

Using The Inquiry Method To Improve Learning Outcomes Of Grade Vi Students At Sdn Girimekar 1 Cilengkrang On Environmental Care Material In Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Subject

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Abstract

Student learning outcomes in the topic of Environmental Care within Islamic Religious Education (PAI) for sixth-grade students at SDN Girimekar 1 Cilengkrang were initially low, with 71% of students scoring below the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). This issue stemmed from the use of conventional teaching methods that positioned students as passive recipients of information, resulting in limited understanding and engagement. Based on the constructivist perspectives of Piaget, as well as the views of John Dewey and Ausubel, meaningful learning requires active involvement in questioning, investigating, and constructing knowledge. Therefore, this classroom action research (CAR) aims to improve student learning outcomes through the implementation of the inquiry method. The study was conducted in three cycles, each consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The participants were 31 sixth-grade students. Data were collected through learning achievement tests, student activity observations, and field documentation. The findings show a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes. Mastery learning increased from 29% in the pre-cycle to 39% in Cycle I, rose to 52% in Cycle II, and reached 72% in Cycle III. Additionally, students became more active and demonstrated improved behavior related to environmental care, such as reducing plastic waste, bringing personal tumblers, and disposing of waste properly. This research concludes that the inquiry method is effective in improving both cognitive learning outcomes and students' environmental awareness in the Environmental Care topic of the PAI subject. Therefore, the inquiry method is recommended as an alternative learning approach to foster active, critical, and meaningful learning experiences.

Keywords: Classroom Action Research, inquiry

INTRODUCTION

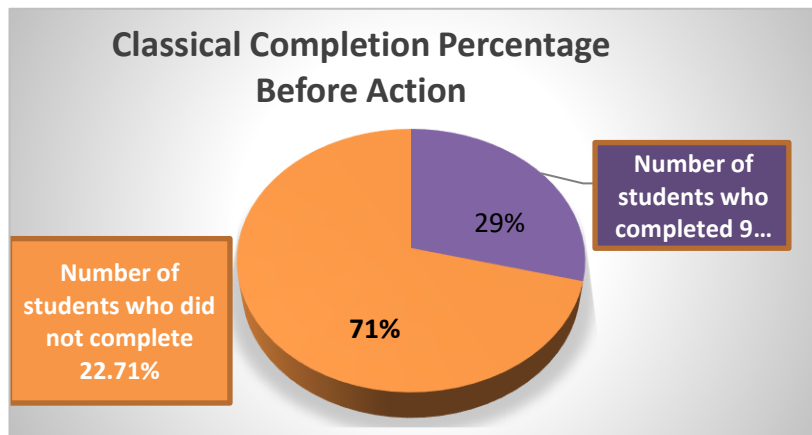
The goal of education is a systematic process of activities aimed at producing progressive changes in human behavior, in order to cultivate intellectual and noble character in students (Nuha & Gustama, 2024; Supadi & Fauzi, 2024). Meanwhile, according to Guru Tua (Habib Idrus bin Salim Al-Jufri), the goal of education is to educate humanity, and ideal education is not merely about filling the brain but also about educating all dimensions within a human being, including the intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social aspects (Saidi et al., 2023).

Based on preliminary observations using a pre-test instrument, it was found that the knowledge of sixth-grade students regarding environmental care material was still very low. One of the main causes was the use of less effective learning strategies. This aligns with John Dewey (1986) perspective, which suggests that conventional teaching models tend to make students passive, merely receiving information without developing critical thinking skills or active participation.

According to Piaget, knowledge is actively constructed by students through interaction with their environment (Halid, 2024; Waite-Stupiansky, 2022). One-directional conventional methods, such as lectures, do not support this knowledge construction process, leaving students passive. David Ausubel adds that conventional methods can be effective if the material is delivered systematically and logically (Sexton, 2025). However, he emphasizes the importance of connecting new information with prior knowledge to make learning more meaningful. Without

this connection, conventional methods risk encouraging rote memorization without genuine understanding.

