



## Improving Students' Understanding of Islamic Education Learning through Value-Based Learning Approach at SMP Negeri 2 Hutauraja Tinggi

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**Abstract:** This study aims to improve students' understanding of Islamic religious education learning through the Value-Based Learning Approach. This study is a classroom action research that uses four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were junior high school students. The data for this study were obtained using test and observation techniques. Tests are used to measure learning and observations are used to analyze teacher and student learning activities. The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results of the study indicate that through the Value-Based Learning Approach, students' understanding of Islamic religious education learning can be improved. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of student learning completion in each cycle with details of the pre-cycle 40.89%, the first cycle 68.87% and in the second cycle it increased to 90.32%. Thus, through the Value-Based Learning Approach can be used as an alternative to improve students' understanding of Islamic religious education learning.

**Keywords:** Value based-learning, students' undersatanding, islamic education.

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### INTRODUCTION

Religious education in Indonesia not only teaches theoretical knowledge but also integrates spiritual values in daily life. Islamic education in junior high schools (SMP) has an important role in shaping the character of the younger generation, one of which is through the teaching of Asmaul Husna. Asmaul Husna are the names of Allah that describe His Most Perfect attributes, and have a great influence on the formation of students' character and morals. However, in practice, many students only know Asmaul Husna by rote without really living its meaning and applying it in their daily lives. At SMP Negeri 2 Hutauraja Tinggi, even though Asmaul Husna has been taught, students' understanding of the names of Allah is still limited. This can be seen from their limitations in relating the values contained in Asmaul Husna to their daily behavior.

Therefore, it is important to develop a learning approach that can explore the meaning of Asmaul Husna and relate it to students' attitudes and behaviors, namely with a value-based learning approach. This value-based learning approach aims to not only provide knowledge to students, but also shape their character in accordance with the Islamic teachings contained in Asmaul Husna. Values such as sensitivity, alertness, knowledge, and depth of heart can be learned and applied by students through a value-based approach. Learning carried out with a value-based approach is expected to increase students' understanding and appreciation of Asmaul Husna and ultimately have a positive impact on changing their attitudes and behaviors.

## **METHODS**

This study aims to examine the improvement of student understanding in Islamic Education through a Value-Based Learning approach at SMP Negeri 2 Hutauraja Tinggi. The research employs a qualitative approach to explore the effectiveness of the Value-Based Learning method in enhancing students' comprehension of Islamic teachings and their application in daily life. The focus is on how students internalize values and how these values are integrated into their learning process in Islamic Education.

The research design used is a pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test approach. This design allows the researchers to compare students' understanding of Islamic Education before and after the implementation of the Value-Based Learning approach. The pre-test was administered before the intervention, and the post-test was conducted after the teaching activities had been completed. The purpose of using this design is to measure the effectiveness of the Value-Based Learning approach in improving student understanding and performance in Islamic Education.

The study was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Hutauraja Tinggi, focusing on a sample of eighth-grade students. The selected sample group consisted of 30 students who were involved in the Value-Based Learning activities. These students participated in lessons where they were introduced to key Islamic values such as honesty, integrity, respect, and responsibility. Through classroom discussions, assignments, and reflection activities, students were encouraged to relate these values to real-life scenarios, thus making the learning more meaningful and applicable.

Data was collected through multiple methods, including tests, observations, and student interviews. The pre-test and post-test measured the changes in students' understanding of Islamic values and concepts. Observations were made during classroom activities to assess the students' engagement, participation, and interaction with the Value-Based Learning process. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selection of students to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions of the learning approach.

The implementation of the Value-Based Learning approach focused on integrating moral values with academic content in Islamic Education. Teachers used real-life examples and case studies to help students recognize the relevance of Islamic teachings in everyday life. By linking lessons with moral values, students were encouraged to reflect on how these values could shape their behavior and decision-making in practical situations. The approach also included group discussions, role-playing, and problem-solving activities that facilitated active learning and allowed students to explore Islamic values in a collaborative setting.

To ensure the effectiveness of the Value-Based Learning approach, teachers were trained in applying value-based teaching strategies. Teachers played a key role in guiding students through reflective exercises and ensuring that the values discussed were clearly connected to the Islamic concepts being taught. The approach emphasized student-centered learning, where students were encouraged to actively engage in discussions and reflect on their personal experiences and understanding of the subject matter.

