

The Implementation of Discovery-Based Learning in PAI Education Within the Framework of the Independent Curriculum at SDN 2 Marong

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Abstract

The research is based on the Discovery Learning learning model applied to the independent curriculum. The purpose of this study is to describe how Islamic Religious Education educators apply the Discovery Learning learning model to Islamic religious education learning in the independent curriculum, and to find out the obstacles faced by Islamic Religious Education teachers when using the Discovery Learning learning model in class SDN 2 Marong central Lombok. The method used is a descriptive qualitative research method which is intended to explain and analyze events, social activities, actions, beliefs, and mindsets of a person both individually and in groups with the type of field research. Data were collected based on observation, interview and documentation techniques. Based on the findings of the research conducted by the author, the results show that: the application of the Discovery Learning learning model in Islamic Religious Education learning has shown the development of student participation in the learning process. There are three steps in the Discovery Learning learning model in Islamic religious education learning, namely: stimulation/giving stimulation, questions or identifying problems, and finally the conclusion has not been fully carried out by students properly as expected. However, there are obstacles faced by teachers in implementing the Discovery Learning learning model in Islamic religious education learning, including: lack of student learning motivation, lack of student learning activity, lack of student discipline and relatively short allocation of time and learning hours.

Keywords: discovery learning, independent curriculum, learning process development

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Introduction

Learning The Discovery Learning Method is an active and hands-on learning style developed by Jerome Bruner in the 1960s. Bruner emphasized that learning should involve "learning by doing." With this method, learners actively participate rather than passively receive knowledge. Discovery Learning represents a general instructional approach that embodies the development of constructivist learning in school-based environments (Khasinah, 2021). Discovery Learning is a method of understanding concepts, meanings, and relationships through an intuitive process to ultimately arrive at a conclusion. Through this model, learners are encouraged to discover what they are learning on their own and then construct knowledge by comprehending its meaning (Putri et al., 2023).

The Discovery Learning model guides students to understand concepts, meanings, and relationships through an intuitive process, ultimately leading to a conclusion. Concept discovery occurs when data from the teacher is not presented in its final form but as part of an ongoing process (never-ending process). By using the Discovery Learning model, students are encouraged to identify what they want to learn, seek information independently, and then organize or construct their knowledge and understanding into a final form (Syaifullah & Maulidiyah, 2024). In the Discovery Learning model, the teacher's role is primarily as a guide and facilitator of learning. This approach allows students to engage more actively in activities, either independently or in groups, to solve problems with the teacher's guidance (Fardilah et al., 2023).

The learning mechanism in the Discovery Learning model emphasizes problem-solving, with the teacher acting as a more passive source of information (Safitri et al., 2022). This mechanism transforms students from initially being passive to becoming more active through the application of this method. The principle is straightforward: students undergo an active process through problem-solving, where they seek various pieces of information as materials for solving a given problem. Consequently, students become more engaged in synchronizing their experiences with the new information they have acquired (Susanti & Purwandari, 2024). In this strategy, teachers provide opportunities for students to identify problems relevant to the lesson material, formulate hypotheses, and then draw conclusions from their observations. Discovery Learning plays a significant role in improving student learning outcomes. This is evident through the Data Processing activity, where students are given the chance to understand information or concepts they have learned or discovered independently. This is followed by verification activities to collectively prove the validity of a concept. As a result, the learning experience becomes more meaningful and firmly embedded in students' memory and cognitive processes (Alfiza & Ritonga, 2023).

Based on the aforementioned literature, the researcher assumes that in Discovery Learning, the learning process is student-centered, where students search for and discover their own knowledge concepts, allowing them to take an active role in classroom learning. In its implementation, teachers must position themselves as guides for students during the learning process. Teachers are also required to provide ample opportunities for students to actively explore and discover their knowledge.

Education is one of the basic needs of humans, just like the need for food, drink, clothing, shelter, and health, which must be fulfilled (Sada, 2017). This is because humans are born without any knowledge, as stated in the words of Allah SWT in Surah An-Nahl: 78.

