The implementation of the contextual learning approach in Akidah Akhlak lesson in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung

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ABSTRACT

Akidah Akhlak lesson is a subject aimed at internalizing the cognitive component, specifically related to cultivating and developing the concepts of divinity and humanity within students. To effectively foster Islamic character formation, a learning method that aligns with learning objectives and the student's developmental level is required. This study focuses on analyzing the implementation of contextual learning approaches in Akidah Akhlak lessons at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung. The research employs a descriptive qualitative research method. Data collection involves observation, interviews, and documentation. Informants were selected through purposive sampling in January 2022. Data analysis relies on descriptive analysis techniques. The findings reveal that Akidah Akhlak learning is structured using contextual learning methods, incorporating components such as constructivism, inquiry, questioning, community learning, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. Applying a contextual approach to Akidah Akhlak learning contributes to shaping Islamic character among students. However, several challenges exist in practice, including difficulties in analyzing individual differences using a contextual approach, evaluating learning outcomes, and managing learning time effectively due to its time-intensive nature.

ABSTRAK

Pembelajaran Akidah Akhlak merupakan salah satu pelajaran yang bertujuan untuk menginternalisasikan komponen kognitif, yang berkaitan dengan penanaman dan pembinaan ketuhanan dan kemanusiaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan menemukan implementasi pendekatan pembelajaran kontekstual pada pembelajaran Akidah Akhlak di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung. Metode penelitian yang digunakan yaitu metode penelitian dengan jenis penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan metode observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Pemilihan informan dilakukan dengan teknik *purposive sampling* yang dilakukan selama bulan Januari 2022. Teknik analisis data dilakukan dengan teknik analisis deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran Akidah Akhlak didesain dengan metode pembelajaran kontekstual dilaksanakan dengan komponen pembelajaran konstruktivisme, inquiry, pertanyaan, pembelajaran komunitas, pemodelan, refleksi dan penilaian otentik. Pembelajaran Akidah Akhlak dengan pendekatan kontekstual membantu membentuk karakter islami pada diri siswa.

1. Introduction

Education, as experts contend, represents a concerted effort to nurture the essence of humanity [1]. This endeavor requires meticulous planning and a profound understanding to realize its intended objectives [2]. Essentially, education serves to align individuals with their inherent qualities and inclinations, enabling them to discover their identity and, subsequently, the transcendent essence that lies within [3] [4]. This holistic perspective mandates that education encompasses all facets of life, intricately woven into the human experience [5].

In this grand tapestry of education, the pivotal role belongs to educators, specifically teachers, who are the bedrock upon which the success of the educational process stands. They occupy the heart of this process, wielding profound influence over its outcome [6]. The fate of a school, in terms of achieving its educational goals, pivots on the dedication and expertise of its educators [7]. The educational process is more than just a series of lessons; it is a journey marked by diverse strategies, methods, and approaches aimed at the realization of meticulously planned objectives [8]. Learning, in essence, becomes a deliberate endeavor that orchestrates and activates an individual's cognitive faculties, guided by predefined learning objectives [5].

To successfully attain these learning objectives, we must employ strategies and approaches that instill enthusiasm and curiosity, fostering a dynamic and engaging learning process. Effective teaching should be underpinned by a profound understanding of students' interests, with alternative approaches designed to facilitate the achievement of these objectives, not merely focusing on conceptual comprehension but also promoting experiential learning [8]. This quest for effective learning comprises five crucial factors or variables, as proposed: active student involvement, the ability to capture students' interest and attention, the power to kindle motivation, the cultivation of personal principles, and the embodiment of these principles within the learning process [9].

The researcher's work demonstrates novelty in implementing Akidah Akhlak learning with a contextual learning approach at the Tsanawiyah Madrasah education level. Research on the Akidah Akhlak learning methods has been conducted by various researchers, each contributing novel insights to the field. Fatimatuzahroh, Nurteri, and Koswara introduced the Lectures Vary method, which has demonstrated a positive impact on enhancing learning outcomes [10]. Indrawan and Alim innovatively presented a combination of lecture, question and answer, discussion, and assignment methods tailored to the specific learning material [11]. Fauzia brought a fresh perspective by implementing the 'learning start with a question' method, fostering more active learning situations and enhancing students' question-formulation abilities [12]. Nusaibah et al offered a novel approach through Role Playing, which has proven effective in shaping students' moral development [13].

