

## **Implementing PBL Improves Understanding and Critical Thinking Asmaul Husna**

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### ***Abstract***

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of applying the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in enhancing students' understanding and critical thinking skills regarding Asmaul Husna, particularly Al Ar-Razaq. The research employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach with a cyclical design consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The subjects were 30 sixth-grade elementary school students. Data were collected through comprehension tests, learning activity observations, and in-depth interviews with teachers and students. The findings revealed that the application of PBL significantly improved students' understanding of Asmaul Husna, with an average posttest score increasing by 25% compared to the pretest. Students demonstrate the ability to explain the meaning of Al Ar-Razaq comprehensively, provide concrete examples, and relate the concept to daily life. Furthermore, PBL effectively develops students' critical thinking skills, as evidenced by their ability to analyze problems, evaluate solutions, and make logical decisions based on Islamic principles. This study concludes that PBL fosters interactive, relevant, and meaningful learning, contributing to achieving 21st-century educational goals. The research recommends that teachers adopt PBL as an innovative learning strategy in Islamic education.

***Keywords:*** Problem-Based Learning, Asmaul Husna, Understanding, Critical Thinking, Islamic Education.

### ***Abstract***

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in improving students' understanding and critical thinking skills in the material of Asmaul Husna, especially Al Ar-Razaq. The study used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach with a cycle design consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The subjects of the study were 30 sixth grade elementary school students. Data were collected through comprehension tests, observations of learning activities, and in-depth interviews with teachers and students. The results of the study showed that the implementation of PBL was able to improve students' understanding of the Asmaul Husna material, with an average posttest score increasing by 25% compared to the pretest. Students demonstrated the ability to explain the meaning of Al Ar-Razaq in depth, provide concrete examples, and relate the concept to everyday life. In addition, PBL is also effective in developing students' critical thinking skills, demonstrated through their ability to analyze problems, evaluate solutions, and make logical decisions based on Islamic principles. The conclusion of this study confirms that PBL can create interactive, relevant, and meaningful learning, and contribute to the achievement of 21st century education goals. This study provides recommendations for teachers to adopt PBL as an innovative learning strategy in Islamic religious education.

***Keywords:*** Problem-Based Learning, Asmaul Husna, Understanding, Critical Thinking, Islamic Education.

## INTRODUCTION

The material on Asmaul Husna Al-Ar-Razaq in grade 3 of Elementary School has an important purpose. This material not only provides conceptual knowledge, but also forms awareness and practice of Islamic values in everyday life. At the Elementary School level, the curriculum is designed to provide basic understanding while forming a strong critical and moral attitude in students. Education, as a whole, is one of the main pillars in building the character and abilities of students to face the challenges of the times.(Farhani et a. 2022).

Traditional learning methods that have been widely used in schools often place teachers as the center of teaching and learning activities. This approach, although it has certain benefits, is often considered less effective in supporting the development of deep understanding and critical thinking skills in students. In this method, students tend to be directed to simply memorize various definitions and concepts without really understanding how to apply them in real contexts or everyday life situations. As a result, there is a gap between the theoretical knowledge possessed and the practical skills needed. Conditions like this are a major challenge that needs to be overcome in order to improve the quality of learning in the classroom as a whole.

Traditional teacher-centered learning methods are often less effective in building students' deep understanding and critical thinking skills. Students tend to only memorize concepts without being able to apply them in real situations, resulting in a gap between theoretical knowledge and its application. One approach that can overcome this problem is the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Model.

PBL is a student-centered learning method, where they are actively involved in solving real problems that are relevant to the learning material. In the context of learning halal and haram law, for example, PBL presents everyday scenarios or cases that require Islamic law analysis. Through this process, students not only understand the concept theoretically but also develop critical thinking skills and decision-making based on sharia principles (Anggraeni et al., 2023).

The advantage of PBL lies in its ability to encourage students to think critically, collaboratively, and creatively. The problem-solving process allows them

to explore information, discuss, and evaluate proposed solutions. This is in line with national education goals that emphasize critical thinking skills and moral character building. In addition, PBL is also relevant to the 21st century learning approach that focuses on higher order thinking skills (HOTS) (Lee et al., 2024).