وَاللَّهُ اَخْرَجَكُمْ مِّنُّ بُطُوْنِ اُمَّهٰتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ شَيْئًا وَّجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَوَالْافْدِهَ ۚ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ

Allah brought you out of your mother's womb in a state of knowing nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts so that you may be grateful.

The above verse emphasizes that in Islamic Education, it is a process of developing students' potential through teaching, habituation, guidance, mastery, and supervision to acquire various knowledge and Islamic values in order to achieve perfection in life, both in this world and the hereafter. Islamic religious education can be defined as a learning process conducted by an individual or educational institution that provides material about Islam to those who wish to gain a deeper understanding of Islam, both in terms of academic content and practices that can be implemented in daily life (Syafrin et al., 2023).

Islamic education is both a knowledge-based and action-based education. This explains that the function of Islamic education, in addition to providing understanding and values (knowledge), also plays a role in transforming the behavior of the community according to Islamic teachings. At the same time, it serves as a field for da'wah, fostering the growth and development of the Muslim community (Salim & Suratman, 2023).

Abuddin Nata states that there are several foundations in education that must be understood by every education provider and educator. These foundations aim to produce individuals with intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. These foundations are as follows: 1) The foundation of humanity. 2) The foundation of the unity of humankind. 3) The foundation of balance. 4) The foundation of mercy for all of creation (Poloso, 2018).

In addition to the foundational principles that must be considered, Abuddin Nata also mentions several principles in Islamic education that are also taught by the Qur'an and Sunnah. These principles are as follows: 1) The principle of compulsory learning and teaching. 2) The principle of education for all. 3) The principle of lifelong education. 4) The principle of education

with a global perspective. 5) The principle of integral and balanced education. 6) The principle of education that aligns with human talents. 7) The principle of research-based and planned education. 8) The principle of excellent and professional education. 9) The principle of community-based education. 10) The principle of education that adapts to the changing times (Poloso, 2018).

Based on the foundations and principles mentioned above, it is understood that the core values in Islam must serve as a reference in the educational process. This will distinguish Islamic education from education outside of Islam, particularly in producing graduates with strong character. Additionally, the principles of Islamic education are an effort to realize the ideal goals of Islam, which is to become a mercy for the universe.

The curriculum is a vital component for every school, especially in Elementary Schools/MI, to drive the educational process. Curriculum innovation refers to a renewal or idea expected to impact the curriculum itself (Rahman et al., 2021). The development of education curricula in Indonesia has advanced to the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Independent Curriculum). This curriculum is an adaptation and application of the emergency curriculum designed in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The core principle of this new curriculum is student-centered learning, introducing the concept of Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn). This approach allows students to choose subjects that interest them. Schools have the right and responsibility to develop curricula tailored to their specific needs and characteristics. The policy of allowing curriculum selection aims to accelerate the phased reform of the national curriculum. It can be said that this policy of giving schools the option to select their curriculum is part of a broader change management effort (Cholilah et al., 2023).

Various dimensions of curriculum implementation that are important to consider include curriculum content, organizational structure, roles or behaviors, knowledge, and the internalization of values (Ramadhan et al., 2023). The success of curriculum implementation is determined by the aspects of planning and implementation strategies. Essentially, this implementation integrates philosophical aspects, objectives, subject matter, teaching strategies, learning activities, as well as evaluation and feedback (Ramdhan, 2019).

Several studies have explored discovery learning. First, research by Dyah Aris Susanti et al. found a shift from traditional teaching methods, which focus on lectures or teacher-led explanations, toward more interactive and collaborative approaches. This modification aligns with the use of discovery learning, which encourages students to actively participate in classroom discussions as a means of learning (Susanti & Purwandari, 2024). Secondly, research by Idawarnis shows that the application of the Guided Discovery Learning model in Class XI IPS 2 can enhance students' learning activities in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) through the use of student worksheets at SMA Negeri 10 Padang during the 2022/2023 academic year (Idawarnis, 2022). Thirdly, research by Andy Sulastri Juniastuty indicates that student learning outcomes in Class V at SD Negeri 14 Karti, Teluk Keramat Subdistrict, Sambas Regency, on PAI lessons about Asmaul Husna (Al-Muhyi and Al-Mumit) showed a significant improvement, as observed from students' evaluation scores across the pre-cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2 (Juniastuty, 2023).