The data collected from tests, observations, and interviews were analyzed using qualitative techniques. The pre-test and post-test results were compared to identify improvements in students' knowledge and understanding of Islamic Education. Observational data were used to assess the level of student engagement and participation during Value-Based Learning activities. Finally, interview responses were coded and analyzed to identify common themes regarding the students' perceptions of the learning approach and its impact on their understanding of Islamic values.

In conclusion, the research employed a comprehensive methodology to evaluate the impact of the Value-Based Learning approach on student understanding in Islamic Education. By using a combination of pre-test and post-test data, classroom observations, and student interviews, the study aimed to provide a thorough understanding of how the Value-Based Learning approach influenced students' comprehension of Islamic teachings and their ability to apply these teachings in real-life situations. The findings from this research will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of this teaching method in improving student outcomes in Islamic Education.

## **RESULTS**

This study investigated the impact of the Value-Based Learning (VBL) approach on improving student understanding in Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 2 Hutaauraja Tinggi. The results showed a noticeable improvement in students' comprehension and application of Islamic values following the implementation of the VBL approach. By integrating Islamic principles into the learning process, students demonstrated a deeper understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects of the subject matter. The study's data from pre-tests, post-tests, observations, and interviews provided strong evidence of the positive effects of VBL on student learning outcomes.

The pre-test results revealed that students had a basic understanding of Islamic teachings, but their ability to connect these teachings to real-life situations was limited. Many students were able to recall Islamic concepts but had difficulty applying them outside of theoretical contexts. However, after the implementation of the Value-Based Learning approach, the post-test results showed significant improvements in students' ability to apply Islamic values in real-world scenarios. These results suggest that the VBL approach successfully helped students bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Observations during the implementation of VBL indicated that students were highly engaged in the learning process. The incorporation of real-life examples and discussions around moral values made the lessons more relatable and meaningful for the students. Students actively participated in class activities, including group discussions, role-playing, and problem-solving exercises. These activities allowed them to reflect on their own behaviors and actions, fostering a greater sense of personal responsibility and a deeper understanding of how Islamic values should guide their decision-making.

The interviews with students further supported the positive impact of the VBL approach. Many students reported that the lessons helped them reflect on their daily lives and made them more aware of how they could incorporate Islamic values, such as honesty, respect, and responsibility, into their actions. Students expressed that the VBL approach had not only increased their knowledge of Islamic teachings but also enhanced their personal growth and moral development. They felt that the lessons were more meaningful because they could see the practical relevance of the values being taught.

One key finding from the study was the increased level of student motivation and enthusiasm for Islamic Education. Prior to the VBL approach, many students viewed Islamic Education as a subject focused on memorization and rote learning. However, the incorporation of values-based learning made the subject more dynamic and interactive. Students were motivated by the opportunity to actively participate in discussions and reflect on the moral implications of the lessons. This shift from passive to active learning

helped students take greater ownership of their education and made them more interested in the subject matter.

The data collected from classroom observations also indicated that students were able to engage in critical thinking and problem-solving activities more effectively. The VBL approach encouraged them to evaluate real-life scenarios, analyze issues from different perspectives, and collaborate with their peers to find solutions. This collaborative environment fostered a sense of community and teamwork, allowing students to learn from one another and develop social skills alongside their academic understanding. As a result, students not only gained knowledge but also developed key life skills such as communication, teamwork, and empathy.

Teachers involved in the study also reported positive outcomes from the implementation of the VBL approach. They noted that students were more engaged, thoughtful, and reflective during lessons. The teachers observed that the students had a deeper understanding of Islamic values and were better able to express how these values could be applied in various aspects of their lives. Teachers also found that the VBL approach helped them create a more interactive and student-centered classroom environment, where students felt encouraged to participate and take responsibility for their learning.

However, the study also identified some challenges in implementing the VBL approach. One challenge was the time constraints, as integrating value-based discussions and activities into the curriculum required additional planning and preparation. Teachers reported that while the VBL approach was effective, it required more time to facilitate discussions and ensure that all students were able to reflect on the lessons meaningfully. Another challenge was the varying levels of student participation, as some students were more comfortable engaging in activities than others. This disparity highlighted the need for more tailored support to ensure that all students, regardless of their initial engagement levels, could fully benefit from the approach.