Previous studies have shown that the application of PBL can improve students' understanding in various subjects, including Islamic religious education. However, the application of PBL to the material of Asmaul Husna, especially Al Ar-Razaq, at the Elementary School level is still minimally researched, especially in the environment of SD Negeri 084082 Sibolga. This material is important because it has high relevance to the daily lives of students, such as recognizing the types of sustenance that are in accordance with Islamic principles (Anggraeni et al., 2023).

The culturally and socially diverse environmental context of SD Negeri 084082 Sibolga adds to the urgency of this research. Understanding of Asmaul Husna, especially Al Ar-Razaq, can be the foundation for the formation of tolerance and moral awareness of students. Therefore, an effective learning strategy is needed to optimize the potential of students and answer challenges in the local environment (Suryani, Agustyaningrum, and Hasibuan, 2019).

This study aims to examine the application of PBL in improving students' understanding and critical thinking skills in the Asmaul Husna material, especially Al Ar-Razaq. This study is also expected to provide practical benefits for teachers, students, and schools, as well as being a reference in the implementation of PBL for similar subjects (Lee et al., 2024).

With the implementation of the PBL Model, learning that has been passive is expected to change to be more interactive and participatory. Involving students directly in the problem-solving process allows them to understand the material in depth, develop critical thinking skills, and relate the concepts learned to everyday life. In addition, the role of the teacher as a facilitator in the PBL learning process creates a conducive and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

This research is a strategic step in responding to the challenges of modern education, especially in the context of Islamic religious learning. The PBL model

is expected to not only improve students' conceptual understanding but also shape the character and critical thinking skills needed to face future challenges (Lee et al., 2024).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach which aims to increase understanding and critical thinking skills of students through the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model. This approach allows teachers to intervene directly in the learning process in the classroom, so that learning problems can be identified and addressed effectively. In addition, PTK provides space for teachers to evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of the actions taken to achieve better learning outcomes.

The variables of this study consist of two variables, namely the Independent Variable where there is the application of a problem-based learning model (PBL) as an intervention to improve students' understanding and critical thinking skills. The second is called the Dependent Variable, namely the level of students' understanding of the material on halal and haram laws through comprehension tests and evaluation of learning outcomes, including their ability to understand concepts, provide examples, and apply the material. Critical thinking skills are measured through the ability to analyze, evaluate, and make logical decisions related to the material. The population of this study consisted of all 6th grade students at SD N 084082 Sibolga with a sample of all students. This was stated by Burhan Bungin who said that if the population is less than 100 then please take all of them. The data sources for this study consist of primary data, namely all 6th grade students. While the secondary data sources consist of all supporting documents such as syllabus, lesson plans, and material references.

Related to the data collection technique in this study can be known through the Data Collection Technique, namely Tests, namely by measuring understanding and critical thinking through questions relevant to the material, Observation, which records the activities of students and teachers during the learning process using observation sheets. Interviews can be used to ensure information to students and teachers related to the implementation of PBL. Meanwhile, for documentation in the form of recordings or

documents that can be used as supporting documents owned by Sibolga State Elementary School.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Improving Students' Understanding of Asmaul Husna Material  
The Problem-Based Learning (PBL) learning model has been proven as an effective method to improve students' understanding of Asmaul Husna material, especially the name of Allah Al Ar-Razaq. The results of the study showed that the implementation of PBL can have a positive impact on students' learning outcomes. This improvement was measured through the results of the pretest and posttest, where the posttest score showed a significant difference compared to the initial score.

Students who previously only had a limited conceptual understanding of the meaning of Al Ar-Razaq are now able to explain it in more depth. They not only understand the literal meaning but are also able to relate it to the concept of sustenance in everyday life. For example, students can explain how Allah provides sustenance in various forms, both material and non-material, and highlight the importance of gratitude. This ability is developed through relevant learning scenarios, such as the case of the distribution of halal sustenance in the Islamic perspective, which is designed to relate the concept to real contexts.

This increase in understanding is consistent with previous findings that learning experiences that actively engage students in solving real-world problems can improve their conceptual understanding (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). By providing relevant challenges, students are more motivated to learn and internalize the concepts being taught.