This research was conducted based on the urgency of finding effective teaching methods to address the challenges of modern education, particularly in teaching Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Today, many students struggle to understand and practice religious principles in their daily lives. This highlights the need for more engaging and dynamic methods. Additionally, the implementation of discovery learning in PAI can help achieve the goals of the Kurikulum Merdeka by fostering students' creativity and independence in learning. This approach not only increases students' interest and willingness to learn but also helps them gain a deeper understanding of PAI content by allowing them the freedom to explore and absorb religious concepts. Nevertheless, further comprehensive research is needed to fully understand the efficiency of discovery learning and the challenges educators face when applying it in PAI.

The findings of this research can enrich learning theories by providing new insights into the application of Discovery Learning in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and identifying the challenges and opportunities in its implementation. Practically, these findings can assist PAI instructors in creating and implementing more dynamic and participatory teaching methods, ultimately enhancing students' understanding and engagement with PAI content. Furthermore, this study is expected to advance the goals of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes independent learning and creativity, helping students comprehensively and practically understand religious principles in their daily lives.

Based on initial observations conducted by the researcher at SDN 2 Marong, Central Lombok, it was found that the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher had implemented the Discovery Learning model, starting with the preparation of a comprehensive lesson plan (RPP) for the Discovery Learning model, as detailed in the appendices. However, in practice, the application of this model in the classroom was not fully aligned with the procedures or steps of the Discovery Learning model during PAI lessons. In the learning process, the teacher begins by introducing the lesson and outlining its objectives and content. Then, the teacher divides the students into groups and assigns tasks for them to discover the day's learning material. The students explore and uncover the material through group discussions. After the discussion, each group presents its findings, and other groups have the opportunity to ask questions. Once all groups have presented and exchanged questions, the teacher reinforces or supplements any unclear points in the learning material. Despite this structure, the implementation in practice has not been optimal, highlighting the need for studies like this one to strengthen the learning process based on Discovery-Based Learning.

The purpose of this research is to explore how Discovery Learning is implemented in PAI instruction and how it can facilitate the application of the Kurikulum Merdeka. This study focuses on the implementation process and the effectiveness of this approach in enhancing students' understanding of PAI subjects. The research has both theoretical and practical applications. Theoretically, it contributes to a deeper understanding of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and its alignment with the Kurikulum Merdeka. Practically, it serves as an additional reference in the field of education, offering a more specific and in-depth examination of Discovery Learning.

Method

This research method is qualitative research. Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions, holistically, and through descriptions in the form of words and language (Moleong, 2017). The qualitative approach is research conducted to collect data to examine or answer questions about the current status of the object being studied.

The research location selected as the subject of the study is SDN 2 Marong, Central Lombok. This location was chosen for several reasons, including the fact that the teacher's implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons has not been optimal, resulting in students feeling unmotivated due to boredom and monotony. Students are only required to write without being given the freedom to express their thoughts and ideas. The main data source in qualitative research is words and actions. In relation to data, it can be categorized into words and actions, written sources, photos, and statistics (Moleong, 2017).

Several techniques are used in determining data sources to obtain data, namely purposive and snowball techniques. The purposive technique is a method of selecting a sample based on certain considerations. Meanwhile, the snowball technique is a method of sample selection that starts with a small number and then grows. In sample selection, one or two individuals are initially chosen. However, since these two individuals do not feel that the data provided is complete, the researcher then seeks other individuals who are considered to know more and can complement the data provided by the initial two individuals (S. Sugiyono, 2019).

