

Effectiveness of the Demonstration Learning Model In Optimizing Understanding of Islamic Religious Education Materials

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ABSTRACT

Islamic religious education plays a major role in addressing multidimensional crises and character building. Islamic religious education is believed to be able to build positive character and personality. The success of religious education contributes to the preparation of a generation with good ethics, morals, and behavior. However, without a good understanding, it is difficult for students to grow and develop in accordance with the expected values that are the objectives of existing learning. The research method used a qualitative approach with a literature study method. The results of the study show that the demonstration learning model emphasizes the simulation of events, rules, and sequences of activities, either directly or through other relevant media. This is believed to optimize students' understanding of Islamic Religious Education material, so that understanding Islamic values as a strong foundation can shape students' character optimally. The conclusion is that the demonstration learning model can be applied to all subjects, with the aim that students can be more actively involved in understanding and constructing their knowledge, so that understanding Islamic values as a strong foundation can shape the optimal character of students.

Keywords: *Demonstration learning model, Islamic religious education, understanding*

Introduction

An important effort that teachers must make in the learning process at school/madrasah is how to optimize students' understanding of the material being studied. Only in this way can teachers ensure that students

are able to improve their learning capacity, as well as various specific skills in line with their interests, talents, and potential.

In relation to the above description, Dick and Reiser Robert (Sutikno, 2013) state that effective learning is learning in which students acquire specific skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and is learning that students enjoy. In essence, learning is considered effective when changes occur in the cognitive, effective, and psychomotor aspects. Given the importance of learning in achieving educational goals, the selection of learning methods must be able to shape learners to become independent and high-quality individuals.

Based on this quote, it can be understood that the inaccuracy of the learning model with the material being taught will be a major obstacle to improving the effectiveness of the learning model and student understanding, so teachers must be able to select and sort out the appropriate learning model. Conversely, with the right learning model, student understanding can be improved, and their learning achievements will also increase.

Students' understanding of the material studied can certainly help schools achieve their educational goals. In this case, one of the subjects that is important for achieving national educational goals is Islamic Religious Education. Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in students' understanding of religion and in improving their character and morals in accordance with the established national educational goals.

Islamic Religious Education is aimed not only at building a good understanding of Islamic teachings, but more importantly at building the character (*akhlaqul karimah*) of students. Instilling religious values in students is a necessity that must be done from an early age. This is in line with the National Education Goals (TPN) that education is aimed at shaping and developing the potential of students to become people who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Law, 2003).

Islamic education plays a major role in addressing multidimensional crises and character building. Islamic education is believed to build positive character and personality. Successful implementation of religious education contributes to preparing a generation with good ethics, morals, and behavior. Conversely, failure in implementing religious education will lead to the moral degradation of the nation's generation. In the learning process, there will be reciprocal

interaction between teachers and students.

Successful interactions will lead to the achievement of educational goals if educators truly pay attention to their students while teaching, so that they can choose models that are appropriate for the students' circumstances. Syafrudin states that:

Improvements in education quality can be achieved by improving the quality of learning, and improvements in learning quality can be achieved by increasing knowledge about designing effective, efficient, and attractive learning models (Syafruddin, 2005).

Islam considers knowledge to be very important. People who have knowledge are promised a high status by Allah SWT, especially in the eyes of other humans. Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad encouraged all Muslims to seek the highest level of knowledge possible. The Prophet Muhammad stated that those who seek knowledge will receive the same reward as those who fight in the way of Allah. He even commanded that the pursuit of knowledge should not be limited to one's own country, but that one should seek knowledge even if it means traveling great distances.

Of course, every subject taught has the same importance in achieving national educational goals, even though they have different characteristics and emphasis. The subject of Islamic Religious Education, for example, as the field taught by the author, not only has knowledge values that are very useful in the scientific world but also has the goal of fostering and developing values and awareness of the importance of seeking knowledge and conveying it to others. Through the values and awareness contained in the subject, students are accustomed to always adhering to what they have learned before finally deciding to take certain actions in life.

However, the internalization of values and awareness, which in turn could shape students' attitudes based on scientific knowledge, can only be achieved if the students concerned have a good understanding and mastery of the materials being studied. Students can only obtain the benefits of the values of the existing subjects when they achieve good learning outcomes, which demonstrate a complete understanding of what they have learned. Without a good understanding, it is difficult for students to grow and develop in accordance with the expected values that are the objectives of existing learning.

Optimizing students' understanding of Islamic Religious Education subjects is not only demonstrated by descriptive skills related to the concepts and materials studied, but also by the ability to demonstrate the

values contained in the relevant lessons.

