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Strategies to Increase Student Interest in Studying Islamic Religious Education during the Covid-19 Period

Abstract

This study aims to determine the strategies used by Islamic religious education teachers in increasing the interest of students in SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the covid 19 pandemic, and the factors that affect student learning interests, and how the strategies used by Islamic religious teachers (PAI) at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur. The method that the researcher uses is the descriptive qualitative research method. While the data sources of this study were taken from Islamic Religious Education teachers, school principals, and students who were determined by the researchers. The results of the study showed that teachers carried out various strategies in increasing interest in learning Islamic Religious Education for students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the covid 19 pandemic, namely: using the WhatsApp application both in online assignments and in collecting assignments. In addition, the teacher gives praise, prizes for students who are fast and precise in spelling out the tasks given. Then provide punishment for students who do not collect assignments by memorizing short letters. The factors that influence the interest in learning Islamic Religious Education students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the Covid-19 pandemic are internal and external.

Keywords: Strategy, Interests, Learning, Islamic Religious Education, COVID 19.

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Introduction

An expert educator from the Netherlands said that education is guidance given by adults to someone who is not yet an adult in order to become an adult (Dewey, 2001). Likewise, the purpose of Islamic religious education itself must be able to carry out the rights and obligations to Allah SWT by implementing and practicing their knowledge (Supriadi et al., 2021; Raudlotul & Mohd, 2013; Apriandi, 2021). As stated in Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National education system chapter 1 article 1 paragraph 11 that formal education is a structured level of education consisting of elementary, middle, and high schools and universities.

While the purpose of national education itself is one of them to create people who believe and are pious (Huwaida, 2013). This is done if all components, both components of students, teachers, and curriculum support each other in a system with Islamic religious education (PAI). Thus what is stated in the Qur'an: that Allah SWT created humans and jinn to serve him.

But in reality, sometimes Islamic Religious Education is considered a scary subject because it meets verses and is made a standard for grade promotion (Akmal & Ritonga, 2020). Therefore, a teacher is required to be more creative and innovative in teaching conveying certain material using strategies (Wael et al., 2018; Kasmaienezhadfard et al., 2015) so that students are passionate or interested in learning Islamic Religious Education to the maximum, especially during the covid 19 period (Sutarto et al., 2020; Li et al., 2021; Gustiani, 2020).

Students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur, if they are seen in the field that during the current covid 19 pandemic, with the offline and online learning system shift system, they consider this to make it easier for them to collect assignments for taking grades so that it is not uncommon to find students rarely entering and unplug and don't collect assignments, some even just have to cheat on friends because of sending through the application. Some even think that this pandemic period is also making it difficult for them because of the online learning system. This view is due to various factors, including economic limitations, ownership of an Android cellphone, and understanding of IT. While progress is growing rapidly like IT, mastery of IT is needed either through training, or workshops held in schools (Ritonga et al., 2016).

The description above, it can be seen that learning during the Covid-19 period was faced with problems, without exception PAI learning at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur, therefore this study was intended to identify and reveal the strategies used by teachers in increasing students' interest in studying religious education. Islam in the time of covid-19.

Method

SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur is one of the upper secondary education institutions under the guidance of the West Pasaman Regency Education Office. This school was used as the object of research because this school had problems in implementing learning during the Covid-19 period related to learning Islamic religious education. The method used is descriptive qualitative, this method was chosen because it is considered following the research objectives.

The time of this research is to last for 6 (six months), in that period is used by researchers to succeed all series of research ranging from data collection, data classification, verification, data analysis to concluding. The research was carried out by upholding the academic principles that apply in the Postgraduate Program of UM West Sumatra (Team, 2019).

The informant of this research is the head of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur, this informant is seen to know a lot related to the strategies carried out by Islamic Religious Education teachers in increasing student interest because the school principal sets policies related to learning during the covid-19 period. In addition, PAI teachers are also used as research informants, this is because PAI teachers are implementers of learning during the covid-19 period. Other informants are students at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur who were selected by snowball sampling.

To obtain data from all the informants mentioned above, the researchers used observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The observation in question is to observe all activities carried out by the informant, while the interview used is in the form of a free interview, this technique is intended to provide flexibility to informants to convey what they think. While the document study is intended to find the data contained in the document related to the strategy of increasing student interest.

The research data were analyzed using interactive techniques, namely analyzing all data from data collection, data reduction, data classification to analysis, and drawing conclusions. Data analysis like this is intended to make it easier for researchers to check the accuracy of all data collected during the research.

