep. The collaborative approach in PBL is also in line with social learning theory, where interaction between peers encourages scaffolding and internalization of concepts together (Suparno, 2013). Group discussion activities and presentation of results help students develop communication skills, empathy, and tolerance, according to the main message of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13. Therefore, the effectiveness of PBL in this study is supported by the integration of constructivistic, contextual, and social approaches in PAI learning.

This study shows results that are in line but also have significant differences compared to previous research related to the application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning. As reported by Hasan (2019), PBL is effective in improving students' critical thinking skills and learning outcomes, this finding was also confirmed in this study with an increase in the average score from 65 in the first cycle to 77 in the second cycle. However, what distinguishes this study is the focus on the integration of the values of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13—such as diversity, tolerance, and piety—with the real-life context of students in the school and family environment, something that has not been developed specifically in previous research. Another innovation from this study is the use of structural guidance and visual media to assist elementary school students in understanding PBL steps, given their age and cognitive limitations. In addition, this study provides evidence that PBL can be effectively applied in PAI learning at the primary education level, an important contribution because most of the previous research focused more on the secondary or higher education level (Sanjaya, 2010). Thus, this study not only supports the validity of PBL theory, but also expands its application in the context of PAI in elementary schools with a more adaptive and contextual approach.

The implications of this study's findings for the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in elementary schools is that the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model can be an innovative and effective strategy to improve learning outcomes while strengthening the internalization of religious values. The results showed a significant increase from an average score of 65 in the first cycle to 77 in the second cycle, with learning completeness reaching 89%. This proves that PBL is able to create a more active, collaborative, and meaningful learning process, especially in understanding the moral messages of Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 such as diversity, tolerance, and piety. The practical implication is that PAI teachers need to design learning that is based on real problems, so that students not only memorize the material but are also able to relate it to everyday experiences. In addition, providing structural guidance and the use of visual media can help elementary school students at an

early age understand PBL steps more systematically. Thus, the implementation of PBL has the potential to be a relevant alternative approach in the context of the Independent Curriculum, especially to develop students' spiritual, social, and critical thinking competencies. This research makes an important contribution to the development of PAI learning methods that not only focus on cognitive aspects, but also on the formation of Qur'an-based characters.

F. Conclusion

The findings of the study show that the Problem Based Learning (PBL) learning model is effective in improving the learning outcomes of grade IV students in the material of Surat Al-Hujurat verse 13 at SD Negeri Balerejo 3. In the first cycle, the average student score was 65 with a completeness of only 36%. Learning activities are still low because students are less active in discussions and have difficulty formulating problems. After improvements were made in cycle II with more structured guidance, the use of visual media, and the addition of discussion time, learning outcomes increased significantly with an average of 77 and completeness reached 89%. In addition to improving cognitive understanding, students are better able to relate religious values such as diversity, tolerance, and piety to daily life. Thus, PBL has proven to be a relevant and effective learning strategy to improve the quality of PAI learning in elementary schools.

This study has several limitations, including the subject coverage which is limited to 28 grade IV students in one elementary school, so the results cannot be generalized widely. In addition, the short duration of the research in only two cycles makes long-term observations on the application of Problem Based Learning (PBL) not optimal. The ability of students who are still limited in understanding the steps of PBL is also a challenge in itself. Based on these findings, it is recommended that PAI teachers improve their competence in implementing problem-based learning and that schools provide training or mentoring to support the implementation of this model. For future researchers, it is recommended to expand the sample and extend the research time to obtain more comprehensive data. Thus, PBL can be developed optimally to improve the quality of PAI learning in elementary schools.

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