The data sources in this research are the PAI teacher at SDN 2 Marong, Central Lombok. Other data sources include documentation from the classroom learning process, facilities and infrastructure, media, teaching materials, and others. The research was conducted from mid-September (September 17th to October 11th, 2024), with various findings that will be presented in the research results section.

Data analysis in qualitative research is conducted before entering the field, during the fieldwork, and after the fieldwork is completed. This includes during the data collection process and after data collection within a certain period (D. Sugiyono, 2013). Miles and Huberman stated that the method or technique for processing qualitative data can be done through three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Nasution, 2023).

Results

The application of the Discovery Based Learning model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SDN 2 Marong, Central Lombok

1. Planning in the implementation of the Discovery Learning model by the PAI teacher in Islamic Religious Education learning

Planning in the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Religious Education is an important stage that teachers must carry out before engaging in the teaching and learning process and to achieve the final learning objectives. To uncover data about how planning for the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Religious Education is carried out, the researcher conducted a study at SDN 2 Marong, Central Lombok.

2. Planning learning objectives

Based on the documentation study, the researcher observed that the planning of the learning objectives for implementing the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Religious Education can be found in the lesson plan (teaching module) delivered by the teacher in the classroom. From the results of the documentation study, the researcher concluded that every learning activity and the implementation of the planned teaching model must align with the lesson plan. The lesson plan is used as a supporting tool for the learning activities and process.

3. Selecting the Islamic Religious Education learning material using the Discovery Learning model

One of the important aspects in implementing the teaching process is selecting the learning material to be delivered to the students. The teaching and learning process will not run smoothly and effectively without proper learning material. Before delivering the material to the students, a teacher must master the material to be taught. With the teacher's mastery of the material, students will more easily understand the content being taught, thus achieving the expected learning goals. From the observations and interviews conducted by the researcher, it can be concluded that almost all materials can be taught using the Discovery Learning model, such as the material on Tolerance and Avoiding Violence, Belief in the Messengers of Allah, and Honoring Parents and Teachers. However, there are some materials that require the teacher to explain directly to the students, such as the material on the Funeral Rites. To ensure that the learning goals are achieved effectively, teachers must adapt the materials to be taught using the Discovery Learning model.

4. Developing learning materials for Islamic Religious Education using the Discovery Learning model

For an educator, learning materials are essential tools. Learning materials can include information, tools, and texts needed by the teacher for instructional planning and implementation of the learning process. Based on the analysis conducted by the researcher at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok, it was found that there are several learning materials used by the PAI teacher in teaching Islamic Religious Education using the Discovery Learning model.

The materials used by the PAI teacher include the PAI and Character Education textbook as well as Student Worksheets (LKS). With the use of these learning materials, it is hoped that the learning activities will become more engaging, motivating students to learn, and encouraging creativity, while also providing opportunities for independent learning that is guided and supported by the teacher.

Implementation of the Discovery-Based Learning Model in Islamic Religious Education at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok.

The implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok aims to make students more active in the learning process. This model emphasizes the process of discovery and inquiry, with the teacher playing more of a facilitator or guide role during the learning activities. In this model, students are expected to actively discover and find answers to the problems they encounter.

From the author's observations and interviews with the PAI teacher during the research at SDN 2 Marong Lombok Tengah, it was found that the implementation of the Discovery Learning model has not fully aligned with the theoretical expectations and still contains some weaknesses. The procedure for the Discovery Learning model has not been completely carried out by both the teacher and the students as desired. The procedures followed by the PAI teacher and students in the learning process are as follows:

1.Stimulation

Based on the observations conducted by the researcher at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok, in this stage, the PAI teacher presented the learning material titled "Caring for Orphans" based on Q.S. Al-Ma'un. Afterward, the teacher immediately divided the students into 6 groups. Once the groups were formed, the teacher gave the students a task regarding the material from Q.S. Al-Ma'un, which included the verses and their meanings. After providing the task, the students began working in groups.