Based on these initial observations and supported by expert theories, the inquiry method was implemented to enhance students' knowledge in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subject.



Based on the graph above, the majority of students (71%) scored below the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) of 75. Only 29% of students achieved scores above the KKM. This phenomenon is likely due to ineffective learning strategies, resulting in low student comprehension of the material. One primary cause is the use of conventional teaching methods, which have several weaknesses, including: Passive students: The lecture method often leaves students as mere listeners without active engagement in the learning process (Johnson & Coulter-Kern, 2025; Sekwena, 2023). Memorization without understanding: Many students merely memorize material without truly grasping the underlying concepts or deeper meaning (Afriati et al., 2025; Efendi et al., 2025). Lack of variety: Monotonous teaching strategies can lead to student boredom and disinterest in the subject matter (Cui et al., 2024; Narko et al., 2024).

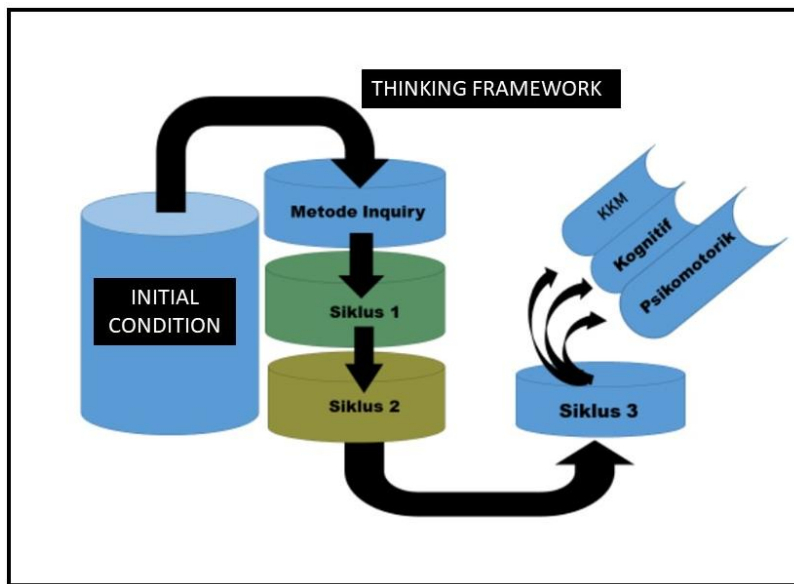
These weaknesses demonstrate that conventional approaches are not always effective in fostering deep understanding or active student participation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopted a qualitative approach using Classroom Action Research (CAR). According to Kurt Lewin, CAR is highly effective in improving classroom learning quality. The method follows a repetitive cycle of Planning, Acting, Observing, and Reflecting (Reflecting). The study was conducted in three stages: Initial observation: Friday, February 14, 2025, First cycle: Friday, February 21, 2025, Second cycle: March 14, 2025, Third cycle: March 21, 2025

If the inquiry method is applied to the Environmental Care material in PAI, then Learning outcomes will improve (evidenced by an average post-test score of 80, exceeding the KKM of 75). Students' environmental awareness will become more positive (observed through participation in real actions such as plastic waste reduction—mandatory use of *misting* and *tumblers* when buying snacks at school—and campaigns urging vendors to avoid plastic packaging). Student engagement in discussions will increase, seen through active questioning and opinion-sharing.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cycle 1

Planning At this stage, I prepared a teaching module on environmental care material. Since the inquiry method was used, students were divided into groups of four. Implementation

The material was delivered using audiovisual media, including videos on environmental issues and their impacts. Each group was directed to analyze environmental problems around the school, encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving. Evaluation was conducted through a written test to collect data on the process and outcomes. Reflection Average test score: 64 Number of students meeting KKM (≥ 75): 12 (up from 9 students in the pre-test) Learning outcome improvement: Increased from 29% to 39% (illustrated in a graph)

Findings While there was progress, student participation and understanding were still limited, necessitating improvements in the next cycle.

