



Analysis of Active Learning Strategies in Islamic Historical Culture Subject

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze active learning strategies in the subject of Islamic Cultural History (ISH), with a focus on the basic principles of active learning, forms of its application, benefits generated, and challenges and solutions in its implementation. The method used in this study is library research with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were obtained through literature studies of textbooks, scientific journals, curriculum documents, and previous research results relevant to active learning strategies and ISH education. The analysis was carried out thematically on the principles of active learning, models of its application such as cooperative learning, discovery learning, and problem-based learning, as well as the challenges of its implementation in the school environment. The results of the study indicate that active learning strategies in ISH are able to increase student participation, build critical thinking skills, and strengthen the appreciation of Islamic values in the context of history. However, the success of its implementation is influenced by teacher readiness, supporting facilities, student learning culture, and curriculum flexibility. Therefore, teacher training, development of contextual learning media, and more authentic learning evaluation are needed so that this strategy can be implemented effectively and sustainably.

1. Introduction

Islamic Cultural History Education (ISH) plays an important role in shaping the character, historical insight, and Islamic identity of students. Through ISH learning, students are invited to learn about the journey of Islamic civilization, great figures, and noble values that have become the foundation of the development of Muslims from time to time. However, in practice, ISH learning is often still dominated by conventional approaches that are verbalistic and teacher-centered. This model tends to emphasize memorizing historical facts without linking them to the context of students' current lives, resulting in low student participation and poor understanding of the material.

The application of active learning strategies in ISH can be realized in various methods, such as group discussions, role plays of historical figures, project-based learning, and the use of interactive media such as historical videos or chronological maps. The use of this strategy can build a fun learning environment and motivate students to be more involved in learning activities. In addition, the active

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approach also encourages students to develop social skills, logical thinking, and the ability to express opinions systematically. In other words, SKI learning is not only oriented towards knowledge transfer, but also strengthening values and character formation.

In response to the limitations of conventional approaches, active learning has emerged as an alternative strategy that is more participatory, dynamic, and student-centered. Active learning is defined as an instructional approach that encourages direct student involvement in the learning process through discussions, problem solving, case studies, simulations, or other collaborative methods. This strategy not only increases learning motivation, but also strengthens critical, analytical, and reflective thinking skills that are very relevant in understanding the history and values of Islamic culture. This study aims to analyze active learning strategies applied in SKI learning, with a focus on how these strategies are aligned with the principles of learning in SKI, such as contextualization of historical values and the relationship between the past and present reality. This study is expected to contribute to the development of a more effective, relevant, and transformative SKI learning model.

2. Methodology

The method used in this study is library research, namely by collecting, documenting, and analyzing various scientific sources that are relevant to active learning strategies in the context of learning Islamic Cultural History (SKI). These sources include reference books, scientific journal articles, previous research results, dissertations, theses, and other academic documents that discuss educational theory and its implementation in SKI subjects. The approach used in this study is descriptive qualitative, because the data collected are in the form of narratives and opinions of experts that are analyzed descriptively and thematically, without involving quantitative data.

The research process is carried out through several stages. First, identification and selection of sources are carried out by searching for relevant and credible literature, both from physical libraries and digital databases. The author focuses the search on sources that discuss active learning such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning, as well as theories and practices of learning in history and Islamic education subjects. The selected sources were selected based on certain criteria, such as recency (published within the last 15 years, except for classical theories that are still relevant), author authority, relevance to the topic, and depth of analysis. Sources that did not meet academic standards or contained excessive bias were removed from the bibliography.

After the sources are collected, the documentation stage is carried out by recording bibliographic information, main content, and the relevance of each source to the focus of the study. Quality assessment is carried out critically by considering the reputation of the author, publisher or scientific journal, as well as the consistency and validity of the arguments. Furthermore, the data is analyzed through a thematic coding process, namely by grouping information based on main themes such as the principles of active learning, the role of teachers, student participation, integration of Islamic values, and the relationship between SKI material and active learning strategies. The author also compares theories from various sources, then synthesizes their similarities and differences to formulate active learning strategies that best suit the characteristics and objectives of SKI learning. With this approach, this study is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive picture of active learning strategies that are not only effective in increasing student participation and understanding, but also in line with Islamic values and educational principles contained in the SKI subject.