At the elementary school level, Susiba proposed a diverse array of methods, including articulation games, mind mapping, games, storytelling, lectures, questions and answers, sociodrama, demonstrations, and role play, expanding the repertoire of innovative teaching techniques [14]. Irfangi introduced a story-based method that has successfully increased student enthusiasm and comprehension of the subject matter [15]. Nurjanah, Yahdiyani, and Wahyuni's research highlighted the effectiveness of habituation methods, examples, peer tutors, and quiz teams in molding students' character, underscoring the significance of these strategies in character development. [16] Finally, Masnun's introduction of a contextual teaching and learning approach at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah education level represents a pioneering approach in the field, emphasizing the importance of context in the learning process [17].

Within the realm of educational institutions, the Akidah Akhlak lesson stands as a manifestation of Islamic education's spiritual essence, assuming a paramount role in religious instruction. Education aims not merely to fill students' minds with knowledge, but to nurture their characters, instilling noble values, virtues, and a spiritual consciousness, preparing them for a life of purpose [18].One such innovative approach that aligns with these ideals is the Contextual Learning Method (abbreviated as CTL) [5]. Contextual learning goes beyond the confines of traditional education, emphasizing the connection between the learning material and real-world applications. It encourages students to apply their knowledge in practical, everyday situations [19]. This approach underscores the relationship between educational content and students' lived

experiences, enabling them to relate and apply their learning outcomes to real-life challenges [20].

Contextual learning is problem-based learning, designed to enhance students' critical thinking and empower them to address the issues they encounter in their daily lives. By linking educational material to real-world scenarios, students can employ their knowledge to solve problems within their families, communities, or workplaces [21]. Key components of contextual learning include constructivism, questioning, learning communities, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment [14] [15]. This approach involves students in constructing their knowledge and reasoning at higher cognitive levels, primarily through inquiry-based activities and independent problem-solving [24].

Contextual learning also facilitates advanced cognitive processes by stimulating higher-level thinking [25]. To harness the full potential of this strategy, teachers must create conditions that encourage robust brain activity [26]. By integrating real-life context into learning, students are challenged to think more deeply and proactively contribute ideas to address real-life issues [27]. The adoption of a contextual approach transforms the educational landscape. It positions students as active learners, with teachers assuming the role of dedicated guides [9]. Given the significance of contextual learning in education, we are motivated to delve into its implementation in the Akidah Akhlak learning process at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung in North Tapanuli.

2. Method

This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, namely research that produces descriptive data from observable people and actors. This qualitative research is an analytical descriptive research that seeks to explain systematically about the things that are the focus of research problems by looking at accurate and factual data sources. Analytical descriptive research is not limited to collecting or compiling data but includes analysis and interpretation of data [28]. By using a descriptive-analytic method, this research is more directed at holistic individual settings, meaning that it does not isolate individuals or organizations into hypothetical variables, but looks at them as a whole.

The sampling technique in this study was purposive sampling technique. According to, purposive sampling is a sampling technique with certain consideration [28]. Informan in this research contain teacher and student class VIII. The reason the researcher chose class VIII because class VIII had the most students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung besides that class VIII students were considered as students who were more mature and knew more about what researchers expected and could be more easily invited to work together in research, so This will make it easier for researchers to take research samples. This research was conducted in January 2022.

Research instruments consist of interviews, observation, and documentation. The first is an interview, namely asking questions orally by asking questions that have been prepared beforehand. Second, observation is carried out by systematically observing and recording the phenomena to be observed. Third, documents to obtain research data in the form of notes, books, archives, etc. at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung. The data analysis technique utilizes descriptive analysis, where the researcher collects the data that has been obtained, followed by an analysis that describes the research findings

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. First Research

The results of the initial assessment by researchers are used as initial parameters to see student morals before taking action and as a reference in preparing the orientation of the next Islamic moral improvement program. This study begins with the first observation. This is an orientation activity to find out the learning process of Akidah Akhlak. Akidah Akhlak are usually practiced by teachers to shape the Islamic character of their students. This orientation is carried out to understand how teachers and students are involved in the learning process in the

classroom. This is useful for examining the steps taken to correct weaknesses and deficiencies in improving students' Islamic character. According to the results of student interviews, students have so far found learning the Akidah Akhlak to be a little fun, but they tend to get bored if the teaching is too much in the form of lectures.

The learning model that has been implemented by the researcher as a teacher of the moral principles of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung is jigsaw learning, cooperative, problem solving and role playing. The contextual learning model has not been applied because it sees complex learning stages. So, to support the success of the Akidah Akhlak subject, the researcher decided to apply a contextual learning model to the Akidah Akhlak subject to shape the Islamic character of students which was carried out in class VIII Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung.

