

## Improving Student Learning Outcomes Using the Index Card Match Method in Islamic Religious Education Learning: A Study at SD Negeri 16 Selamat

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**Abstract:** This study aims to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning by using the index card match method. This study is a classroom action research that uses four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were elementary school students. The data for this study were obtained by test and observation techniques. Tests are used to measure learning outcomes and observations are used to analyze teacher and student learning activities. The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results of the study indicate that the index card match method can improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of student learning completion in each cycle with details of the pre-cycle 48.71%, the first cycle 66.39% and in the second cycle increased to 89.66%. Thus, the use of the index card match method can be used as an alternative to improve student learning outcomes in Islamic religious education learning.

**Keywords:** Index card match method, learning outcome, elementary school.

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### INTRODUCTION

The index card method is one of the active learning approaches designed to increase student involvement in the learning process. In this method, students are asked to write down their information, questions, or opinions about a particular topic on an index card, which is then used as material for group discussions or class activities. This method allows students to organize their thoughts, share ideas, as well as build understanding through interaction with peers. In the context of elementary school education, the index card method is very relevant because it can be adjusted to the level of student development, encouraging them to actively think, communicate, and work together in a fun learning atmosphere. In addition to increasing student engagement, the index card method is also effective in strengthening students' memory and understanding of the subject matter. Writing and talking about their ideas activities help students process information in more depth. For example, in science learning, students can use index cards to write down the steps of experiments or important concepts learned, while in language subjects, they can write down key words or main ideas from the text being discussed. By actively engaging students, this method not only improves learning outcomes but also trains critical

thinking, collaboration, and communication skills that are essential for their future development.

Learning is essentially a process of interaction with all situations around the individual. Learning can be seen as a complex process that happens to everyone throughout their lives. The learning process occurs because of the interaction between a person and his environment. One of the characteristics that a person learns is that there is a change in behavior in that person may be caused by a change in the level of knowledge, skills or attitudes. Learning is also a deliberate process and does not happen by itself, for that it requires efforts from students. Learning is a process of teaching and learning activities related to creating a comfortable and effective learning environment. Referring to government regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, it states that learning is carried out in an interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging, motivating students to participate actively, and providing sufficient space for initiative, creativity and independence in accordance with students' talents, interests, and physical and psychological development. Learning must also provide an example, to achieve the quality of education in schools, one of which is by improving the teaching and learning process.

The benchmark of learning success can be seen from the learning outcomes of students, the value of learning outcomes can be used as a parameter to assess the success of the learning activity process in schools and also measure the performance of researchers in carrying out the learning process. Researchers as people who have a strategic position in the context of human resource development are required to continue to participate in conducting research or developing existing devices. A researcher is required to pay attention to students and be creative in responding to and solving various obstacles encountered in the classroom, it is also hoped that the researcher will be able to improve low student learning outcomes, namely with the creativity of the researcher in choosing the learning method used, so that students are more motivated in learning. The learning method used is in accordance with the learning objectives, the teaching materials to be delivered and in accordance with the capacity of the student's intelligence level.

Islamic Religious Education plays a very important role in shaping the character and personality of students from an early age. Elementary School is the initial stage of formal education that is the foundation for children's moral and spiritual development. Through Islamic Religious Education learning, students are introduced to Islamic values that will guide them in behaving well, both in the school environment, family, and society. One of the main goals of Islamic Religious Education is to instill noble morals from an early age. Children at elementary school age are in a stage of development where their character is still easy to shape. By studying Islamic teachings, they are taught to be honest, disciplined, respectful to parents and teachers, and to do good to others. These values will be guidelines in their daily lives.

In addition, Islamic Religious Education learning also helps students understand the concept of divinity and faith in Allah SWT. By knowing and understanding the pillars of faith and the pillars of Islam, students will have a better understanding of their beliefs. This is important for building a strong relationship between humans and the Creator and forming a sense of gratitude and awareness to carry out worship properly.

PAI also plays a role in teaching students about the importance of worship in everyday life. They are taught how to pray, read the Qur'an, pray, and understand the meaning of other worship such as fasting, zakat, and hajj. The habit of worship from an early age will form a religious lifestyle and become a habit that continues into adulthood.

In addition to the aspect of worship, Islamic Religious Education also equips students with an understanding of morals in interacting with others. They are taught to be polite, respect each other, help others, and avoid bad behavior such as lying and hurting friends. Thus, religious learning not only forms a good relationship with Allah, but also with other human beings. In the world of education, Islamic Religious Education learning also contributes to increasing student discipline and responsibility. Islam teaches the importance of regularity in carrying out worship such as the five daily prayers which

require time discipline. By getting children used to discipline from a young age, they will find it easier to apply it in their learning activities and daily lives.