3. Results

3.1 Definition and Principles of Active Learning in SKI

Active learning is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the full involvement of students in the learning process through critical thinking activities, problem solving, discussion, collaboration, and reflection (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Prince, 2004). In active learning, students are not just objects that receive material, but become subjects who play an active role in constructing knowledge. This approach has been widely used in modern education because it has been proven effective in improving conceptual understanding and high-level thinking skills (Freeman et al., 2014; Nasution et al., 2022).

In the context of learning Islamic Cultural History (SKI), active learning has an important role in changing the learning paradigm from simply memorizing historical facts to the process of interpreting and internalizing the values of Islamic civilization. SKI not only teaches the chronology of historical events and figures, but also the moral, social, and spiritual values contained therein. Therefore, active learning strategies are very relevant because they can integrate cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects holistically (Hidayat & Zabidi, 2021).

The principles of active learning in SKI can be explained through several main aspects. First, the principle of active involvement: students are encouraged to engage in discussions, historical debates, case studies, and simulations of historical events. For example, in studying the event of the hijrah, students not only read the event but also reconstruct the background, impact, and relevance to the current condition of the people. Second, the collaborative principle: learning takes place in a group work atmosphere that encourages social interaction, tolerance, and mutual respect, in accordance with the values of Islamic brotherhood (Izzaty, 2021).

Third, the principle of contextualization: learning Islamic history must be connected to contemporary reality, so that students can take applicable and contributive lessons to everyday life. For example, when studying the leadership of Umar bin Khattab, students are invited to analyze a fair and firm leadership style in the context of modern leadership. This is in line with the meaningful learning approach, where learning materials are directly linked to the experiences and needs of students (Ausubel in Fauzan, 2020).

Fourth, the principle of reflection and values: students are invited to reflect on Islamic values contained in history such as honesty, courage, justice, and the spirit of preaching. Active SKI learning not only provides historical knowledge but also forms Islamic character. This shows that active learning can be a means to strengthen Islamic-based character education (Yusuf & Rahmawati, 2019). Fifth, the principle of diversity of sources and media: active learning encourages teachers and students to rely not only on textbooks, but also on alternative historical sources such as primary documents, historical videos, infographics, and even virtual tours of Islamic historical sites. The use of this technology also supports students' digital literacy skills (Fadlillah & Wahyuni, 2018). By implementing these principles, active learning in SKI has the potential to form a generation of Muslims who not only understand Islamic history narratively, but are also able to reflect these noble values in real life. This approach supports the mission of Islamic education which is not just a transfer of knowledge, but also the formation of personality and a deep understanding of the role of Muslims in the course of history and the future.

3.2 Implementation of Active Learning Methods

The implementation of active learning methods in learning Islamic Cultural History (ISH) is an important strategy in reforming conventional approaches that have so far been oriented towards lectures and memorization. In conventional models, students tend to be passive and only receive information without being given space to explore, dialogue, or reflect on Islamic history material. In fact, history learning should be dialogical, interpretive, and contextual. Therefore, the implementation of active learning methods is a strategic step to revive ISH learning in a more meaningful, participatory, and Islamic character-forming manner. Effective active learning methods in ISH learning include cooperative learning, problem-based learning (PBL), and discovery learning. In cooperative learning, students are divided into groups to discuss history material collaboratively and present the results of the discussion to the class forum. This model has been shown to improve students' learning outcomes and social skills (Izzaty, 2021). In ISH learning, this method can be used in studying topics such as the role of the caliphs in the development of Islamic science.

