



Project Based Learning Model to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Islamic Education Learning at SD Negeri Alue Ie Itam

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Abstract: This study aims to improve the learning outcomes of sixth-grade students at Alue Ie Itam Public Elementary School on the topic of "Belief in the Day of Judgment" through the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model. The study used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, implemented in two cycles, each consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The results showed that the implementation of PjBL increased the average student grade from 74.94 in Cycle I to 85.21 in Cycle II, with classical learning completion reaching 100% in Cycle II. The PjBL model was effective in improving students' understanding of the material and collaborative skills.

Keywords: Project Based Learning, learning outcomes, Islamic Religious Education

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education and Ethics in elementary school play an important role in shaping students' character and morals from an early age. Through this education, students are introduced to religious values that they must internalize and apply in their daily lives. Religious education serves as a foundation that leads students to understand the concepts of faith, worship, and good morals, while teaching them to be responsible individuals for themselves, their families, and society. In religious education, students are taught not only aspects of religious rituals, but also how to interact with others by prioritizing tolerance, respect, and honesty. These values are the basis for forming a generation that has a strong moral foundation and is able to make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment. Therefore, religious education in elementary school is essential in the process of forming students' character.

However, observations show that there are obstacles in the effectiveness of learning Islamic Religious Education and Ethics. In Class VI, students' understanding of the material is still not optimal. Many students have difficulty mastering basic concepts, such as the pillars of faith, the pillars of Islam, and the moral values taught. This inability becomes an obstacle in the formation of students' character and spiritual understanding. This problem is exacerbated by the difficulty of students connecting the theories they learn with their application in daily life. This inability affects the formation of students' character, as they

have not been able to apply religious values in real action. This shows the need for a more applicable learning approach.

Another factor that affects the low learning outcomes of students is the teaching method that still focuses on theory and tends to be one-way. Passive learning makes students less engaged in learning activities, so they do not have enough opportunities to delve into the material. Time constraints and lack of variety of methods are also significant obstacles that hinder students' understanding. The low learning outcomes of students are an indication that the teaching and learning process is not effective. In the material of believing in the Day of Judgment, for example, many students do not understand the concepts they should master. This low understanding can be caused by a lack of student interest, monotonous teaching methods, and a lack of learning media that is interesting and supports understanding.

The lack of variety in learning methods causes the learning process to be monotonous and less interesting. This reduces students' interest in the material being taught, so that it has a direct impact on their learning outcomes. The use of learning media that is interesting and according to the needs of students can increase their motivation and involvement in the learning process. Effective media not only makes it easier to understand the material, but also increases students' interest in actively asking questions and exploring lessons. With a more interactive approach, students not only become passive recipients, but also actively internalize the knowledge provided. Innovation in learning methods and media is key to increasing student engagement and understanding.

To overcome this problem, the Project Based Learning (PjBL) method was chosen as a solution. PjBL is a student-centered approach to learning, where they learn through relevant and meaningful projects. This method encourages students to work collaboratively and actively in applying the concepts learned, so that their understanding of the material is more deep. PjBL also improves students' critical thinking skills, creativity, and social abilities. Through challenging projects, students learn how to solve problems, innovate, and interact effectively with peers. This approach allows students to learn in a fun and engaging way, so their motivation and interest in the lessons increases.

The PjBL method places students as active subjects in the learning process. They not only receive information, but are also directly involved in the exploration and application of knowledge through projects that fit their learning context. This approach provides a more holistic and meaningful learning experience for students. In addition to improving material understanding, PjBL allows teachers to tailor learning to students' needs and learning styles. Each student can learn according to their abilities and interests, so that their learning potential can be maximized. Teachers can also monitor the progress of each student more effectively through the projects they are working on.

The use of PjBL in religious education and ethics is expected to significantly improve student learning outcomes. With active engagement, deeper exploration of the material, and the application of religious values in the project, students can better understand and internalize the concepts being taught. This has the potential to improve the overall competence and character of students. In addition, PjBL encourages the creation of a more collaborative and communicative learning environment. Students learn to work together, respect the opinions of peers, and share ideas in the projects they do.

This experience not only improves their academic skills, but also their social and emotional abilities. Thus, the application of Project Based Learning in Islamic Religious Education and Ethics in elementary schools has great potential to improve learning outcomes, motivation, and student involvement. This method provides a more engaging, interactive, and applicative learning experience, so that students not only understand the material cognitively but are also able to apply it in daily life.

METHODS

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) to improve students' learning outcomes on the topic of Belief in the Day of Judgment in grade VI at SD Negeri Alue Ie Itam. CAR was chosen because it allows teachers and researchers to systematically reflect on classroom practices and implement solutions to improve learning processes. The research focused on the application of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) to enhance students' understanding and engagement with the religious material. The study was conducted in iterative cycles, following the principle that learning improvement is achieved through repeated actions. Each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These stages were applied systematically to ensure continuous evaluation of teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

During the planning stage, the researcher collaborated with the classroom teacher to design lesson plans using the Project-Based Learning approach. Concept maps were prepared as instructional media to help students visualize the material. Modules on Belief in the Day of Judgment were developed along with evaluation instruments to measure both cognitive understanding and practical skills. In the acting stage, the teacher implemented the planned lessons. The learning process began with an introduction to the topic using interactive discussions and short lectures. Students were divided into small groups to create concept maps illustrating the principles of belief in the Day of Judgment. Teachers guided each group, ensuring that students actively participated in constructing their concept maps and understanding the material.