The implementation of the use of contextual learning models in learning Akidah Akhlak at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung cannot be separated from the implementation steps. This is so that the implementation of Akidah Akhlak learning runs more smoothly. In research Jaelani, according to the teacher of Akidah Akidah in MA An-Nur Malangbong, it is stated that there are several steps in applying contextual learning models in Akidah Akhlak learning. These steps include before the learning or planning stage, the implementation of learning and after the implementation of learning.

Table 1. Observations

Observed aspects	Observasi results
Conditioning students in a conducive learning situation physically and psychologically.	In the first stage the teacher only asks students to prepare themselves to receive learning, then in the next stage the teacher has conditioned students
Appearance at the beginning of learning	The teacher has done apperception well.
Convey the learning objectives that will be implemented	Learning objectives have been carried out.
Develop students' thinking to construct their knowledge	Occasionally trying to explore student knowledge through several questions, but only a few can answer
Carry out inquiry activities on the topic being taught	Doing question and answer, where students try to find and find themselves based on the theme to be
Develop curiosity in students by asking questions	Encourage students to ask questions, but more teachers ask
Dividing the group heterogeneously	The teacher divides students by counting from the front, then divides by number.
Carry out group activities through discussion and question and answer	The teacher carries out group activities in each lesson.
Guiding students in working on group assignments	When students work on group assignments, the teacher guides them at the beginning.
Give a reward to the group that gets the best score	Strengthen students' answers and actions in completing their assignments with applause, then
Allow students to ask questions	Allow students to ask questions
Give a positive response to student participation	Respond to every answer or action in completing a task with applause, then with praise, reinforcement
Involve students in the use of media as a learning model	Students are also told to use teaching aids (most of them have already been implemented), this also
Reflecting by involving students after learning activities	Doing reflection with the guidance of the teacher
Provide ability assessments for all students	In the first stage, the teacher provides an assessment of learning outcomes in the form of a portfolio

The implementation of contextual learning in Akidah Akhlak learning follows the following flow [5]:

a. Planning, including setting learning objectives, learning plans, learning materials, methods used, and implementation time.

b. Implementation, this includes the entire process of learning activities before using contextual learning models in moral learning to improve students' Islamic character.

c. Observation, carried out in conjunction with the learning program includes teacher and student activities, learning methods, student learning outcomes and material development.

d. Reflection is an activity carried out to reflect on the results obtained from the actions taken. This reflection is also the basis for action planning for the next cycle.

e. Research is conducted collaboratively with colleagues who have assisted in observation and reflection during research.

The application of contextual learning models in improving students' Islamic character can be seen from the observation sheets during the process at table 1.

The results of the initial assessment obtained by the researcher on increasing the Islamic character of students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung were based on findings in the field, namely that most students still lacked Islamic character. This is indicated by the large number of students who have not been able to listen to other people's opinions, the ability to ask questions is still low, they do not have a sense of respect for what their friends say, they have not been able to work well in groups, especially in moral sharing, where students have not been able to show material share things that have not been understood or respond to problems faced by their friends. The results of the evaluation of Islamic character which includes the morals of *Al-Hikmah* (wise), *As-Syaja'ah* (brave).

Based on the results of the initial assessment, the researcher plans to increase the Akidah Akhlak subject to improve students' Islamic character. Improvements through contextual learning learning models are carried out in cycles consisting of four stages, namely learning planning, implementation, observation and carrying out reflections when learning is completed in each cycle. If in cycle I the students' Islamic character is still not optimal, then the learning process is improved again in the next planning cycle until the researcher finds a cycle that can change the learning process for the better, so that Islamic character can improve.

3.1. Learning Planning

Before carrying out the process of learning aqidah morals, the researcher first made a lesson plan using a contextual learning model. This lesson plan was made with reference to the learning syllabus listed in the 2013 curriculum.

3.3. Implementation of Learning

In the observations made, the researcher divided the activities into three stages, namely preliminary/initial, core and final activities. In the preliminary activities, the researchers carried out namely:

a. The researcher opened the lesson by saying greetings, praying together led by the class leader solemnly, the researcher started the lesson by reading the Al-Qur'an chosen by one of the students, not forgetting the researcher checked the student's attendance.

b. The researcher conducted an apperception by asking students' insights regarding the despicable morals of backbiting, not forgetting that the researcher asked students.

c. Researchers convey basic competencies and learning objectives. The purpose of avoiding backbiting behavior at the first meeting is that students can understand the meaning of backbiting, the negative values of backbiting and efforts to avoid backbiting behavior.

d. Researchers condition students physically and psychologically in a conducive learning situation. Researchers have prepared props that will be used. Students sit neatly ready to participate in learning.

e. Researchers convey the stages of activities that will be carried out in learning. These stages are stages of learning using contextual learning models.