Figure 2.

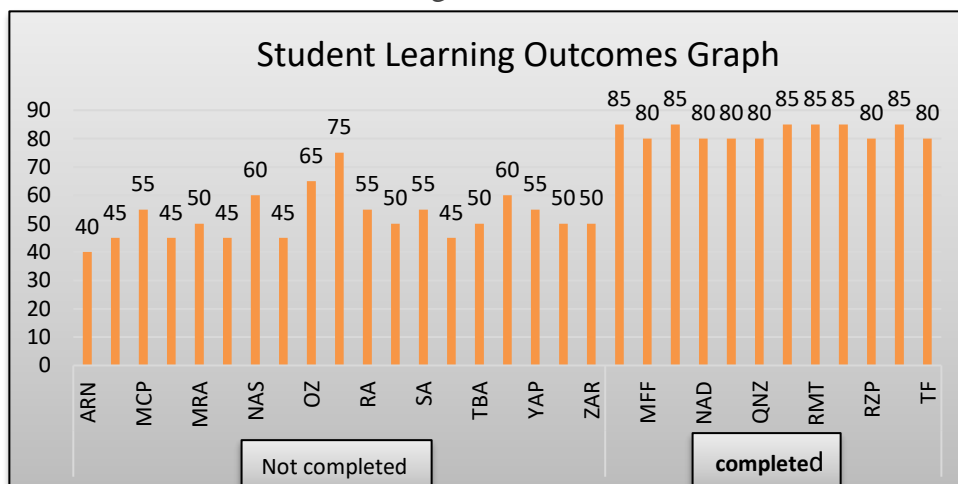
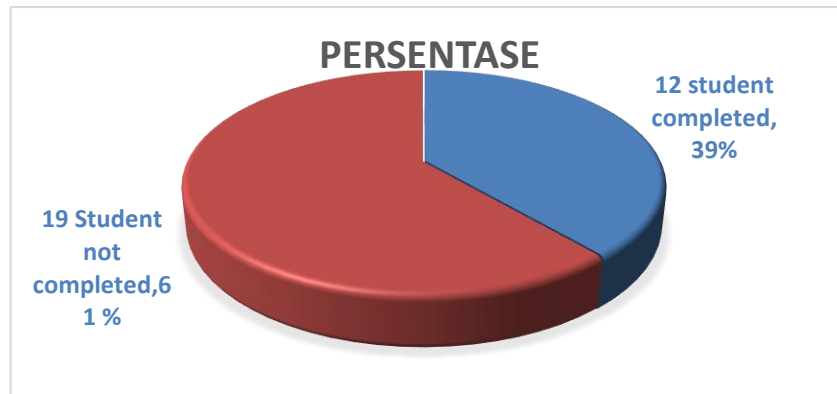


Figure 3.



Planning (Improvement from Cycle 1) Reviewed observation data, test results, and questionnaires to identify weaknesses (e.g., low participation or suboptimal understanding).

Revised the teaching module to be more interactive and challenging. Enhanced learning media (e.g., more engaging videos). Structured inquiry activities (e.g., a project analyzing plastic waste producers). Prepared student worksheets and questionnaires to measure environmental awareness.

Implementation Students engaged in more structured inquiry-based tasks. Written tests and questionnaires were used for assessment. Reflection Learning outcomes improved from 39% to 52%. Challenges: Varied cognitive abilities among students required further refinement in Cycle 2.

