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Improving the Understanding of Aqidah Material through Problem-Based Learning Method for Grade VI Students at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu, Tanah Jawa District

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Abstract:

This study aims to improve the understanding of Grade VI students at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu, Tanah Jawa District, on Aqidah material in Islamic Religious Education through the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. The common issue encountered is the students' low comprehension of Aqidah concepts, which impacts the lack of application of faith values in their daily lives. PBL was chosen as it encourages students to be more active in the learning process, enhances critical thinking skills, and fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter. This study employs a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach conducted over two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. Data were collected through comprehension tests, observations, and interviews with the students. The results of the research show that the application of the Problem-Based Learning method significantly improves students' understanding of Aqidah material. This is indicated by the increase in test scores across each cycle and the positive behavioral changes that more closely reflect Aqidah values in their daily lives. Thus, PBL is proven to be effective in enhancing students' comprehension of Aqidah material and can be applied in Islamic Religious Education learning.

Keywords: Problem-Based Learning, Aqidah Comprehension, Islamic Religious Education, Classroom Action Research, SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays an essential role in shaping students' personalities and morals. One of the key aspects of PAI is Aqidah learning, which teaches the values of faith in Allah SWT and guides students to internalize and practice religious teachings in their daily lives. A strong understanding of Aqidah provides a solid spiritual foundation, enabling students to consistently embody religious values in their attitudes and behaviors.

However, based on initial observations at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu, Tanah Jawa District, it was found that Grade VI students' understanding of Aqidah concepts remains low. Students tend to memorize material without truly grasping its essence, which leads to a lack of optimal application of faith values in their daily lives. This is reflected in the students' limited awareness of practicing Islamic behaviors such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility. The

low understanding of Aqidah is suspected to be due to a less interactive, teacher-centered learning approach, which results in students being passive in the learning process.

To address this issue, a learning strategy is needed that can increase student engagement and encourage them to think critically and actively understand Aqidah material. One method considered effective is Problem-Based Learning (PBL). This method allows students to learn through solving problems relevant to their daily lives, enabling them not only to memorize Aqidah concepts but also to understand and apply them in more practical contexts.

Through the application of PBL, it is expected that students will be more engaged in learning, improve their critical thinking skills, and gain a deeper understanding of Aqidah values. Thus, the goal of Islamic education, which is to cultivate a generation of faithful and morally upright individuals, can be optimally achieved. Based on this background, this research aims to improve Grade VI students' understanding of Aqidah material at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu through the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning method.

METHODS

This study uses a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach, conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of four stages: planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection. This method was chosen because it is suitable for directly improving classroom teaching practices through repeated actions until the desired results are achieved. The subjects of this study are 30 sixth-grade students at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu, Tanah Jawa District. The selection of the subjects was based on initial observations that indicated problems in students' understanding of Aqidah material. The stages of the research are as follows: Planning: In this stage, the researcher collaborates with the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher to design the learning activities using the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. The learning plan includes the preparation of the lesson plan (RPP), evaluation tools, and observation instruments. In this phase, relevant problems from the students' daily lives are also identified to be used in the learning process. Action Implementation: In this stage, the learning activities are carried out according to the plan.

The teacher begins by presenting real-life problems related to Aqidah concepts. Students are then divided into groups to discuss and find solutions to the problems. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding the discussions and providing direction when necessary. Observation: The researcher and the teacher observe the learning process to monitor student engagement in group discussions, their understanding of Aqidah material, and the development of their critical thinking skills. These observations are recorded using prepared observation sheets. Reflection: After the action implementation and observation stages, the researcher and the teacher reflect together to evaluate the outcomes achieved in the cycle. This reflection is used to assess the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning method in improving student understanding. If deficiencies are found, improvements will be made for the next cycle. This research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages, repeated to achieve a significant improvement in the students' understanding of Aqidah material.