3.4. Core Activities

The template is designed so that author affiliations are not repeated each time for multiple authors of the same affiliation. Please keep your affiliations as succinct as possible (for example, do not differentiate among departments of the same organization). This template was designed

for two affiliations. According to Education World, Komara, Priansa, Hartono, and Suhana learning contextual involves seven main components of learning, namely: constructivism, questioning, inquiry, learning community, modelling, reflection, and authentic assessment [29] [30] [31] [32] [33]. In the core activities, researchers use contextual learning models in the learning process, namely through the following stages:

a. Observation, namely by reading, listening, seeing (with or without tools).
b. Constructivism, learning activities at this stage are carried out using techniques: asking questions about information that is not understood from those being observed or questions to get additional information about what is being observed.
c. Inquiry, With teacher motivation, students ask questions about the subject themes they get. During the group discussion process, students were given the freedom to ask questions and look for learning resources by reading in textbooks or searching the internet.
d. Learning Community, at this stage, the researcher formed 6 groups of students. Group formation is done by counting students from numbers 1 to 6, repeated from numbers 1 to 6 and so on. Then the same number gathers and becomes the group. In order not to make noise, when gathering together, you are not allowed to speak, you are only allowed to use gestures, you are allowed to use hand signals or mouth movements. The grouping of students runs naturally, heterogeneously, students come from different abilities and backgrounds with the goal that all students can be active. One group consists of 4 or 5 students. After the groups are formed, students gather with their groups. At this stage, the teacher distributes the subject matter to each group. The main topics that should be discussed by each group are as Tabel 2:

Table 2. Distribution of Study Materials

Group	Subject
I	Understand reprehensible behavior "ghibah"
II	Negative impact and danger of disgraceful behavior "ghibah"
III	Avoiding disgraceful behavior "ghibah"
IV	Strategies and ways to prevent reprehensible behavior "ghibah"
V	Wisdom to avoid despicable behavior "ghibah"
VI	Examples of backbiting behavior in society and its consequences

After receiving assignments from the teacher, students observe pictures and reading texts of backbiting behavior for further reading and observations about the themes of the subject matter obtained and write them on cardboard.

Furthermore, the position of the group is not centered on one point in the sense that the group is spread out, some are in the right corner of the class, the left corner of the class and some are even outside the class so that they focus more on working in the group. Determination of group leaders is not determined by the teacher, but by each group. Usually what students do is students in their groups raise their hands first, then in a matter of 3 students in the group immediately appoint who has the right to be group leader. The one with the most votes is the one entitled to be the group leader. This is where the principles of democracy are implemented.

e. Modelling, this stage is also known as the association stage. In the learning process, this stage is a process of associating information, namely by processing the information that has been collected, both limited to the results of experimental activities and the results of observed activities and information gathering activities. At this stage each group discusses the subject matter that has been given to each group. Then, one person from each group is assigned to deliver material to other groups in turn. After finishing delivering the material

to the other groups, the representatives returned to their respective groups and discussed it again.

f. Communication, the stage of communicating learning activities is conveying the results of observations in the form of conclusions from the results of the analysis orally, in writing or other media. In this activity students from each group took turns presenting the results of their discussions, while the other groups paid attention or listened.

3.5. Closing Activity

In this activity the researchers carried out were:

a. Researchers provide reinforcement material about avoiding the despicable morals of backbiting, namely material that has been discussed together. This is done because maybe the students have not yet acquired knowledge about avoiding the despicable behavior of backbiting completely.

b. Researchers and students together concluded the material to avoid the despicable nature of backbiting. The researcher asked several students to conclude, the last conclusion globally was conveyed by the researcher.

c. The researcher conducted a post-test of students' understanding during the learning process. Post-test conducted in the form of written tests and oral tests. For the oral test, the researcher appointed several students to answer the questions asked by the researcher.

d. Researchers and students reflect on the learning that has been implemented or also called the reflection stage. At the reflection stage, the researcher asked how students responded to learning by using a contextual learning model so that on average students felt happy, busy, exciting, and not too bored.

e. Researchers give rewards to the best presenters and the best groups. The award is based on the assessment of researchers and students.

f. The researcher conveys the material to be studied at the next meeting. The researcher stated that the material for the next meeting was still the same material, namely material to avoid the despicable morals of backbiting, but students were invited to analyze backbiting activities in which information was obtained from various sources and made on paper.

g. The researcher gave independent assignments to students related to the material to be studied at the next meeting.

h. Researchers and students expressed the moral messages obtained from today's learning.

i. The lesson closes with prayer.