Figure 4

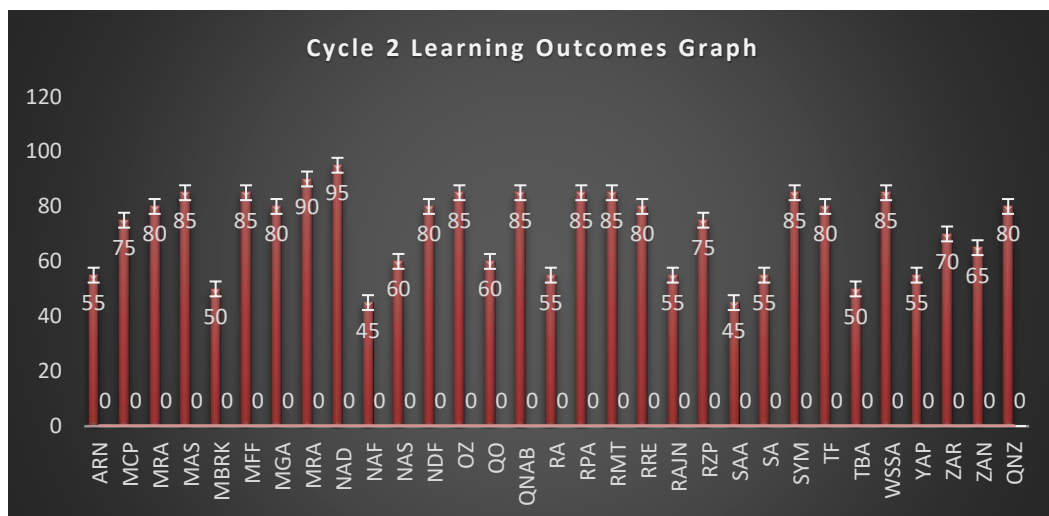
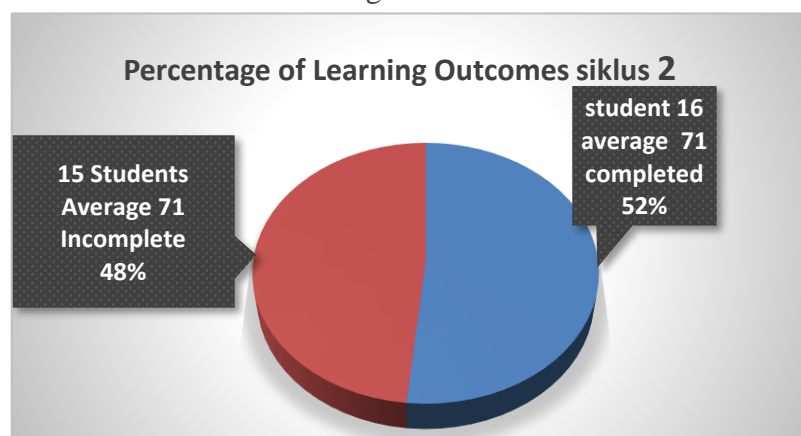


Figure 5



Cycle 2

Planning (Final Optimization) Applied the Jigsaw technique in inquiry activities (e.g., plastic waste analysis project). Used more innovative media to enhance engagement.

Conducted a final written test to measure knowledge improvement. Reflection (Final Results) Cognitive Aspect: Average post-test score: 75 (meeting KKM) 72% of students achieved KKM.

Remaining issue: Some students still had misconceptions about Islamic environmental teachings. Behavioral Aspect: 5% demonstrated environmental care (proper waste disposal, turning off taps after ablution). Habit formation: Most students consistently used tumblers and food containers to reduce plastic waste. Area for improvement: Some students still needed reminders to apply these practices consistently.