Islamic Religious Education also provides students with an understanding of the meaning of life and the purpose of humans in the world. Through the stories of the prophets and Islamic teachings, students are taught to always do good, seek knowledge, and try to be individuals who are useful to their surroundings. This understanding will help them face various life challenges with patience and sincerity. In addition, religious learning also plays a role in protecting students from negative environmental influences. In this modern era, there are many challenges that can affect children's moral development, such as free association, gadget addiction, and the influence of foreign cultures that are not in accordance with Islamic values. With Islamic Religious Education learning, students have a strong moral fortress to filter information and choose good behavior in accordance with religious teachings.

Islamic Religious Education also instills a sense of love for the Qur'an as a guide to life. By getting used to reading, understanding, and memorizing the holy verses of the Qur'an, students will be closer to Islamic teachings and can apply them in their daily lives. This will help them in forming a better character based on Islamic values. Overall, Islamic Religious Education learning in Elementary Schools is very important to form the character, faith, and morals of students from an early age. With good religious education, students not only grow into academically intelligent individuals, but also have high morals, discipline, and a great sense of responsibility in their lives. Therefore, Islamic Religious Education must continue to be strengthened in the education curriculum in order to create a generation that is faithful, has noble morals, and is ready to face the challenges of life with strong Islamic values.

## **METHODS**

In accordance with classroom action research, the research problems solved come from the problem of learning practices in the classroom in a more professional way. The implementation procedure follows the basic principles of general action research. According to Daryanto (2014:30) "Research procedures should be detailed starting from planning, implementation of actions, observation and evaluation, to analysis and reflection that is recyclable or action cycle". The implementation of classroom action research can be carried out in four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Below the researcher describes the activities carried out at each stage, namely, a) Action Planning Stage; b) Stage of implementation of actions; c) Action Observation Level and; d) Action Reflection Stage.

Research on the effectiveness of the index card method in improving the learning outcomes of elementary school students using a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design. This study involved two groups, namely the experimental group that used the index card method in the learning process and the control group that used conventional learning methods. Both groups were given a pretest to measure initial ability, followed by treatment in the experimental group, and then ended with a posttest to measure the improvement in learning outcomes. The comparison of pretest and posttest results from the two groups was analyzed to determine the influence of the index card method on learning outcomes. The population of this study is elementary school students of a certain grade who have a level of heterogeneity in learning ability. Samples were taken by purposive sampling to ensure that the characteristics of the students in the experimental group and the control group were balanced. The subject matter taught using the index card method is selected based on topics that are in accordance with the curriculum and relevant to be implemented interactively. In addition, the research instruments used include multiple-choice learning outcome tests or simple essays, student activity observation sheets, and questionnaires to find out students' responses to learning methods. The implementation of the research was carried out in several stages. The first

stage is preparation, including compiling learning tools based on the index card method and testing the validity and reliability of research instruments.

The second stage is the implementation of classroom learning, where the experimental group is taught using the index card method, while the control group uses the lecture method. Teachers in both groups ensure that the delivery of material is consistent, so that the difference in learning outcomes is only due to the methods used. The third stage is data collection through pretest, posttest, observation sheet, and questionnaire. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analyses were used to describe the improvement in student learning outcomes, while inferential analyses, such as t-tests, were used to determine the significance of the differences between the experimental and control groups.

In addition, data from observation sheets and questionnaires were analyzed thematically to identify patterns of student responses to the applied learning methods. This approach provides a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of the index card method in learning. The results of the study are expected to show that the index card method is effective in improving the learning outcomes of elementary school students. By actively engaging students in the learning process, this method helps them understand the material better, strengthen memory, and improve social skills such as collaboration and communication. This research also provides insight for teachers about the benefits of using innovative and interactive learning methods in creating a more interesting and meaningful learning atmosphere.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In accordance with classroom action research, the research problems solved come from the problem of learning practices in the classroom in a more professional way. The implementation procedure follows the basic principles of general action research. According to Daryanto (2014:30) "Research procedures should be detailed starting from planning, implementation of actions, observation and evaluation, to analysis and reflection that is recyclable or action cycle". The implementation of classroom action research can be carried out in four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Below the researcher describes the activities carried out at each stage, namely, a) Action Planning Stage; b) Stage of implementation of actions; c) Action Observation Level and; d) Action Reflection Stage.