One of the main challenges faced by many teachers is how to optimize students' understanding of the material being studied. Optimizing understanding is important, given that there are many learning objectives that can only be achieved when students are able to understand the material well and achieve good learning outcomes.

Fundamental issues in optimizing understanding are often encountered in many pedagogical practices in various subjects, especially Islamic Religious Education. Most teachers generally use conventional learning models, which place the teacher at the center of learning through lectures and memorization. This type of learning model often causes students to become bored and find it difficult to understand the material being taught.

On this basis, experts suggest the need to apply the demonstration learning model to various subjects, especially Islamic Religious Education. According to Sagala, the demonstration learning model is a presentation of the process of an event or object occurring, resulting in exemplary behavior that can be observed and understood by students in real life or through imitation (Sagala, 2009).

The demonstration learning model is a learning model that presents lesson material through demonstrations and shows students a particular process, situation, or object, whether real or merely imitation. Regardless of the presentation method, it cannot be separated from the teacher's explanation. Even in the demonstration learning model, students only observe (Nasih and Kholidah, 2009).

The demonstration learning model is one of the most rational choices for Islamic Religious Education subjects, because this model makes students the main subjects who are actively involved in learning, while being guided to apply the material they have learned in real life. The application of this model is expected to overcome fundamental problems, namely optimizing student understanding.

This article is essentially an attempt to explore how to apply the demonstration learning model in the Islamic Education process, to reveal how learning steps can be effective, and how the implications are expected to be optimally obtained, in improving the quality of the process and results of Islamic Education subjects.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach through a literature study method. This approach was chosen based on the argument that efforts to

formulate the effectiveness of learning models in the field of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) require in-depth conceptual, historical, and theoretical analysis of academic texts, rather than simply quantitative measurement of variables in the field.

The design of this literature review was implemented through several systematic stages: Data Sources: Data was obtained from various primary and secondary literature that are authoritative in the fields of pedagogy and educational evaluation. References analyzed include books, scientific journal articles, and legislative documents such as Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. The main literature used includes the works of learning strategy experts such as Wina Sanjaya and Helmiati, as well as fundamental literature related to understanding and learning outcomes by Daryanto and Anas Sudijono.

Data Collection Techniques: Researchers used documentation techniques to collect, classify, and select relevant written information. The literature was sorted based on its relevance to the three main pillars of the study: PAI learning issues, theoretical construction of demonstration models, and indicators of optimization of understanding.

Data Analysis Techniques: The collected data was analyzed using content analysis and theoretical synthesis techniques. This process began with a critique of the weaknesses of the conventional (lecture) model in PAI. Next, the researcher deduced procedural steps from the demonstration model such as event or rule simulations and synthesized them with the hierarchy of cognitive domain understanding. The results of this synthesis were then formulated into a complete argument regarding how the demonstration model can effectively shift verbalistic understanding to meaningful applied understanding for students.

Results and Discussion

Demonstration Learning Model

Demonstration comes from the word "demonstration," which means performance. According to Wina Sanjaya, the demonstration model is a method of presenting lessons through demonstrations and showing students a particular process, situation, or object, whether real or merely imitation. Demonstration in relation to the presentation of information can be interpreted as an effort to demonstrate how to do something. The

demonstration model is a learning pattern that involves demonstrating objects, events, rules, and sequences of activities, either directly or through the use of teaching media that are relevant to the subject matter being presented.(Sanjaya, 2010).

The demonstration learning model is an effort to enable students to actively engage in the learning process. This model also makes learning activities more organized by demonstrating objects, events, rules, and sequences of activities, either directly or through the use of learning media relevant to the subject matter or material being presented. (All, 2009).

Demonstration is a learning method that combines verbal explanation with practical action and the use of tools, thereby enhancing verbal explanation, attracting the attention of participants, and so on. (Simanjuntak, LL, 1986). This is in line with Nana Sudjana, which states that demonstrations are better understood as a learning model that shows how something happens. (Sudjana, 1998).

The main purpose of using the demonstration learning model in the learning process is to clarify the meaning of concepts and to show (exemplify) how to do something or how something happens. From the perspective of its purpose, it can be said that the demonstration learning model is not a learning model that can be implemented independently in the learning process, because it is a tool to clarify what is being explained, both verbally and textually.

Thus, the demonstration learning model functions more as a teaching pattern used to implement certain teaching models, such as the lecture learning model. With the demonstration learning model, the process of students' acceptance of lessons will be more deeply memorable, thereby forming a good and complete understanding. Students can also observe the teacher during the learning process.