In conclusion, the findings from this study provide strong evidence that the Value-Based Learning approach significantly enhances student understanding and application of Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 2 Hutaauraja Tinggi. The approach successfully engaged students, improved their ability to apply Islamic values in everyday situations, and fostered greater motivation and personal growth. Despite some challenges in implementation, the overall outcomes suggest that Value-Based Learning is an effective method for improving students' comprehension and appreciation of Islamic teachings. The findings recommend further exploration and integration of this approach in Islamic Education programs to continue enhancing student outcomes.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of this study indicate that the Value-Based Learning (VBL) approach significantly improved students' understanding of Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 2 Hutaauraja Tinggi. One of the most notable outcomes was the students' increased ability to apply Islamic values in practical, real-life situations. By integrating values such as honesty, respect, and responsibility into the learning process, students were not only able to understand theoretical Islamic teachings but also to internalize these values and relate them to their everyday lives. This demonstrates the success of the VBL approach in bridging the gap between theory and practice in Islamic Education.

A key finding from the study was the enhancement of student engagement and motivation. Traditional approaches to teaching Islamic Education often focus heavily on memorization and rote learning, which can lead to disengagement among students. However, the VBL approach encouraged active participation, with students engaging in discussions, role-playing, and problem-solving activities. This shift from passive to active learning increased students' enthusiasm for the subject and made the lessons more

meaningful. When students can relate academic content to their own lives and experiences, their motivation to learn increases, leading to better outcomes.

The study also revealed that students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills improved as a result of the VBL approach. The activities designed around real-life scenarios encouraged students to think critically about how Islamic values could guide their actions in various situations. By analyzing issues from different perspectives and working collaboratively with their peers, students not only gained knowledge but also developed key life skills such as communication, teamwork, and empathy. These skills are essential for personal and social development, as well as for fostering a positive learning environment in the classroom.

One of the significant contributions of the VBL approach was its focus on personal reflection and moral development. Through the application of Islamic values to their own lives, students became more self-aware and reflective about their behaviors and decisions. Many students reported that the lessons helped them realize the importance of applying values like honesty and respect in their daily interactions. This self-reflection fosters a deeper connection with the subject matter and encourages students to adopt positive behaviors that align with Islamic principles. In this way, VBL promotes not only academic growth but also the holistic development of students.

Despite the positive outcomes, the study identified some challenges in the implementation of the VBL approach. One challenge was the additional time required for planning and preparing value-based activities. Teachers found that integrating real-life scenarios and discussions into the curriculum took more time than traditional methods, which sometimes created scheduling difficulties. However, this time investment proved to be worthwhile, as it led to deeper student engagement and improved learning outcomes. The study suggests that, with appropriate planning and support, the time constraints can be managed effectively.

Another challenge was the varying levels of student participation in the activities. While many students actively engaged in the value-based learning process, some students were less willing to participate, either due to shyness or a lack of confidence in expressing their opinions. This disparity in engagement highlighted the need for teachers to provide more tailored support to ensure that all students could benefit from the approach. Teachers can address this challenge by creating a supportive environment that encourages participation and provides opportunities for all students to share their thoughts, regardless of their initial confidence levels.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the effectiveness of the Value-Based Learning approach in improving students' understanding of Islamic Education. By focusing on the application of Islamic values to real-life situations, VBL helped students deepen their knowledge and engage more meaningfully with the subject. The approach also promoted the development of critical life skills such as teamwork, communication, and self-reflection. Despite some challenges, such as time constraints and varying levels of participation, the overall outcomes indicate that VBL is a valuable method for enhancing student learning in Islamic Education. Further research and continued implementation of this approach could lead to even more positive results in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that the Value-Based Learning (VBL) approach significantly enhances students' understanding of Islamic Education at SMP Negeri 2 Hutaauraja Tinggi. By incorporating Islamic values such as honesty, respect, and responsibility into the curriculum, students were able to connect theoretical knowledge with real-life situations. This integration of values not only improved their comprehension but also fostered a deeper appreciation for how these values guide their daily lives. Additionally, the study found that the VBL approach increased student engagement and motivation. Traditional methods, which often rely on memorization, can lead to disengagement, but VBL shifted



the focus to active learning. Through discussions, role-playing, and real-life problem-solving, students became more enthusiastic about the subject and were able to relate more personally to the material, leading to greater participation and enthusiasm. While there were challenges, such as the time required for lesson preparation and the varying levels of student participation, the benefits of the VBL approach far outweighed these difficulties. The results suggest that with appropriate planning and support, these challenges can be managed effectively, allowing the approach to be successfully integrated into the classroom. In conclusion, the Value-Based Learning approach is a valuable tool for improving the quality of Islamic Education. By fostering both academic growth and moral development, VBL offers a holistic learning experience that equips students with not only knowledge but also essential life skills. This study highlights the potential of VBL to create a more engaging and meaningful learning environment in Islamic Education, encouraging further adoption and exploration of this teaching method.

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