Figure 6

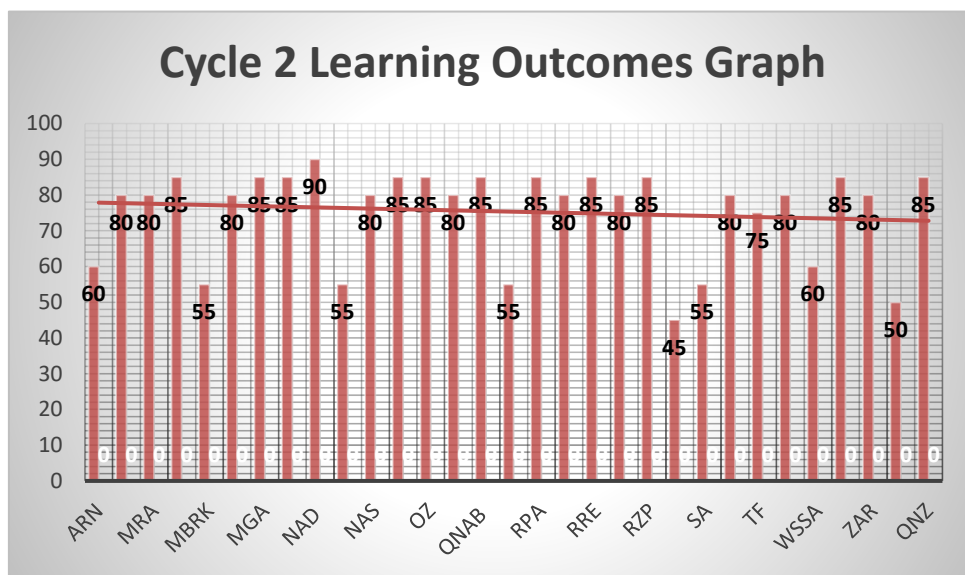
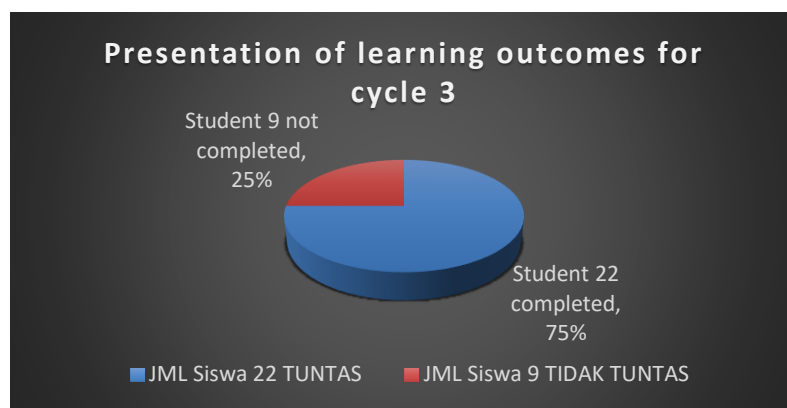


Figure 7



Based on the results of this study, brand image, brand trust, and halal labeling are proven to have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions at Rocket Chicken Purwokerto, as shown by their respective significance values of 0.000, 0.040, and 0.019 (all < 0.05), supported by t-values of 5.380, 2.085, and 2.380 (all > 1.65936), with regression coefficients of 0.369, 0.234, and 0.239, indicating that improvements in these variables increase purchasing decisions. In contrast, brand awareness does not affect purchasing decisions, which is evidenced by its significance value of 0.151 > 0.05 and t-value of 1.445 < 1.65936, showing no statistical influence despite its regression coefficient of 0.153. The regression equation $Y = -1.460 +$

$0.369X_1 + 0.153X_2 + 0.234X_3 + 0.239X_4 + e$ further confirms that purchasing decisions are shaped by brand image, brand trust, and halal labeling, while brand awareness does not contribute significantly to consumer decision-making.

CONCLUSION

The inquiry method successfully improved both cognitive understanding (evidenced by test scores) and environmental awareness (observed in student behavior). However, continuous reinforcement is needed to ensure long-term habit formation and correct misconceptions.

The learning outcomes of 6th-grade students in the "Caring for the Environment" material for Islamic Religious Education before using the inquiry method were assessed as very low, as students tended to be passive, merely receiving information.

After conducting classroom actions for 3 cycles using the inquiry method, students' understanding significantly improved. This is illustrated by many students achieving learning outcomes above the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 75. Specifically, in the third cycle, the average student score was 75, with 72% of students achieving above the KKM, and the remainder still requiring more preventive action. Therefore, this classroom action research is provisionally considered complete, even though it has only met the success indicator, which is: 72% of students achieved completeness in the cognitive aspect regarding environmental preservation.

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