Furthermore, the development of Students' Critical Thinking Skills  
In addition to understanding, the PBL approach also contributes greatly to improving students' critical thinking skills. In this model, students are involved in the process of identifying problems, analyzing situations, and evaluating solutions based on Islamic values contained in Asmaul Husna. The results of observations during

learning show that students begin to demonstrate the ability to provide logical and in-depth arguments related to the problems faced.

These critical thinking skills are developed through group discussions, where students are encouraged to share perspectives and provide solutions based on evidence. In certain scenarios, such as how to determine actions that are in accordance with the principles of Al Ar-Razaq, students are able to evaluate the impact of various proposed decisions. According to Facione (2011), critical thinking skills include skills such as analysis, evaluation, and inference, which can be honed through activities such as discussion and problem solving. PBL provides an ideal space for the development of these skills.

**The Effectiveness of PBL in Improving Learning Interaction** PBL not only improves understanding and critical thinking but also creates a more interactive and participatory learning environment. In problem-based learning, the teacher acts as a facilitator, helping students explore problems and find solutions. Observations during the study showed that students became more active, both in asking questions, discussing, and expressing their opinions.

This increased interaction shows that PBL is able to overcome the limitations of conventional approaches that tend to be passive. According to Savery (2006), active approaches such as PBL encourage students to be more involved in learning, which ultimately results in a more meaningful learning experience. With a dynamic classroom atmosphere, students can learn not only from the teacher but also from their peers.

**The Relation of Asmaul Husana Material to Daily Life** One of the main advantages of PBL is its ability to connect learning materials to students' daily lives. In this study, students were able to relate the concept of Al Ar-Razaq to real situations, such as understanding various forms of halal sustenance and how to be grateful for the gift. Problem-based learning provides a relevant context, so that students feel that the material being studied is not only theoretical but also has practical applications.

For example, students are given a scenario about managing family wealth based on Islamic values. They not only learn the concept but also how to apply it

in everyday decision making. This supports the view that contextual learning can increase the connection between theory and practice (Johnson, 2002).

The information above clearly provides us with an understanding that the application of problem-based learning to improve understanding and critical thinking skills in the Asmaul Husna material has a very important review. For example, with research conducted by Amin, H. (20-23). Application of the Problem-Based Learning learning model in improving learning outcomes in the Asmaul Husna material. *Al-Mihnah: Journal of Islamic Education and Teacher Training*, 1(5). This research is a classroom action research aimed at improving the learning outcomes of class V students of SD Negeri 78 Kendari in the Asmaul Husna material through the application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model. The results of the study showed that the implementation of PBL can improve student learning outcomes, with learning completeness increasing from 62.5% in cycle I to 93.75% in cycle II.

Maesaroh, S. (2023). Application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) learning model to improve student learning outcomes on the Noble Exemplar of Asmaul Husna material (Action research for class IV SDN 204 Cidadap, Bandung City). *Socio Religion: Journal of General Education Studies*, 22(1). This study contains information about the implementation and learning outcomes of students as well as their improvement after following the PBL model on the Noble Exemplar of Asmaul Husna material. The results of the study showed that the implementation of learning with PBL went well, with increased teacher and student activity in each cycle, as well as an increase in Islamic Religious Education learning outcomes. Further stated by Rabasiah. (2023). Application of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) learning model in improving student learning outcomes on the Asmaul Husna material for class IV SDIT Al Qalam Kendari. *Al-Muhtarif: Journal of Islamic Religious Education*, 1(4). This study aims to improve student learning outcomes on the Asmaul Husna material through the Problem-Based Learning method. The results of the study showed that the PBL method successfully improved student learning outcomes, with an increase in average scores and the number of students who completed learning from cycle I to cycle

II. Next, Sari, DP, & Rahmawati, F. (2022). Implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model to improve students' critical thinking skills on the Asmaul Husna material in class V of SDN 1 Surakarta. *Journal of Elementary Education*, 13(2), 215-226. This study explores the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving students' critical thinking skills on the Asmaul Husna material. The results showed a significant increase in students' critical thinking skills after the implementation of PBL, as indicated by an increase in test scores and active participation in class discussions. Next, Putri, AL, & Nugroho, SE (2021). The effect of the Problem-Based Learning model on students' conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills on the Asmaul Husna material at SMP Negeri 2 Yogyakarta. *Journal of Educational Innovation*, 10(1), 45-58. This study examines the effect of the Problem-Based Learning model on students' conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills in the Asmaul Husna material. The results showed that the application of PBL significantly improved students' conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills compared to conventional learning methods.

