

Research Article

Development of Islamic Cultural History Learning Strategies at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the teaching of Islamic Cultural History (SKI) at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen, focusing on the methods, models, media, and challenges encountered. The goal of SKI learning is not only to provide historical insights but also to instill Islamic values and enhance students' critical thinking skills through a Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) approach. The methods used include lectures, storytelling, and interactive discussions, while the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model is applied to encourage analysis and problem-solving. Learning media such as textbooks and audiovisual aids help improve students' understanding. However, several challenges remain, such as students' low reading proficiency, suboptimal implementation of HOTS, and resistance to learning innovations. To address these issues, teachers employ more adaptive strategies, such as reading guidance, gradual implementation of HOTS, and interactive methods. With this approach, SKI learning is expected to be more effective in shaping students with Islamic character and critical thinking skills.

Keywords: Islamic Cultural History; Learning Methods; Learning Models; Learning Media; HOTS; MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen

1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping a superior future. The teaching and learning process is a daily routine carried out by educators, aiming to impart knowledge and provide valuable experiences for students. This creates a challenge for teachers to create a creative, interactive, and innovative learning environment, ensuring that learning activities remain conducive and enjoyable (Muthia et al., 2021). Islamic Cultural History (SKI) is a subject within Islamic religious education that is rich in noble values and historical civilization. However, SKI is often less favored by some students (Istiqomah et al., 2023). The perception that history lessons are monotonous and less engaging can lead to decreased student motivation (Fachrudin, 2023). In this context, teachers, as the frontline of education, play a critical role in creating learning innovations that align with students' characteristics and current educational developments. Thus, SKI learning should not only focus on delivering material but also foster interest, creativity, and critical thinking among students.

The 2013 Curriculum was designed to strengthen students' religious and cultural identity, enhance their understanding of Islamic values, and broaden their cultural perspective (Adiyono, Agnia, et al., 2023). With the advancement of knowledge and the dynamics of education, traditional one-way teaching strategies are becoming less relevant. Lecture-based learning methods sometimes fail to optimally stimulate students' interest (Adiyono, Rusdi, 2023). In the context of SKI learning, teachers need to develop methods, techniques, and strategies that not only capture students' interest but also facilitate a deep understanding of the subject matter (Munawir, 2024). Learning innovation involves teachers developing more creative and student-oriented methods, media, and strategies. Through innovation, learning activities are expected to become more interactive, participative, and collaborative. This approach not only focuses on theoretical delivery but also aligns with aspects of critical thinking and problem-solving. Learning innovation allows students to be more actively involved in the process, whether through the use of technology or project-based approaches (Indonesian Teacher Research et al., 2023).

In the midst of modern learning approaches, students are required to be creative, responsive, and active in analyzing, concluding, and reporting their learning outcomes. Technology has become a catalyst for change in education, making learning more flexible, personalized, and accessible (Rifriyanti, 2019). However, it is not only students who need to adapt to

modern learning; teachers also need to design creative and innovative learning experiences (Nurlatifah et al., 2021).