2. Problem Statement

From the observations and interviews, it can be concluded that at this stage, students were given the opportunity to identify problems and understand the verses from Q.S. Al-Ma'un. Based on the observations and interviews with the PAI teacher, it was found that many students relied on the information their peers had gathered. Not all students were active in seeking information from various sources such as books or other supporting resources. Some students were distracted in the classroom, while others focused on searching for and gathering information related to the lesson. However, the implementation of the Discovery Learning model significantly increased student engagement, turning passive, bored, and sleepy students into active participants in the learning process, as the teacher provided opportunities and space for them to engage.

3. Conclusion

The final stage of the Discovery Learning model is drawing conclusions. In this stage, students are required to summarize the material they have learned from Q.S. Al-Ma'un, including the verses and their meanings. During the conclusion stage, most students were able to argue based on what they had learned with their groups. This indicates that the implementation of the Discovery Learning model has a significant impact on student participation and academic achievement.

Challenges Faced by Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Implementing the Discovery-Based Learning Model at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok.

Based on the interviews conducted with the Islamic Religious Education teacher, it can be concluded that the factors hindering the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Religious Education at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok include the following:

1. Lack of student motivation in learning

- 2. Insufficient student participation in the learning process
- 3. Lack of discipline among students
- 4. Limited time allocation and relatively short teaching hours.

Discussion

The application of the Discovery Based Learning model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at SDN 2 Marong, Central Lombok

In the implementation of the Discovery Learning model, the teacher acts as a facilitator rather than being teacher-centered, and it is the students who play an active role in discovering the concepts they need. The goal of the Discovery Learning model is to guide students to identify what they want to learn by searching for information independently, and then students organize or construct what they have learned and understood into a final form (Alfiza & Ritonga, 2023). The lesson planning prepared by the teacher includes creating a flow of learning objectives and teaching modules in advance. The content of the teaching module includes general information about the module, which consists of the author's name, institution/school, grade/class, time allocation, and academic year. The second part includes the core competencies, which consist of learning achievement phases, domains, learning objectives, initial competencies, triggering questions, Pancasila profile, keywords, student targets, number of students, assessments, types of assessments, teaching models, availability of materials, main learning activities/student arrangements, methods, facilities and infrastructure, learning materials, learning resources, lesson preparation, steps in learning, assessment implementation, enrichment and remedial actions, assessment criteria, and assessment rubrics (Hanun et al., 2023).

In the planning stage, the teacher prepares and designs the Lesson Plan and teaching module with Islamic Religious Education material. The teacher then prepares the teaching media used in this stage. Next, the teacher creates research instruments such as tests, non-tests, and supporting teaching media. The test instrument is first prepared in the form of multiple-choice questions before the lesson is implemented, along with non-test instruments in the form of observation sheets, both for observing teacher activities and student activities (Uspitasari et al., 2022). In the implementation stage, there are three steps carried out: the opening or introductory activity, the core activity, and the closing activity (Lasoma, 2023).

There are several steps in implementing the Discovery Learning model in the classroom, which consist of the planning and implementation stages. Below are the details: 1) Setting learning objectives: When determining learning objectives, they should align with the competency achievement indicators. The designed objectives will indicate whether the Discovery Learning model can be applied in the lesson. 2) Identifying student characteristics: Identifying student characteristics such as prior knowledge, interests, learning styles, and others. This is important because the characteristics of students affect the success of applying this model. 3) Selecting the lesson material: Not all teaching materials can be applied using the Discovery Learning model. 4) Determining the topics to be studied inductively by students (based on examples of generalizations): In designing the syntax, topics should be presented inductively, starting from general information to specific. 5) Developing learning materials: Develop learning materials such as examples, illustrations, tasks, and so on that students will study. These materials are developed in the form of examples, illustrations, or other forms that lead to specific information. 6) Organizing the sequence of learning: Organize the learning sequence from simple to complex, from concrete to abstract, or from the enactive, iconic, to symbolic stages. The teacher must arrange the syntax from general to specific information. 7) Assessing the learning process and student outcomes: The teacher assesses according to the competency achievement indicators (Hasibuan et al., 2023).

