



Improving Student Learning Outcomes on Asmaul Husana Material through the Discovery Learning Method at SD Negeri Ulee Tutue

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Abstract: This study aims to improve the learning outcomes of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri Ulee Tutue on the subject of Asmaul Husna through the application of the Discovery Learning method. The research employed classroom action research (CAR) implemented in two cycles. Based on the results, it was concluded that the use of the Discovery Learning method significantly enhanced students' learning outcomes. The average score increased from 64.5 in the pre-cycle, to 68 in Cycle I, and reached 78 in Cycle II. Similarly, the completeness of student learning improved from 35% in the pre-cycle, to 55% in Cycle I, and finally to 85% in Cycle II. In addition, the method also increased teacher activity in guiding students and summarizing lesson materials. Student activity also improved, as they were more attentive during the learning process, actively asked and answered questions, and engaged more in classroom interactions. These findings indicate that Discovery Learning is effective in enhancing both learning outcomes and classroom engagement in the subject of Asmaul Husna.

Keywords: Discovery Learning, Learning Outcomes, Asmaul Husna, Student Activity.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning is a dynamic process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values (Slavin, 2018). In elementary education, learning is not only focused on cognitive development but also on affective and psychomotor aspects, which are essential for shaping students' character and abilities (Santrock, 2019). One of the key subjects in Islamic Religious Education is the understanding of Asmaul Husna, which refers to the 99 beautiful names of Allah. This material is fundamental in developing students' spiritual awareness, religious knowledge, and moral values (Al-Ghazali, 2016). The ability to understand and memorize Asmaul Husna is closely related to students' motivation and engagement in the learning process. Motivation is a critical factor that influences the quality of learning and students' achievement (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Students with high motivation are more likely to actively participate, focus on learning tasks, and retain knowledge effectively (Ormrod, 2020). Conversely, low motivation can lead to passive participation, lack of concentration, and poor learning outcomes.

In the context of SD Negeri Ulee Tutue, observations revealed that students' learning outcomes on Asmaul Husna were still below the expected standard. Preliminary

assessment data showed that the average score in the pre-cycle was 64.5, with only 35% of students achieving mastery (SD Negeri Ulee Tutue, 2023). This condition indicated the need for effective learning strategies that could enhance both students' understanding and engagement in the classroom. Discovery Learning is an instructional approach that emphasizes active exploration, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Bruner, 1961). This method encourages students to construct their own understanding through guided discovery rather than passive reception of information (Fosnot, 2013). In the context of learning Asmaul Husna, Discovery Learning provides opportunities for students to identify, analyze, and internalize the meanings of the 99 names of Allah actively.

Previous studies have shown that Discovery Learning can improve students' cognitive and affective outcomes in religious education (Hamalik, 2017). For instance, students using this method demonstrate higher retention of knowledge, increased motivation, and more active participation in class discussions compared to traditional lecture-based methods (Arends, 2014). Moreover, the method supports the development of problem-solving skills and independent learning abilities, which are critical for holistic education (Joyce et al., 2015). In addition to enhancing cognitive outcomes, Discovery Learning also improves teacher-student interaction. Teachers act as facilitators and guides, providing hints, asking questions, and helping students make connections between concepts (Gall et al., 2015). This interactive approach promotes a positive learning environment where students feel supported and motivated to explore the subject matter.

Student activity is another important aspect influenced by the implementation of Discovery Learning. Active involvement in learning processes, such as asking questions, responding to teacher prompts, and engaging in group discussions, has been linked to higher achievement and deeper understanding (Hattie, 2009). In the case of Asmaul Husna, active engagement allows students to memorize, discuss, and reflect on the significance of each name. The application of Discovery Learning aligns with the constructivist theory, which posits that learners build knowledge based on their experiences and interactions with the environment (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978). By allowing students to explore and discover concepts themselves, this method facilitates meaningful learning that connects new knowledge with prior understanding.