3.3 Cooperative Learning: Building Collaboration and Historical Understanding

One of the most widely used active learning methods in the context of SKI is cooperative learning, which is a learning method that emphasizes group cooperation in understanding a concept or solving a problem. This method is in accordance with Islamic values that emphasize brotherhood, deliberation, and mutual cooperation. In SKI learning, cooperative learning can be applied by dividing discussion groups to discuss certain historical themes, such as the development of Islamic civilization during the Abbasid era, the contributions of Muslim scientists, or internal conflicts during the Khulafaur Rasyidin era. According to Izzaty (2021), cooperative learning can significantly improve students' understanding of historical material because they not only read, but also re-explain, discuss, and present the results of their thinking. Models such as jigsaw, think-pair-share, and group investigation are effective variations in SKI learning. For example, in the jigsaw method, each group member is responsible for studying a particular aspect of history and then teaching it to other members, so that there is an active and meaningful exchange of knowledge. In addition to improving understanding of the material, cooperative learning also forms students' social and spiritual characters, such as responsibility, empathy, and fairness in expressing opinions. This is in line with the values of tarbiyah in Islam which prioritize the formation of collective personality and noble morals.

3.4 Problem-Based Learning: Encouraging Critical Analysis of Historical Events

The problem-based learning (PBL) method is a learning approach that focuses on providing real or hypothetical problems as learning triggers. In SKI learning, PBL is very relevant to encourage students to understand the dynamics of Islamic history critically and contextually. For example, students can be given problems such as: Why did the Abbasid Dynasty, which was so advanced in science, decline? or How can the solution to the Sunni-Shia conflict in Islamic history be used as a lesson for the current context? According to Arifin and Lestari (2020), the application of PBL in SKI learning helps students develop higher-order thinking skills, such as analyzing cause and effect, making inferences, and evaluating the actions of historical figures. PBL also encourages students to search for and evaluate various historical sources, both from books, scientific articles, and primary sources, thereby increasing students' historical literacy and scientific attitudes. Pedagogically, PBL also provides a great opportunity for internalizing Islamic values. When students are asked to analyze Umar bin Khattab's decision in the government administration system, for example, they not only understand the policy factually, but also emulate Umar's honesty, firmness, and partisanship towards social justice. Thus, PBL in SKI not only sharpens cognition, but also forms students' Islamic affection.

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3.6 Discovery Learning: Cultivating Independence and Historical Inquiry

The implementation of active learning methods in SKI is increasingly optimal with the use of digital media and technology. Teachers can use historical documentary videos, infographics, interactive maps, or virtual museum tours to support methods such as PBL and discovery learning. Yusuf and Rahmawati (2019) emphasized that technology integration can enrich students' learning experiences and help them understand the complexity of history with interesting visualizations.

Digital platforms such as Google Classroom, Padlet, Canva, and Quizizz can also be used to organize group discussions, collaborative assignments, or competition-based quizzes within a cooperative learning framework. With this media, teachers can also bridge different learning styles visual, auditory, kinesthetic all of which can be facilitated in active learning.

The integration of media and technology also allows SKI learning to be more open and cross-disciplinary, for example by linking the topic of Islamic history to global issues such as Islamophobia, the Palestinian crisis, or the contributions of Muslim scientists to modern science. This provides space for SKI learning to be relevant, transformative, and critical.

The success of implementing active learning methods is highly dependent on the role of the teacher as a facilitator, mediator, and guide. Teachers are no longer the only source of information, but rather as learning designers who design activities that encourage active student involvement. Teachers need to master active classroom management strategies, design challenging tasks that are appropriate to students' ability levels, and be able to provide constructive feedback. In active learning SKI, evaluation does not merely measure memorization results, but assesses students' thinking processes, participation, creativity, and reflection. Therefore, the use of authentic assessments such as portfolios, reflective journals, group presentations, and creative products such as concept maps or history posters is very relevant (Nasution et al., 2022). This evaluation provides a complete picture of students' spiritual, social, and cognitive competency achievements.