The use of demonstration learning models greatly supports the learning process and interaction of students. The advantages are: (1) students' attention is more focused on the lesson being taught, (2) mistakes that occur when lessons are lectured can be overcome through observation and concrete examples. As a result, what is learned by students is more profound and stays with them longer. Through the demonstration learning model, students can actively participate and gain

direct experience, as well as develop their skills. However, we still see weaknesses in this model. (Helmiati, 2012).

Demonstration models are very effective for teaching material that emphasizes skills, step-by-step procedures, and actions, such as the process of doing something, comparing one method with another, or seeing/knowing the truth of something. This model is very effective in helping students find answers to questions such as how something works, how to do something, how to organize something, and so on. Demonstration as a learning model is when a teacher or a demonstrator (an outside person who is specifically asked) or a student shows or demonstrates to the whole class a process, such as demonstrating how to perform *tayamum*, shrouding a corpse, how to bake a cake, and so on. (Helmiati, 2012).

The following is an example of the application of the demonstration learning model steps in Islamic Religious Education subjects to increase enthusiasm for seeking knowledge and conveying it.:

1. Teachers prepare and organize students, explain learning objectives, present phenomena or facts in the form of demonstrations or stories to raise issues and motivate students to engage in solving selected problems. Check students' initial abilities.
2. Teachers deliver learning materials and convey them to others as an implementation of the understanding of Q.S. At-Taubah (9): 122 and related hadiths to students using the lecture method. During the delivery of the material, students are allowed to ask questions to the teacher so that the learning process is more interactive.
3. The teacher demonstrates how to implement the understanding of Q.S. At-Taubah (9): 122 and related hadiths to students by showing several ways to increase enthusiasm in seeking knowledge and conveying it. To anticipate students who are not paying attention, the teacher reminds those who are not paying attention. At this stage, with the help of teaching aids such as the Quran and writing instruments, the teacher demonstrated how to convey the knowledge that had been understood. The teacher may ask one of the students to be his or her partner in this demonstration, so that the other students will assume that the

practice demonstrated by the teacher and his or her partner is very likely to be possible for them to do.

4. The teacher immediately divided the students into groups to practice what had been demonstrated. In addition, the teacher also corrected any students who did not perform the practice correctly.
5. The teacher conveyed the main points of the material using a lecture method after the students practiced the spirit of seeking knowledge and conveyed it.
6. In the closing stage, students are given a test to assess their understanding of what they have learned before the teacher informs them of the upcoming material.

The application of the demonstration learning model in the learning process is very important, because the demonstration learning model is a tool for achieving educational goals. The application of an inappropriate model to the learning process will cause difficulties in achieving the educational goals themselves.

Islamic Religious Education

Islamic Religious Education faces various significant problems (Abdudssyukur and Zulfah, 2025) This problem covers many aspects, ranging from uninteresting learning models (Nurkhalijah and Khairuddin, 2023), lack of innovation and interaction in teaching materials (Ahmad Hariyadi, 2020), including challenges arising from students' social and cultural environments and the appropriate application of technology. (Sa'datul Marwah, 2023) Each of these elements influences one another and poses challenges in the process of internalizing Islamic values among students. One of the main challenges in PAI learning is the abstract nature of religious values themselves.

Research shows that teaching religious values must be done with proper planning, implementation, and evaluation so that it does not only become theoretical teaching, but also an experience that can be accepted and understood by students. (Sufiani, Try Andreas Putra, and Raehang, 2022) Appropriate instructional learning can help students better understand and internalize Islamic teachings and values in their daily lives. (Gaddafi, 2023).

In essence, Islamic Religious Education is fundamentally an effort to nurture and guide students so that they can fully understand Islamic

teachings, appreciate its objectives, and ultimately practice and embrace Islam as a way of life. (Majid, 2004) Therefore, when we refer to Islamic education, it encompasses two things: first, educating students to behave in accordance with Islamic values or morals; second, educating students to learn Islamic teachings (subjects related to knowledge of Islamic teachings).

Islamic education is essentially an effort to nurture and develop human potential, so that the purpose of human existence in this world as servants of Allah and at the same time as Allah's caliphs can be achieved as well as possible. The potential referred to includes physical potential and spiritual potential such as reason, feelings, will, and other spiritual potential.

According to Abdurahman Getteng, in its essence, Islamic education can be a joint effort by the community or an effort by social institutions that provide educational services, and it can even be an individual's own effort for themselves. Education in Islam is part of da'wah activities, and the latter word is mentioned in the Qur'an. It provides a model for shaping the personality of an individual, family, and society. The goal is to develop noble character, as well as high knowledge and obedience in worship. The noble character referred to her concerns personal, family, and community aspects, both in terms of relationships with other humans and the natural environment, as well as relationships with Allah, the creator of the universe (horizontal and vertical aspects). From this, it is hoped that intellectual Muslims will emerge, which in turn will manifest in *akhlak al-karimah* as the embodiment of Muslim humanity. (Getteng, 2009).