Implementation of the Discovery-Based Learning Model in Islamic Religious Education at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok.

1. Stimulation or Providing Stimulus

Stimulation is a crucial step for teachers to perform at the beginning of the lesson (Hijarani & Nuraeni, 2023). Its purpose is to create learning interaction conditions that develop and assist students in exploring the learning materials (Oktavioni, 2017). This stimulation aims to guide students to identify problems within the topic being studied.

There are two types of discovery in this context:

- a. Pure Discovery: In this type, learning is entirely student-centered and does not rely on the teacher. This activity receives minimal guidance from the teacher, meaning the teacher primarily encourages students to think actively and independently to develop the learning topics until they reach a solution.
- b. Guided Discovery: In guided discovery, the teacher provides direction regarding the learning material in the form of instructions, guidance, questions, or dialogue. This method aims to help students draw conclusions (generalizations) in line with the teacher's plan. Here, the teacher acts as a facilitator and mediator to help summarize the topics discussed collaboratively (Winarno, 2024).

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a proven teaching method that effectively enhances students' analytical skills, making them more adept in their abilities. Strong analytical skills directly contribute to improving students' critical thinking abilities. With well-developed analytical and critical thinking skills, students are expected to approach future challenges with critical and accurate solutions. Moreover, they are less likely to accept information blindly and will evaluate what others say with discernment (HARYANTO & KUSMIYATI, 2022).

2. Questioning and Problem Identification (Problem Statement)

After stimulation, the next step is for the teacher to provide opportunities for students to identify as many relevant issues related to the lesson material as possible. One of these issues is then selected and formulated into a hypothesis (a temporary answer or opinion regarding the problem question) (Purwaningrum, 2016). The chosen issue is subsequently framed as a question or hypothesis—a statement serving as a tentative answer to the posed question. Allowing students to identify and analyze the problems they encounter is an effective technique to help them develop the habit of identifying and addressing issues independently (Syaifullah & Maulidiyah, 2024).

3. Conclusion (Generalization)

According to Bruner, students draw conclusions to establish general principles applicable to similar problems or events by considering the results of verification. Based on interviews and observations conducted, it was found that at the conclusion stage, only active and diligent students were able to draw conclusions and understand the conclusions presented. Meanwhile, students who were not earnest in participating in the learning process struggled to derive conclusions from the lesson.

Challenges Faced by Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Implementing the Discovery-Based Learning Model at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok.

Several inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Education learning at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok include the following:

- a. Lack of student motivation in learning
- b. Limited student engagement in the learning process
- c. Lack of discipline among students
- d. Relatively short allocation of time and teaching hours

Conclusion

The implementation of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Education (PAI) learning for SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok consists of two main stages. First, the planning stage, which includes setting learning objectives, selecting Islamic Education materials suitable for the Discovery Learning model, and developing learning materials used by PAI teachers within the model. However, only some of these planning elements were carried out by the teacher in the classroom. Second, the implementation stage of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Education involves three key procedures/steps: Stimulation (Providing Stimuli), Problem Statement (Identifying and Formulating Problems), and Generalization (Drawing Conclusions).

The factors inhibiting the application of the Discovery Learning model in Islamic Education learning at SDN 2 Marong Central Lombok include: Lack of student motivation in learning, Limited active participation of students during lessons, Low discipline among students and Short allocation of time and teaching hours.

The findings of this study indicate improvements in students' analytical and problem-solving skills, as well as beneficial adjustments to their learning styles, which now emphasize cooperative learning and group discussions. Thus, the study aligns with the goals of the independent curriculum by promoting student-centered learning and equipping them to face 21st-century challenges. Additionally, it significantly advances the development of more effective and relevant PAI learning strategies to meet students' educational needs.

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