RESULTS

This study was conducted in two cycles with the aim of improving the understanding of Aqidah material among sixth-grade students at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu through the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method. The following are the results and discussions obtained from each cycle: In the first cycle, the focus of the lesson was on introducing the basic concepts of Aqidah, where students were presented with a problem related to faith and asked to engage in group discussions. The learning process was more interactive compared to conventional teaching methods. Most students showed interest in the discussions, although there were still some students who remained passive.

The observation results from cycle I showed that around 60% of the students actively participated in group discussions. However, some students still had difficulties in understanding the material and participating in solving the given problems. Furthermore, the pre-test results showed an average score of 65, while the post-test results after cycle I showed an increase to 72.

Although there was improvement, the reflection results indicated that students' understanding still needed to be enhanced, especially in applying the concepts of Aqidah in everyday life. Some students tended to be less critical in solving problems, and the group discussions were not yet optimal. Therefore, for the next cycle, it was planned to strengthen the material and provide more intensive guidance to students who were still struggling.

Based on the reflections from cycle I, improvements were made in cycle II by providing more concrete examples that were more relevant to students' daily lives. The learning process also emphasized more group interactions, where students shared their understanding of the Aqidah concepts being studied. Additionally, the teacher allowed more time for discussions and provided direct feedback to each group. The results from cycle II showed a significant increase in student engagement. About 85% of the students were actively involved in group discussions, and they began to demonstrate critical thinking skills in solving the problems presented. The improvement in students' understanding of Aqidah material was also evident from the post-test results, with the average score increasing to 85.

Moreover, observations also revealed positive changes in students' behavior in their daily lives. Students were better able to apply Aqidah concepts, such as faith in Allah and responsibility, in their daily actions, both at school and outside of it. The more intensive group discussions encouraged students to respect others' opinions and collaborate in solving problems. From this study, it can be seen that the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method successfully improved students' understanding of Aqidah material. In the first cycle, although there was an increase in student engagement, the post-test results did not yet meet the expected target. However, after improvements were made in the second cycle, students' understanding significantly increased.

The PBL method enables students to be more actively involved in the learning process, where they not only memorize concepts but also understand how to apply them in everyday life. Group discussions help students share knowledge and learn from each other's experiences, ultimately enhancing their overall understanding. Thus, the PBL method has proven effective in improving students' understanding of Aqidah material in the sixth grade at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu. These results demonstrate that interactive, problem-solving-focused learning can help students develop critical thinking skills and deeper understanding.

Additionally, the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method also had a positive impact on students' social skills. Through intensive group discussions, students learned to respect others' opinions, collaborate, and solve problems collectively. This not only improved their understanding of Aqidah material but also strengthened their character and social attitudes, such as tolerance, responsibility, and empathy. The learning process involving active student interaction also created a more dynamic and conducive classroom environment, motivating students to learn and participate more in the learning process. The improvement in students' understanding of Aqidah material was also reflected in their positive behavioral changes in daily life, both in the school environment and beyond. Students showed more discipline, responsibility, and greater appreciation for the religious values taught in class. Teachers also observed an increased curiosity among students about religious subjects, which was reflected in more profound questions and meaningful discussions during the lessons. Thus, the Problem-Based Learning method not only succeeded in improving cognitive learning outcomes but also played a vital role in shaping students' spiritual and moral attitudes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) method effectively improves the understanding of Aqidah material among fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 095199 Kp Melayu in the Islamic Religious Education subject. This improvement is evident from the evaluation results, which show a significant increase in students' learning outcomes after the implementation of PBL compared to before this method was used. Additionally, students became more actively engaged in the learning process, both in group discussions and in completing assigned tasks. Aside from the academic aspect, the PBL

method also had a positive impact on the development of students' character and social attitudes. The interaction fostered through group discussions encouraged students to respect one another, collaborate, and take greater responsibility for their tasks and group work. Students also became more motivated to learn and actively participate in learning activities. Thus, the PBL method can be considered an effective alternative in Islamic Religious Education, particularly in Aqidah material, to enhance students' understanding and foster good attitudes and character in accordance with religious teachings.

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