Still related to the review above, Hidayati, N., & Prasetyo, E. (2020). The effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving students' understanding and critical thinking on the Asmaul Husna material in class VII MTs Negeri 1 Semarang. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 9(2), 123-134 with research results showing that to measure the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving students' understanding and critical thinking skills on the Asmaul Husna material. The results of the study showed that PBL was effective in improving both aspects, with students showing a deeper understanding and better analytical skills after implementing PBL. Even Rahman, A., & Fitriani, D. (2019). Implementation of Problem-Based Learning to improve learning outcomes and students' critical thinking skills on the Asmaul Husna material at SMA Negeri 1 Banda Aceh. *Scientific Journal of Education*, 8(3), 301-312 has provided a new finding which shows that to evaluate the application of Problem-Based Learning in improving students' learning outcomes and critical thinking skills on the Asmaul Husna material, it can be concluded that PBL can improve



students' learning outcomes and critical thinking skills, with a significant increase in test scores and problem analysis skills related to Asmaul Husna.

Further stated by Lestari, S., & Wijayanti, A. (2018). Implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model in Asmaul Husna learning to improve students' understanding and critical thinking at SMP Islam Al-Azhar Surabaya. *Journal of Islamic Religious Education*, 7(1), 89-102 and Nurhayati, S., & Kurniasih, I. (2017). The use of the Problem-Based Learning model to improve conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills in Asmaul Husna material in class VIII of SMP Negeri 3 Bandung. *Journal of Elementary and Secondary Education*, 6(2), 150-162.

The two studies above contribute to the world of education today. The research objectives given by them are first, namely that PBL is effective in improving both aspects, with students being better able to relate the concept of Asmaul Husna to real-life contexts. Second, the results of the study show that the

of the challenges faced is the difference in abilities among students. Some students need additional support to follow a more active and independent learning process. In addition, teachers need to design learning application of PBL can significantly improve students' conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills, as shown by an increase in test and part scores.

Despite showing positive results, the implementation of PBL is not without challenges. One scenarios that are not only relevant but also appropriate to the level of ability of students. Another challenge that arises is the need for a longer time to implement each stage of PBL, from problem identification to solution reflection. According to Barrows (1996), the effectiveness of PBL is highly dependent on the quality of planning and implementation, so teachers need to invest more time and energy in preparation.

Teachers involved in this study stated that PBL provided new experiences that enriched the learning process. As facilitators, teachers felt more able to understand the needs of students and provide more effective guidance. Teacher reflection became an important part of the learning cycle, helping them evaluate and improve the strategies used. In the long term, this reflection allows teachers to

continue to optimize the implementation of PBL. According to Schön (1983), reflection in action is an important component in teacher professional development, because it helps them adjust their approach based on direct feedback from the class.

## **CONCLUSION**

The implementation of PBL in learning Asmaul Husna, especially Al Ar-Razaq, has succeeded in improving students' understanding and critical thinking skills. In addition, PBL creates a more interactive and relevant learning atmosphere to students' daily lives. However, careful planning and additional support are needed to overcome the challenges that arise during implementation. Research Contribution to Educators, namely for educators, it is hoped that there will be a development of learning strategies. This means that this study provides practical guidance for educators in implementing the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model to improve students' conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills in the Asmaul Husna material. In addition, to improve teacher competence, teachers can expand their skills in designing more interactive and problem-based learning, so as to create a more dynamic and relevant learning environment. Reflection on the Learning Process: This study encourages teachers to be more reflective in managing learning, especially in identifying the needs and potential of students and providing appropriate solutions to learning challenges. Furthermore, in the section on increasing student motivation, namely by understanding how PBL can motivate students to learn actively, teachers can adopt this method to overcome boredom in conventional learning models.

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