3.7 Benefits of Active Learning

Active learning in the subject of Islamic Cultural History (ISH) provides many benefits in terms of pedagogy, psychology, and ideology. ISH learning, which was initially identical to the narrative approach and memorization of facts, is now directed to become a dialogical, reflective, and contextual learning process. This is in line with the mission of Islamic education which is not only oriented towards the transfer of knowledge (ta'lim), but also towards character formation, internalization of values, and development of students' natural potential (tarbiyah and ta'dib).

3.2.1 Increasing Student Learning Involvement and Motivation

One of the main advantages of active learning is its ability to increase student involvement in the learning process. When students are given space to discuss, explore, and construct knowledge independently, they are more motivated to learn. Unlike the one-way lecture method that makes students passive and easily bored, active learning transforms the classroom into a place for dynamic interaction of ideas.

According to research by Nasution et al. (2022), the application of active learning methods in history subjects can increase student activity by up to 78%, compared to only 42% in conventional methods. In the context of SKI, students are more enthusiastic about studying Islamic civilization, Muslim scientists, and important historical events such as the Treaty of Hudaibiyah or the Battle of Badr, when they are actively involved in searching for and delivering material. This activity also gives rise to a sense of ownership of knowledge (ownership of learning), which is psychologically important in fostering responsibility for the learning process and its results. In the long term, this supports the formation of independent student characters who are fond of lifelong learning, in accordance with the values of Islamic education.

3.2.2 Developing Critical and Analytical Thinking Skills

History is not a collection of dates and names of figures, but a narrative that contains cause and effect, conflicts, political decisions, and moral values. Therefore, SKI learning ideally teaches not only what happened, but also why and how the event happened, and what lessons can be learned. Active learning allows students to develop higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

Through methods such as problem-based learning and discovery learning, students are trained to interpret historical events from various perspectives. For example, when discussing the division of Muslims during the fitnah kubra period, students are not only asked to memorize facts, but also to analyze the political and social factors that caused the conflict, and to reflect on solutions from an Islamic ethical perspective.

A study conducted by Hidayat & Zabidi (2021) showed that students involved in project-based history learning showed significant improvements in their critical thinking skills and in constructing arguments based on historical sources. This shows that active learning not only enriches understanding, but also develops applicable thinking skills in social, political, and religious life.

3.2.3 Strengthening Islamic Values through Contextual Internalization

SKI has a very rich value content. In every event of Islamic history, there are moral, ethical, and spiritual lessons that are relevant to today's life. Active learning allows for deeper internalization of values because students are not only informed, but are invited to find the meaning of each event themselves.

For example, in studying the attitude of tolerance of the Prophet Muhammad SAW towards non-Muslims in the Medina Charter, students are invited to discuss and compare these values with the

phenomenon of intolerance that occurs in modern society. This process not only increases historical understanding, but also strengthens attitudes of tolerance and diversity as Islamic values.

Fadlillah and Wahyuni (2018) noted that SKI learning that involves value reflection and contextual learning plays a role in shaping students' moral and spiritual awareness. When students are affectively involved in understanding Islamic history, they find it easier to make historical figures as life role models. This is the main strength of active learning: the integration of knowledge, values, and attitudes.

3.2.4 Improving Collaboration and Communication Skills

Active group-based learning activities such as cooperative learning or role-play directly train students in collaborative and communication skills. In an increasingly complex modern world, the ability to work together and communicate effectively is an important competency.

In SKI learning, group discussions about the contributions of Muslim scientists such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, or Al-Khawarizmi, not only enrich historical knowledge, but also teach students to listen, respect opinions, and manage conflicts productively. These values are in line with the principle of shura (deliberation) in Islam which prioritizes collective agreement and wisdom.

Yusuf and Rahmawati (2019) emphasized that students' social skills improved significantly when they were involved in project-based and discussion-based history learning. They not only became more confident in expressing their opinions, but also learned to build arguments based on historical facts and Islamic teachings.