Currently, the learning of Islamic Cultural History at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen still uses conventional methods, where the teacher remains the central figure in the learning process. Meanwhile, in the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers' roles shift to facilitators, making SKI lessons seem less interesting and boring, as the main teaching model used is still lecture-based. This can lead to boredom with the SKI subject. Based on observations of SKI learning at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen, this study aims to describe the strategies used by teachers in developing learning methods for this subject. Additionally, this research explores the supporting and hindering factors in the SKI teaching and learning process. Through this study, it is expected to find effective approaches to improve the quality of learning, including methods, technology utilization, and creativity in delivering material. The resulting innovations are expected not only to help students better understand historical concepts but also to encourage them to be more active, think critically, and appreciate Islamic culture.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative method based on a field study approach. The data collected consists of words or descriptions, not numbers, obtained from interviews and various other sources. The approach used is inductive, based on objective and participatory observation of social phenomena (Nursapia Harahap, 2020). In data collection, the researcher acts as the main instrument, interacting directly with the research subjects. In-depth interviews were conducted to understand the methods and innovations implemented by teachers in teaching Islamic Cultural History (SKI) and to explore students' responses and experiences regarding the learning provided. Additionally, classroom observations were carried out to directly observe the learning process, including the dynamics of interaction between teachers and students and the effectiveness of the strategies applied (Syahrizal & Jailani, 2023). The data obtained were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques, including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Each finding was systematically analyzed to identify patterns, strengths, and challenges in implementing SKI learning strategies. Thus, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the development of SKI learning strategies at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen and offer recommendations for improving learning quality in the future.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Islamic Cultural History (SKI) learning at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen aims to develop students who are faithful, pious, and possess Islamic character. Through stories of Islamic figures, students are encouraged to strengthen their faith and understand values such as honesty, justice, and responsibility. Additionally, SKI learning introduces the history of Islamic civilization, including the contributions of Muslims to science, art, and politics, inspiring students to take pride and continue this legacy. The SKI learning at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen is not only theoretical but also holistic. One of its successes is that students can understand and explain the course of Islamic civilization, including the struggles of Prophet Muhammad SAW, his companions, and the development of Islamic civilization. The goal is to provide in-depth historical insights while strengthening students' Islamic identity. The learning process also effectively internalizes Islamic values into students' lives, as evidenced by significant changes in attitudes and behavior, such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and cooperation. Students are also trained to analyze historical events, draw wisdom, and apply them in everyday life. This reflective ability not only enriches students' knowledge but also enhances their maturity in thinking. The integration of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the SKI subject at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen aims to encourage students to think critically, creatively, and analytically. The process begins by aligning the curriculum to include analysis, evaluation, and creation competencies. Teaching materials are designed to challenge students through case studies, event analysis, and collaborative projects. Learning models such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Storytelling are used to actively engage students. Teachers are trained in HOTS concepts, innovative methods, and classroom management that supports this approach. The implementation is systematically monitored and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness. With these steps, SKI learning not only imparts historical understanding but also develops students' ability to analyze historical events.

3.1 Learning Methods

The learning method is the strategy and effort made by teachers to deliver material to students during the teaching and learning process (KBM) (Wirabumi, 2020). The method used at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen generally remains similar to common methods, namely the lecture method. The lecture method is a conventional approach where material is delivered

directly through verbal communication, using language suited to the students' conditions and abilities. Generally, the lecture method is considered less relevant to the current educational environment as it is seen as too passive, monotonous, and lacks variation in creating an engaging learning atmosphere. However, despite these drawbacks, the lecture method remains popular among teachers with good public speaking skills because it is easy to apply and requires minimal media resources during learning activities (Dafid Fajar Hidayat, 2022).

A narrative or storytelling approach in SKI learning at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen is one strategy used in the learning process. In this method, teachers convey material by telling stories, depicting the journeys of great figures in Islamic history, and sharing meaningful stories of civilization. The storytelling method helps students connect emotionally with the material being learned. For example, when discussing the struggles of Prophet Muhammad SAW in spreading Islam, the teacher not only presents historical facts rigidly but also builds an engaging storyline so students can feel the struggles and challenges faced. This approach makes it easier for students to absorb the material as they feel as if they are part of the story being told. Additionally, this method can stimulate students' imagination, allowing them not only to memorize historical facts but also to analyze the values within them. For example, through the story of Caliph Umar bin Khattab's leadership, students can understand the concept of justice in Islamic governance and how this principle can be applied in everyday life. At MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen, the storytelling approach is highly relevant as it aligns with the characteristics of students who tend to grasp material more easily through interactive methods. Combining storytelling with audiovisual media like pictures or videos makes SKI learning more interesting, increases students' motivation, and helps them build a deeper understanding of Islamic history (Dewi et al., 2021).

3.2 Learning Models

The term "model" refers to a systematic framework used by educators to design, implement, and evaluate the learning process to achieve educational goals effectively (Choirudin & Sahlan, 2023). The selection of the learning model at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen for SKI subjects is adapted to the learning objectives and student characteristics. Given the students' predominantly lower-middle economic background, the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model is often used because it effectively develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills. This model is suitable for active students who enjoy discussions, collaboration, and are curious to find solutions to problems. PBL encourages students to deeply analyze Islamic historical events. For instance, students can understand the causes of the decline of the Abbasid Dynasty and explore solutions in a modern context. Moreover, this model promotes learning that is relevant to students' lives by focusing on solving real-world problems. In practice, teachers usually present case studies such as, "How did Muslims in the classical era maintain *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) amidst sectarian differences?" Students are then encouraged to find solutions and discuss them creatively and collaboratively. This approach helps students not only grasp the material conceptually but also trains them to think analytically and contribute to productive discussions. The model fosters creative, collaborative, and reflective character development in students, aligning with SKI learning objectives at the madrasah. To maximize students' understanding of the material, teachers also provide project-based assignments related to creativity and skills, such as creating mind maps of the Umayyad Dynasty caliphs. This strategy is aimed at keeping the classroom environment lively and enjoyable while maintaining the core focus of learning.