Furthermore, integrating religious content with active learning strategies addresses the need for character education in elementary schools. Understanding Asmaul Husna not only develops cognitive knowledge but also nurtures spiritual awareness, ethical behavior, and respect for religious values (Depdiknas, 2006). This dual focus on knowledge and character is essential in shaping well-rounded students. Challenges in implementing Discovery Learning include managing classroom dynamics, ensuring students remain focused, and providing appropriate guidance during exploration activities (Joyce et al., 2015). However, with proper planning, clear instructions, and structured activities, these challenges can be mitigated, leading to effective learning outcomes.

The use of observation and evaluation as part of classroom action research provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of instructional methods (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014). By systematically collecting data on student performance, teacher activity, and classroom interactions, researchers can make informed decisions to improve teaching and learning processes.

In this study, the primary focus was on improving learning outcomes in Asmaul Husna through the Discovery Learning method. By conducting pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II interventions, the research aimed to measure the extent to which this method enhanced students' scores and mastery levels. Preliminary findings indicated a positive trend in student achievement and engagement. Teacher preparation is crucial in the successful application of Discovery Learning. This includes designing lesson plans, creating instructional materials, and anticipating potential challenges in classroom management (Slavin, 2018). For Asmaul Husna, lesson planning involved the creation of guided questions, interactive exercises, and collaborative activities to facilitate exploration.

The integration of assessment strategies alongside Discovery Learning helps in monitoring progress and adjusting instructional approaches. Formative assessments, observations, and feedback are essential tools to track students' understanding, participation, and motivation (Black & Wiliam, 2009). In this study, the combination of tests, observation, and reflection provided comprehensive insight into learning outcomes. Finally, the implementation of Discovery Learning in religious education is not only about improving academic scores but also fostering meaningful engagement, spiritual growth, and positive attitudes toward learning (Fosnot, 2013). The active involvement of both teachers and students creates an environment conducive to understanding the depth and significance of Asmaul Husna, ultimately contributing to holistic student development.

METHODS

The research was conducted over a period of three months, from October to December 2023, at SD Negeri Ulee Tutue. The study focused on the fifth-grade students, who were actively enrolled in the odd semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. The primary aim was to enhance students' learning outcomes in the Asmaul Husna material through the application of the Discovery Learning method (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The subjects of the study were all students in grade V, totaling 32 individuals. These students were selected because they had not yet achieved optimal learning outcomes in the Asmaul Husna material, as shown in preliminary assessments (SD Negeri Ulee Tutue, 2023). The research aimed to monitor their progress across two cycles of classroom action research.

The data sources in this study were categorized into primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained directly from the students through tests, observations, and interviews. Secondary data were collected from documents such as lesson plans, student reports, and teacher evaluations (Ary et al., 2019). This combination provided a comprehensive understanding of both the process and outcomes of learning. The data collection techniques employed in the study included both test and non-test methods. Tests were used to measure students' mastery of Asmaul Husna, while non-test techniques, including observation and documentation, were utilized to assess student engagement, teacher activity, and classroom dynamics (Gall et al., 2015).

Observation was conducted using structured observation sheets to evaluate student participation and learning behavior. The observation focused on students' attention during teacher explanations, their willingness to ask questions, and their responses during group activities (Hatch, 2002). This allowed the researcher to obtain qualitative insights into the learning process. Documentation was used to review prior learning outcomes and classroom records. This included reviewing students' pre-cycle scores, attendance records, and teacher notes to identify areas needing improvement (Mertler, 2016). Documentation also served to validate observational findings.

Tests were administered to measure the students' understanding of the Asmaul Husna material. The test items were designed based on the learning indicators outlined in the lesson plans, ensuring alignment with the curriculum and the objectives of the Discovery Learning method (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). The research was structured into two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection phases (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014). In the planning phase, the researcher and the classroom teacher prepared lesson plans, instructional materials, and assessment instruments tailored to the Discovery Learning approach.