3.2.5 Improving Historical Literacy and Digital Literacy

In the digital era, active learning can also be utilized to improve students' digital literacy through online historical source exploration activities, making documentary videos, historical podcasts, or digital presentations. These activities not only encourage understanding of Islamic history, but also hone digital skills that are relevant to the needs of the times.

Active learning allows students to get to know various historical sources, both primary and secondary, and learn to assess the validity and credibility of information. This ability is very important in an era of flooding with information and hoaxes. In SKI learning, teachers can direct students to explore historical documents, journal articles, or credible digital sources that contain scientific studies on the history of Islamic civilization.

The integration of digital literacy in active learning makes the learning process not limited to classrooms and textbooks. Students become more independent in learning and have the ability to continue to deepen their understanding through various available digital learning platforms.

3.3. Challenges and Solutions in Implementing Active Learning in SKI

Although active learning offers various significant benefits in teaching Islamic Cultural History (SKI), its implementation in the field is not free from various challenges. These challenges arise from aspects of teachers, students, curriculum, facilities and infrastructure, and learning culture in schools. Therefore, it is important to identify these obstacles and formulate contextual and applicable solutions so that active learning in SKI can be implemented optimally and sustainably.

3.3.1 Limitations of Teacher Competence in Designing Active Learning

One of the main challenges is the low understanding and skills of SKI teachers in designing and implementing active learning. Many teachers are still bound by traditional teaching patterns such as lecture methods, reading textbooks, and memorization assignments. This is caused by several

factors, such as lack of professional training, minimal understanding of active learning models, and the tendency to choose methods that are easier to apply.

Research by Prasetyo & Santosa (2020) shows that more than 60% of history teachers at the secondary level are not familiar with project-based learning models or group discussions. In the context of SKI, this has an impact on the low exploration of historical narratives in a dialogical and contextual manner. Teachers tend to teach factually, not reflectively or interpretively.

The government and educational institutions need to hold ongoing training on active learning strategies, especially in the context of SKI learning. This training should include activity-based lesson plan planning, the use of creative media, and authentic assessments. In addition, collaboration between teachers through learning communities can be a forum for sharing good practices and improving teaching innovation.

3.3.2 Low Readiness and Active Participation of Students

Another obstacle that is often faced is the lack of student readiness to be actively involved in the learning process. Some students are more comfortable with passive methods because they are used to receiving information directly. When they are asked to discuss, research, or present, some show resistance because they are embarrassed, lack confidence, or are not used to thinking critically.

According to Hidayat and Zabidi (2021), many students in secondary schools are not used to scientific discussion activities, historical source analysis, or reflection on values in Islamic historical narratives. They tend to see SKI as a memorization lesson that does not require deep cognitive interaction. This hinders the success of active learning strategies.

Teachers need to build an inclusive, safe, and supportive classroom atmosphere so that students feel comfortable participating. Learning activities can begin with light and fun tasks such as group quizzes, simulations, or history-based educational games. Giving appreciation for student participation, no matter how small, is also important to foster self-confidence and enthusiasm for active learning.

3.3.3 Limitations of Supporting Learning Facilities and Media

The implementation of active learning requires media, tools, and a conducive learning environment. Unfortunately, there are still many schools, especially in remote areas, that face limitations in learning facilities, such as narrow classrooms, the absence of LCD projectors, minimal internet access, or a lack of alternative teaching materials other than textbooks.

These limitations make it difficult for teachers to implement learning models such as discovery learning or project-based learning that require exploration of sources and creative presentation of results. In the context of SKI, narrative history material also requires visual media such as maps, infographics, or documentary videos to make it more lively and interesting.

Schools and the government need to commit to improving the infrastructure and availability of learning media that support active learning. On the other hand, teachers are required to be creative in utilizing existing resources, such as creating simple media, using free digital tools (eg Canva, Google Docs, Padlet), or utilizing open-access sources from the internet that are relevant to SKI material.