3.3 Learning Media

Learning Media are tools, methods, or techniques used to deliver material to make it easier for students to understand. These media act as a bridge between educators and students in the learning process, enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency, and attractiveness of learning (Nurfadhillah, 2021). The use of digital media in teaching Islamic Cultural History (SKI) at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen is an innovation to improve students' understanding. One approach used is digital media-based storytelling, such as animated videos and interactive infographics. These media are not only engaging but also encourage students to analyze historical values and connect them with modern life. For example, in understanding the Hijrah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), students do not only listen to the story but also see visual representations and reflect on the application of patience in their lives. At MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen, although the use of digital media is still limited to LCD projectors and educational videos, ongoing development is being made to enrich students' learning experiences through technology.

Printed Books serve as the basic learning media containing structured materials according to the curriculum. These books are the primary reference source for students and teachers, containing historical information, important events, and concepts taught. The use of books also allows students to study independently outside of class hours. Meanwhile, the LCD projector is used as an audiovisual medium to enrich the learning experience. Through this medium, teachers can present material in a more engaging form, such as videos, images, or interactive presentations. For instance, when discussing significant events in Islamic history, teachers can display maps of the expansion of Islamic territories or show documentary videos to provide students with a more concrete visualization.

The combination of print and audiovisual media creates variation in the learning process, aiming to enhance students' interest and understanding. By utilizing audiovisual media, students gain insights through visual and audio illustrations. This media also supports technology-based learning aligned with the times. However, optimizing learning media still faces challenges, such as the availability of supporting devices and teacher training in technology use. Therefore, efforts to maximize the use of learning media at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen continue to support various student needs. Evaluation at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen is carried out through various assessment models to measure the effectiveness of strategies and the achievement of learning objectives. Two main approaches used are formative assessment and objective evaluation. Formative assessment is implemented by using questions from the LKS book as instruments to evaluate students' understanding. This approach helps identify the extent of students' comprehension and provides feedback to teachers to adjust teaching methods if necessary.

Meanwhile, objective evaluation is conducted directly during the learning process. Teachers observe students' involvement in discussions, activeness in answering questions, and critical attitudes in analyzing events in Islamic history. This evaluation provides a comprehensive overview of students' thinking development in understanding and internalizing Islamic historical values. Unfortunately, learning Islamic Cultural History (SKI) at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen faces several challenges, such as low reading quality among students, suboptimal implementation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), and students' unpreparedness in accepting innovative learning strategies. These obstacles affect learning effectiveness, especially in understanding historical texts and critically analyzing events. Therefore, teachers use these challenges as a guideline to design more effective and creative learning strategies. With a more adaptive approach, such as reading guidance, gradual HOTS implementation, and using more interactive methods, it is expected that students will find it easier to understand and apply historical material in their lives.

4. CONCLUSION

The teaching of Islamic Cultural History (SKI) at MTs Muhammadiyah Sangen aims to develop students who are faithful, pious, and possess a strong understanding of Islamic history. Various teaching methods and models are applied, including lectures, storytelling, and Problem-Based Learning (PBL), to enhance student engagement and promote Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Additionally, learning media such as textbooks, LCD projectors, and digital media-based storytelling help enrich students' learning experiences. The learning evaluation is carried out through formative assessments and objective evaluations to ensure the effectiveness of the implemented strategies. The evaluation results show that students not only understand Islamic history but also internalize Islamic values in their daily lives. This learning approach positively impacts the school environment, shaping students' characters to be more reflective, analytical, and highly motivated to learn. However, in practice, several challenges arise, such as low reading proficiency, suboptimal application of HOTS, and students' unpreparedness for innovative learning strategies. These obstacles affect the effectiveness of understanding historical texts and students' analytical skills. Therefore, teachers continuously develop more effective and creative learning strategies, such as providing reading guidance, gradually implementing HOTS, and using more interactive methods. By doing so, it is hoped that students will find it easier to understand and apply historical material in their lives.

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