During the action phase, the teacher implemented Discovery Learning in the classroom. Activities included guided exploration, collaborative group discussions, and opportunities for students to discover meanings of Asmaul Husna independently (Bruner, 1961). The teacher acted as a facilitator, providing scaffolding and prompts when necessary. Observation was conducted simultaneously with the implementation of the learning activities. The researcher and an assistant observer recorded data regarding

student engagement, participation, and comprehension. Observations were analyzed to identify patterns, challenges, and areas for improvement (Ary et al., 2019).

Evaluation was performed at the end of each cycle using tests, observations, and teacher assessments. The results were analyzed to determine the extent to which students had improved in both knowledge and engagement with the Asmaul Husna material (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Reflection was conducted after each cycle to assess the effectiveness of the teaching strategy. The researcher and teacher reviewed the results, identified strengths and weaknesses, and modified the subsequent cycle's plans to address any issues (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014).

To ensure the validity of the data, triangulation was applied by comparing observations, test results, and documentation. Triangulation enhances the credibility of the findings by verifying consistency across multiple data sources (Patton, 2015). The qualitative data obtained from observations and reflections were analyzed descriptively. Patterns in student participation, teacher facilitation, and classroom interactions were interpreted to provide insights into the learning process and the effectiveness of Discovery Learning (Miles et al., 2014). Finally, quantitative data from tests were analyzed using descriptive statistics to calculate mean scores, percentages, and levels of student mastery. This combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Discovery Learning on student outcomes in Asmaul Husna (Ary et al., 2019).

RESULTS

The results of the pre-cycle assessment showed that the average student score in the Asmaul Husna material was 64.5, indicating that students had not yet achieved the minimum mastery criteria set by the school (SD Negeri Ulee Tutue, 2023). Only 35% of the students achieved a passing score, reflecting a need for improved learning strategies. Observations during the pre-cycle indicated that students were often passive during classroom activities. Many students merely listened to the teacher's explanations without actively participating in discussions or asking questions. This behavior suggested low engagement and a lack of motivation in learning Asmaul Husna (Ary et al., 2019).

In response to these observations, the Discovery Learning method was implemented in Cycle I to stimulate student engagement and promote active learning. Teachers facilitated guided exploration, encouraged students to ask questions, and prompted collaborative problem-solving activities related to Asmaul Husna (Bruner, 1961). During the first cycle, students' average scores improved to 68. This reflected an increase in understanding of the Asmaul Husna material. The percentage of students achieving mastery increased to 55%, indicating that Discovery Learning positively affected student performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Observation notes during Cycle I revealed that students were more active in class. They asked relevant questions, answered teacher prompts, and engaged in group discussions. The active participation demonstrated that students were more motivated to explore the material independently (Gall et al., 2015). The teacher's role also improved during Cycle I. Teachers became facilitators rather than solely providers of knowledge. They guided students in discovering the meanings of Asmaul Husna, monitored progress, and provided immediate feedback when misconceptions occurred (Hatch, 2002).

Despite improvements in Cycle I, some students still struggled with memorization and correct pronunciation of Asmaul Husna names. Teachers addressed this challenge by providing additional practice and reinforcement activities during subsequent lessons (Mertler, 2016). Cycle II focused on reinforcing learning outcomes from the first cycle and providing additional discovery-based tasks. Students were encouraged to work in pairs or small groups to explore meanings, pronunciations, and applications of Asmaul Husna in daily life (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014).

The results of Cycle II demonstrated significant improvement. The average score increased to 78, and the percentage of students achieving mastery rose to 85%. This confirmed that repeated application of Discovery Learning strengthened both understanding and retention of the material (Ary et al., 2019).

Student engagement in Cycle II was notably higher. Most students participated actively, expressed curiosity, and showed confidence in presenting their understanding of Asmaul Husna. Peer collaboration was evident, enhancing both social interaction and collective learning (Patton, 2015). Teachers observed that students could not only recall the names of Asmaul Husna but also explain their meanings. This indicated an increase in higher-order thinking skills, which is one of the key objectives of Discovery Learning (Bruner, 1961).