3.3.4 Inflexible Curriculum and Teacher Administrative Burden

A dense and inflexible curriculum is also an obstacle in implementing active learning. Teachers are often burdened with extensive material achievement targets in a limited time, so they tend to choose fast methods such as lectures to achieve these targets. In addition, administrative burdens such as filling out teaching materials, activity reports, and teacher performance documentation reduce the focus on teaching innovation.

In the context of SKI, the extensive material on Islamic history—from the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW to modern Islamic civilization—makes it difficult for teachers to design active learning for each topic as a whole. The curriculum needs to provide space for teachers to adjust the learning model to the characteristics of students and the local context. The application of the principles of the independent learning curriculum can be a way out, where teachers are given the freedom to choose learning models and adjust time allocation based on the urgency of the material. Schools also need to review the administrative burden so that teachers can focus more on the learning process and developing student competencies.

3.3.5 Lack of Authentic Evaluation and Process Assessment

Evaluation of SKI learning in many schools is still oriented towards the final result, such as multiple-choice tests and memorization essays. This model is not in line with the principles of active learning which emphasize the process of thinking, collaboration, and skill achievement. The mismatch between the learning approach and the evaluation system causes students to remain focused on memorization rather than involvement in the in-depth learning process.

Nasution et al. (2022) emphasized that without a supportive evaluation system, active learning will not be optimal. Students tend to only be active when they know their activities will be assessed in real terms.

It is necessary to apply authentic assessment in SKI learning, such as portfolios, reflection journals, performance assessments (presentations, projects), and peer assessments. Process evaluation must be an important part of the assessment system to assess student engagement, creativity, and collaboration, not just mastery of the content.

3.3.6 Cultural Challenges and Unshifted Educational Paradigms

Culturally, most people and educational institutions in Indonesia still assess learning success based on numbers, test scores, and academic achievement. This paradigm causes active learning to be underappreciated because it is considered “not serious,” “too free,” or “does not emphasize results.”

In SKI learning, which ideally fosters a critical and reflective attitude towards Islamic history, the old educational paradigm that emphasizes obedience and memorization can be a serious obstacle. Teachers who try to innovate often face the expectations of parents or school management who prefer traditional methods.

Systematic efforts are needed to shift the educational paradigm from being outcome-oriented to being process and value-oriented. Socialization to parents, training of school principals, and public campaigns about the benefits of active learning are essential to creating an educational ecosystem that supports innovation. Strengthening the vision of humanistic, participatory, and reflective Islamic education must also continue to be encouraged in the curriculum, teacher training, and national policies.

4. Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the four main themes in this study, it can be concluded that active learning strategies are highly urgent and relevant for improving the quality of Islamic Cultural History (IS) education at all levels. Active learning enriches the educational process by engaging students cognitively, affectively, and psychometrically while bringing them closer to the noble values of Islam embedded in its history. First, active learning in IS is grounded in principles of participation, collaboration, exploration, and reflection. These principles align closely with IS learning goals, which emphasize appreciating exemplary values, understanding Islamic culture, and interpreting history as a socio-religious dynamic. This approach encourages students to become active participants rather than passive recipients of information. Second, active learning in IS can be implemented through various models such as cooperative learning, problem-based learning, and discovery learning. Teachers must be creative in designing interactive, contextual, and meaningful activities. These can include historical discussions, educational dramas, case studies, narrative projects, and interactive digital media that realistically and relevantly depict Islamic historical events. Third, the benefits of active learning in IS are diverse. It increases student engagement, strengthens critical and reflective thinking, fosters empathy and tolerance toward the diversity within Islamic history, and creates a more meaningful, enjoyable learning environment. Active learning also helps students apply Islamic values more contextually in their daily lives. Fourth, despite its significant potential, implementing active learning in IS faces challenges such as limited teacher competence, student readiness, inadequate facilities, a dense curriculum, and traditional educational paradigms. These challenges can be addressed through ongoing teacher training, strengthening learning communities, developing flexible curricula, using accessible technology, and implementing authentic evaluation systems aligned with active learning principles.

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