3.6. Authentic Asessment

At the final stage of this learning process, the teacher conducts an assessment. Authentic assessments are carried out by researchers in the form of performance appraisals, written assessments, and self-assessments in class which aim to measure attitudes, skills, and knowledge based on processes and results. Researchers carry out assessments that measure knowledge literacy and measure students' competence, mastery and understanding of the material to avoid the reprehensible nature of backbiting that has been learned and assignments in the form of project appraisals are carried out in groups which are displayed in each group. Observation results obtained by researchers namely, learning Akidah Akhlak with the use of contextual learning models is carried out for:

a. Motivating student studies in Akidah Akhlak lessons by providing new learning nuances that are different from usual. As we know that the Akidah Akhlak material is dogmatic, meaning that students must agree on what is conveyed in the material even though they do not understand. The usual method of delivering learning usually uses the lecture method so that the delivery can be immediately understood by students and there can be assignments in it, but this method makes children bored and not active in learning. With this contextual learning model, it is hoped that dogmatic teaching can reach students in different ways and not make students passive.

b. To provide a better understanding of the concepts, understandings and facts that students have learned, so that what they learn has meaningful value for them. This contextual learning model teaches students to learn to find their knowledge so that a strong concept is

embedded so that the concept can be understood and understood by the students themselves, then after students understand it they can communicate it to others.

c. Learning by involving them is believed to provide a kind of preparation and training in dealing with the realities of life in society. This learning method is centered on student activity. Students are active in discovering their knowledge, understanding themselves and communicating with others. In the process, if students experience problems, students must be able to solve the problem themselves.

d. Will develop self-confidence, responsibility and a sense of social solidarity in dealing with various life problems. This contextual learning model is one of cooperative learning which is group learning. In group learning, students learn to discuss and learn responsibly to carry out teacher tasks that must be done together, learn to accept differences, and learn to have a sense of solidarity. If there is a problem in the group, group members work together to solve the problem.

3.7. Observation

At the observation stage, it is stated about how students respond to the use of contextual learning models in learning Akidah Akhlak. Students state that learning Akidah Akhlak with contextual learning models is very enjoyable, this is evidenced by the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of students when participating in the learning process. Student responses to group learning in learning the Akidah Akhlak by using a contextual learning model. Students stated that group learning in learning the Akidah Akhlak using a contextual learning model was quite useful. The results of the author's interviews with several students who stated that they argued that sometimes learning through group learning was less effective, this was because during group learning some members did not want to work, did not want to be active, did not want to be given assignments,

Student response to the contextual learning model that this learning model can give freedom to students to move (activity) in learning. This can be seen when students communicate with each other between groups by exchanging knowledge and material around which shows the activeness of students in the learning process. Another response of students to this contextual learning model is that this learning model can foster students' motivation to speak (express opinions) in learning. In this method, all students are allowed to express their opinions both in their groups during discussions and when some students are assigned to explain knowledge material to other groups.

4. Conclusion

After conducting research on the implementation of learning Akidah Akhlak with a contextual approach at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung, then carrying out an analysis supported by the theories contained in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that a contextual approach to the subject of Akidah Akhlak at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung can said to be very effective. Learning design is an important role in improving the quality of learning. The learning design of Akidah Akhlak that is applied at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung includes: Identify learning objectives, learning analysis, analysis of student characteristics and learning situations, development of specific learning objectives, development of research tools/ instruments, develop learning strategies, development and selection of teaching materials, design and development of formative assessments, revise tutorials in learning programs, design and development of summative assessment/evaluation.

The learning design is designed in lesson plans by Akidah Akhlak teachers with a contextual learning approach, namely constructivism, inquiry, questioning, learning community, modeling, reflection, and authentic assessment. The implementation of Akidah Akhlak learning with a contextual approach implemented at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung has implemented the CTL component as stated in the actual learning design (authentic assessment).

The learning of Akidah Akhlak using a contextual approach that is carried out at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Alfalah Tarutung cannot be separated from its supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include the leadership factor of the madrasah head who has managerial ability and high professional integrity, the support factor of parents and the madrasah committee who

are participatory and cooperative with madrasah policies, the mental attitude of the teacher who is always consistent, the ability of qualified teachers, the ability to teach assistive devices/ adequate media, and a conducive environment. While the inhibiting factors include: difficulties in dealing with individual student differences, difficulties in determining suitable material for the use of contextual approaches, difficulties in obtaining learning tools, difficulties in evaluating and managing time, difficulties in communicating verbally/discussions, feelings of doubt and embarrassment, takes a lot of time, and the questions and answers are irrelevant to the material

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