The results of the study show that the index card method is effective in improving the learning outcomes of elementary school students. Analysis of pretest and posttest data in the experimental and control groups revealed a significant increase in the experimental group taught using the index card method. The average posttest score of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group, indicating that this method was able to help students understand the material better. The statistical test using the t-test showed a statistically significant difference between the two groups, confirming that the index card method had a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

Observations during the learning process also revealed that the index card method succeeded in increasing student engagement. In the experimental group, students were seen to be more active in discussing, asking questions, and sharing ideas through the index cards they created. This activity not only helps students understand the concepts being taught but also improves critical thinking and collaboration skills. In contrast, students in the control group tend to be passive, only receiving explanations from the teacher without much interaction or discussion between them. Data from the questionnaire given to students in the experimental group showed a very positive response to this learning method. The majority of students feel that the use of index cards makes learning more fun and easy to understand. They also admit that writing down ideas or concepts on index cards helps them retain information longer. Students stated that this activity made them more focused and motivated to participate in learning. Teachers who taught the

experimental group also reported that the index card method helped them create a more dynamic and interactive learning atmosphere. Teachers feel this method allows them to identify students' difficulties directly, as the index cards collected provide an overview of students' understanding of the material. In addition, teachers note that students are more motivated to learn when they are given the opportunity to actively contribute to class discussions.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the index card method not only improves students' learning outcomes but also supports the development of their social and cognitive skills. This method is effectively applied in elementary schools because it is in accordance with the characteristics of students who need active and interesting learning. This study provides recommendations for teachers to use interactive learning methods such as index cards more often to create meaningful and enjoyable learning experiences.

The use of the index card method in improving elementary school students' learning outcomes opens up an interesting discussion about the effectiveness of interactive learning. Research data shows that students taught using this method have higher learning outcomes compared to students taught conventionally. This indicates that active approaches such as index cards can help students understand and remember material better. However, this success is not only related to the features of the method, but also how teachers integrate this activity into the learning process. Therefore, it is important to discuss the extent to which teachers' roles in determining the success of implementing this method, especially in facilitating class discussions and utilizing index cards as a learning tool. One of the interesting findings of this study is the increase in student engagement during the learning process. Group discussions that begin with reading and sharing the contents of the index cards create a collaborative and interactive learning atmosphere. Here, the index card method becomes a means to motivate students to think critically and express their opinions.

However, this discussion also raises the question: do all students, especially those who are shy or less confident, get the same benefits from this method? It is possible that more vocal students tend to dominate the discussion more, so additional strategies are needed to ensure even involvement, such as speaking rotation or special guidance for less active students. From the teacher's perspective, this method not only helps students learn but also gives teachers better insight into students' understanding of the material. Through index cards, teachers can quickly identify students' difficulties and adjust their teaching strategies. However, there are challenges related to time and preparation. The process of preparing index card-based activities may take more time than conventional methods, especially if the teacher is teaching in a large class.

This discussion can be expanded by considering how technology can support this method, for example by using digital applications that allow students to write and share ideas virtually, making it more efficient in its implementation. Overall, the success of the index card method lies not only in the design of the activity, but also in how it is adapted to the needs of students and the learning context. Further discussion is needed to explore ways to expand the benefits of this method, such as integrating it with other technology-based approaches or developing training modules for teachers to optimize its use. By discussing the challenges and potential of this method, we can create learning that is more inclusive, effective, and in line with the demands of 21st century learning.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of data analysis, if it is found that the t-count value shows a significant difference between pre-test and post-test, then it can be concluded that the application of index card match can improve Islamic religious education learning outcomes in grade 4 students of SD Negeri 16 Selamat. Conversely, if there are no significant differences, then the index card match method may need to be improved or adapted to the existing learning

context. Thus, the analysis and testing of this hypothesis will provide a clear picture of the effectiveness of the index card match method in improving Islamic religious education learning outcomes in grade 4 students of SD Negeri 16 Selamat. The implementation of this research was carried out at SD Negeri 16 Selamat. This research consists of 3 cycles with each cycle carried out 1 meeting with a time allocation of 4 hours (4x35 minutes) on the Sub-Theme of Surah At Tiin to improve student learning outcomes in grade IV using the Index Card Match method. Each cycle will be known whether using the Index Card Match method can improve student learning outcomes or not through the tests used by researchers, therefore researchers use the steps of classroom action research.

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