Observations were conducted alongside the implementation of lessons. The researcher monitored student participation, the quality of the concept maps, and comprehension of the topic. Observation instruments measured cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of learning. Collected data provided insights into students' engagement and understanding, serving as a basis for reflection. Reflection was conducted after each cycle to analyze the results and determine the success of the implemented actions. If challenges such as low participation or misunderstanding of the material were identified, improvements were designed for the next cycle. This stage ensured that instructional strategies were continuously refined to enhance learning outcomes.

In the second cycle, planning incorporated improvements based on the first cycle's reflections. Teachers provided clearer guidance on creating concept maps and offered more structured group facilitation. Evaluation tools were adjusted to assess aspects that required further development, ensuring more effective learning support for all students. The acting stage in the second cycle involved re-teaching the material using the improved plan. Students revisited the topic of Belief in the Day of Judgment and created concept maps with more structured guidance. Teachers focused on groups that had lower participation in the first cycle to ensure equitable engagement and improved understanding across all students.

Observations in the second cycle assessed whether the adjustments led to increased student participation and better comprehension of the topic. The researcher documented the impact of these improvements on learning outcomes and the students' ability to develop accurate concept maps. Observational data was essential for evaluating the effectiveness of the PjBL approach. Finally, reflection after the second cycle evaluated whether the learning objectives had been achieved. If students met the desired learning outcomes and actively participated, the cycle was concluded. If not, additional cycles could be conducted to ensure continuous improvement. This study emphasized not only enhancing student learning outcomes but also improving teaching quality and creating an engaging, effective learning environment through the Project-Based Learning approach.

RESULTS

The results of this study indicate that the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model effectively improved students' learning outcomes in Islamic Religious Education, particularly on the topic Belief in the Day of Judgment. The average score increased from 74.94 in Cycle I to 85.21 in Cycle II, demonstrating a significant enhancement in understanding after implementing the PjBL approach (Bell, 2010). This finding is consistent with previous studies highlighting that student-centered, project-based approaches foster deeper learning and engagement. One key factor contributing to the improvement was active student involvement in the learning process. During the project tasks, students worked collaboratively to create concept maps and present their findings to the class. According to Thomas (2000), collaborative projects in PjBL develop not only content knowledge but also essential social and communication skills, which are crucial for holistic student development.

The observation data showed that students who were initially passive became more engaged and participative in discussions and presentations. This aligns with research by Hmelo-Silver, Duncan, and Chinn (2007), which emphasizes that project-based methods encourage active learning and critical thinking by requiring students to solve real-world problems in a meaningful context. Moreover, the use of visual aids and interactive activities during Cycle II, such as PowerPoint presentations and group discussions, appeared to enhance understanding and retention of the material. Mayer (2009) suggests that multimedia and interactive learning can significantly improve student comprehension by supporting dual coding of information in both visual and verbal forms.

The reflection and adaptation process between Cycle I and Cycle II was also instrumental in improving learning outcomes. Adjustments in teaching methods, such as providing additional guidance for students with reading difficulties and recognizing active participation, helped reduce learning gaps. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2014), reflective practice in classroom action research is critical for continuous improvement of instructional strategies. Another contributing factor was the integration of formative assessments, including observation sheets and post-tests, which provided timely feedback on student performance. Black and Wiliam (1998) highlight that formative assessment is essential in promoting learning because it allows teachers to identify misconceptions and adapt instruction accordingly.

The study also found that students' motivation improved alongside their cognitive performance. As students observed their own progress and received positive reinforcement, their willingness to participate increased. Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that intrinsic motivation is enhanced when learners experience competence, autonomy, and relatedness, which are supported through project-based activities. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Project-Based Learning not only improves students' academic performance in PAI but also fosters active engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. The approach provides a structured yet flexible framework for teachers to address individual learning needs while promoting a deeper understanding of religious concepts (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2008). This suggests that PjBL can be a highly effective strategy in primary education settings for enhancing both knowledge and student-centered learning outcomes.

DISCUSSION

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CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and data analysis regarding teacher and student activities during the implementation of Classroom Action Research (CAR) with the title Application of Project Based Learning (PjBL) Model to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Islamic Religious Education Subjects in Grade VI of Alue Ie Itam Public Elementary School, it can be concluded that the application of the Project Based Learning model has proven effective in improving student learning outcomes. This increase can be seen from the average student learning score which increased from 74.7 in cycle I to 89.7 in cycle II. In addition, classical learning completeness also increased significantly, from 67% in cycle I to 100% in cycle II, indicating that all students succeeded in achieving the minimum completeness criteria (KKM). These results confirm that the PjBL model is able to improve conceptual understanding, participation, and active student involvement in the Islamic Religious Education learning process.

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