Optimization of Understanding

Understanding, as explained by Nana Sudjana, is basically the result of learning. Students can explain what they have read or heard in their own words, give other examples of those given by the teacher, and use the instructions for application in other cases (Sudjana, 1998). Meanwhile, according to Sudaryono, understanding is a person's ability to grasp the meaning and significance of the material being studied, which is expressed by summarizing the main points of a reading passage or converting data presented in a certain form into another form (Sudaryono, 2012).

In line with this, Benjamin S. Bloom states that comprehension is a person's ability to understand or comprehend something after it has been learned and remembered. In other words, comprehension is understanding something and being able to see it from various perspectives. Therefore, it can be concluded that a student is said to understand something if he or she can provide an explanation or give a more detailed description of what he or she has learned using his or her own language. It is even better if students can provide examples or synergize what they have learned with issues around them (Sudijono, 1996).

Understanding is one of the benchmarks of competence achieved after students engage in learning activities. In the learning process, each student has different abilities in understanding what they learn. Some are able to understand the material thoroughly, while others are completely unable to grasp the meaning of what they have learned, so that what they achieve is limited to mere knowledge. For this reason, there are different levels of understanding.

In the cognitive domain, comprehension skills demonstrate levels of ability ranging from the lowest to the highest. It can be said that understanding is a higher level than mere knowledge. Therefore, Anas Sudijono explains that the ability to understand is a person's ability to comprehend or understand something after it has been learned and remembered. In other words, understanding is knowing something and being able to see it from various angles. Understanding is a level of thinking that is one level higher than memory and memorization (Sudijono, 1996).

In line with this, Saifuddin Azwar states that someone with comprehension skills has the ability or capacity to explain, classify, summarize, predict, and differentiate (Syafuddin, 2005). W. S. Winkel adds that comprehension includes the ability to grasp the meaning and significance of the material being studied. This ability is demonstrated by explaining the main points of a reading passage, converting data presented in a certain form into another form, such as mathematical formulas into words, and making estimates about trends that appear in certain data, such as in graphs (Winkel, 1996).

According to Daryanto, comprehension ability based on sensitivity and degree of material absorption can be broken down into three levels, namely:

- a. Translating. Translating can be defined as transferring meaning from one language to another. It can also be defined as converting abstract concepts into symbolic models to make them easier for people to learn.
- b. Interpretation. This skill is broader than translating; it is the ability to recognize and understand. Interpretation can be done by connecting previous knowledge with newly acquired knowledge, connecting graphs with actual conditions, and distinguishing between essential and non-essential points in a discussion. Mengekstrapolasi (extrapolation). Ekstrapolasi menuntut kemampuan intelektual yang lebih tinggi karena seseorang dituntut untuk bisa melihat sesuatu di balik yang tertulis. Membuat ramalan tentang konsekuensi atau memperluas persepsi dalam arti waktu, dimensi, kasus, ataupun masalah dari apa yang dihadapinya (Daryanto, 2008).

Conclusion

Based on the description and analysis in the previous discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Nature and Orientation of Islamic Education Learning: Islamic Education (PAI) learning is essentially not only oriented towards the transfer of cognitive knowledge, but also towards the internalization of values and character building. Optimizing PAI learning outcomes requires a comprehensive understanding from students as an absolute prerequisite. Without comprehensive understanding, students will only be able to describe the material theoretically, but fail to appreciate and actualize Islamic teachings as a way of life in their daily lives.
2. Pedagogical Issues in Islamic Education: In practice, the achievement of the ideal goals of Islamic education is still hampered by a number of significant obstacles. The main challenges include the dominance of conventional learning models that are less appealing, a lack of innovation and interactivity in teaching materials, and the urgent need for

teachers to adapt to the socio-cultural dynamics of students and utilize appropriate educational technology.

3. Effectiveness of the Demonstration Learning Model: As an argumentative alternative solution, the application of the demonstration learning model has proven to be effective, especially for PAI material that requires mastery of skills (psychomotor), step-by-step procedures, and concrete proof. The main advantage of this model is its ability to focus students' attention and reduce verbalistic misconceptions that often arise in lecture methods. Through observation and direct experience, students' curiosity about the process and workings of a ritual or muamalah can be answered comprehensively, although its application must still be aware of the limitations and weaknesses of this model.

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