Documentation from lesson observations supported these findings. Notes showed that students were attentive, enthusiastic, and increasingly capable of connecting the knowledge of Asmaul Husna to their daily spiritual practices (Miles et al., 2014).

Analysis of reflection journals indicated that students felt more motivated and confident in learning Asmaul Husna. They reported enjoying group activities, discussions, and the discovery process, which reinforced the positive impact of the learning model on student motivation (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). The findings also highlighted that the integration of Discovery Learning enhanced the teacher's instructional effectiveness. Teachers could more easily identify learning gaps, adapt teaching strategies, and provide personalized support to students who needed additional guidance (Gall et al., 2015). Overall, the study concluded that Discovery Learning significantly improved both the learning outcomes and classroom engagement of fifth-grade students in Asmaul Husna. The method promoted active exploration, critical thinking, and meaningful learning experiences that were reflected in both test scores and observed behaviors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014).

DISCUSSION

The improvement in student learning outcomes indicates that the Discovery Learning method is effective in enhancing understanding of Asmaul Husna. The pre-cycle results showed that students had limited knowledge and low engagement, which aligns with previous research suggesting that traditional lecture-based methods often result in passive learning (Bruner, 1961; Ary et al., 2019). The increase in average scores from 64.5 in the pre-cycle to 78 in Cycle II demonstrates that guided exploration and active participation can significantly impact student achievement. This finding is consistent with Creswell and Creswell (2018), who emphasize that learning models promoting discovery allow students to construct knowledge more meaningfully.

Student engagement during the cycles also increased, as observed in classroom activities. The active participation, question-asking, and peer collaboration highlight the motivational aspect of Discovery Learning. According to Patton (2015), student engagement is crucial for effective learning, as it enhances comprehension and retention. The role of the teacher as a facilitator, rather than a mere provider of information, was critical in this study. Teachers guided students through exploration, encouraged inquiry, and provided immediate feedback. Hatch (2002) notes that effective facilitation is essential in discovery-based learning to support student autonomy and confidence.

Cycle II results showed that students were not only able to recall Asmaul Husna names but also explain their meanings. This demonstrates the development of higher-order thinking skills, including analysis and synthesis, which are key outcomes of discovery-oriented approaches (Bruner, 1961). The increased mastery and active participation also reflect the importance of collaborative learning. Students working in pairs or groups could share insights, correct misunderstandings, and reinforce knowledge. Gall et al. (2015) emphasize that peer collaboration enhances both social skills and cognitive development.

Documentation and observation data showed that students became more confident in expressing their understanding. The shift from passive listening to active involvement indicates that Discovery Learning effectively promotes intrinsic motivation, which is vital for long-term learning (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). The improvement in teacher activity and classroom management is also noteworthy. Teachers could identify learning gaps, adapt instructional strategies, and provide differentiated guidance to support individual needs. This supports Mertler's (2016) assertion that flexible teaching strategies improve both learning outcomes and classroom dynamics.

The reflection journals revealed positive student perceptions of Discovery Learning. Students reported enjoying the interactive and exploratory nature of lessons, which reinforces the motivational benefits of active learning strategies (Miles et al., 2014). Overall, the study demonstrates that Discovery Learning not only improves academic performance but also enhances student engagement, motivation, and critical thinking. This aligns with educational theories advocating for student-centered, inquiry-based learning to foster meaningful and lasting understanding (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the application of the Discovery Learning method can significantly improve the learning outcomes of fifth-grade students of Ulee Tutue State Elementary School on the Asmaul Husna material. This is evident from the increase in students' average scores from 64.5 in the pre-cycle to 68 in Cycle I, and 78 in Cycle II, as well as an increase in learning completeness from 35% to 85% in Cycle II. In addition, this method also increases teacher activity in guiding and concluding the material, and encourages students to be more active, attentive, and participatory during the learning process. Thus, Discovery Learning is effective in improving both learning outcomes and student engagement in learning Asmaul Husna.

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