Results and Discussion

The Strategy of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Increasing Interest in Learning at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during Covid-19

Along with technological advances and the development of the times, both in the world of education and the industrial world, a teacher is the driving force in achieving educational goals that must be adapted to the needs of students and the community. Likewise in the teaching and learning process, an exemplary teacher in various ways, starting from his personality, to the results to be achieved in the material being taught, a teacher must be a motivator for students. As at this time, Indonesia was hit by Covid-19 which had an impact on the world of education.

However, the government does not give up on overcoming this problem, either in the world of education or industry. Such as issuing orders so that the teaching and learning process in every school is carried out online. As in SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur, West Pasaman Regency, this school carries out learning in a combination between online and offline, namely by setting a shift offline schedule. In such conditions, the teacher must motivate students to be passionate or interested in learning. At present, online learning by using various applications, even though it does not take place optimally, must still be carried out for the existence of education during the Covid-19 period.

Of course, the policies issued cannot ensure that everything will run as it should, especially schools in villages that lack facilities in the form of integrated technology to support the online learning process (Sartika et al., 2021; Mursal et al., 2021). The lack of adequate costs and facilities between teachers and students makes the online learning process not as effective as expected. This is in line with what is stated in various findings that learning during the Covid-19 period is faced with various problems (Zalat et al., 2021; Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021; Engzell et al., 2021).

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Based on the author's research from the results of interviews with Islamic religious education teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Sugai Aur during the Covid-19 period at present that the strategy used by teachers to increase students' interest in learning Islamic religious education is to give gifts in the form of pens to students who are fast and precise in their actions. collect assignments, give words of praise, and applause for students who answer questions even though they are not perfect from the answers, provide additional plus points, besides that they also provide punishment in the form of memorizing short surahs if they do not do assignments. Then also use various methods and use applications in learning. This is reinforced by the statements of students who confirmed that he received a gift from the Islamic Religious Education teacher when he completed his assignment on time.

While talking about strategies, there are three related to learning, namely 1, learning organization.2, delivery of Islamic religious education in learning.3, learning management (Wahyuni & Bhattacharya, 2021), because strategy is the same as tactics, a person's way to achieve a goal (Tosi et al., 1991).

The description above is strengthened by the explanations of teachers, students, and school principals providing explanations for researchers that the strategy is "to increase interest in learning Islamic Religious Education for students at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the Covid-19 pandemic, I have done various ways. Among them are using the WA application that is recommended by the government, dividing groups or study classes, and saving assignments on google drive. So that sending assignments when offline or online is easy to access. However, I see some weaknesses, such as HP or IT users, not all students are available. and understand, as well as the use of media that is underutilized by the teacher concerned.

Field observations and interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the Covid-19 pandemic proved that students' interest in learning was minimal. The low interest of students is also inseparable from several factors, namely:

1. Not all students have HP/Android
2. Unreachable signal
3. Insufficient quota
4. Lack of understanding of IT in students
5. Not all devices support the application used
6. Parents' economic factors

7. Lack of student interest in doing assignments remotely.

As stated by the students, "Especially for Class XI, students are less interested in studying Islamic Religious Education because they are online. While Islamic Religious Education Lessons need further explanation, different from other lessons. This reality cannot be denied considering that the Covid-19 condition does not support the implementation of PAI material learning in the form of practice.

This is reinforced by the views of Islamic religious education teachers who say that "When teaching both offline and during and assigning assignments, the teacher gives students the right to send assignments via the WhatsApp Application, Google Classroom or when face-to-face the assignment is carried out during learning, The important thing is that they do the assigned task.

The data described above, it can be emphasized that the teacher's strategy in increasing interest in learning Islamic religious education during the COVID-19 period is in the form of giving rewards and punishments. Rewards are given to students who follow all the learning processes from start to finish. Meanwhile, punishment is given to students who do not comply and follow all learning activities properly. Steps like this have also been carried out by many educators, both during the Covid-19 period and outside of Covid-19, and the impact can be seen in changes in students (Sidin, 2021; Ching, 2012; Hegbusi, 2013). This data proves that reward and punishment are still the right strategy to increase student interest.

Factors Affecting Students' Interest in Studying Islamic Religious Education during the Covid-19 Period

According to the description above, there are so many strategies that teachers do in increasing interest in learning Islamic religious education during the Covid-19 period. This innovation made by the teacher is intended to achieve the learning objectives of Islamic religious education during the covid-19 period. However, learning is still experiencing difficulties, even some students have not made a change in attitude in participating in learning.

Therefore, a teacher must recognize and know the causes of not realizing changes in students' attitudes in participating in learning. In this case, 3 factors must be considered, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic as well as the learning approach factor. Such as psychological or spiritual and physical conditions of students, environmental factors, and the approach used by the teacher. Likewise with the state of the nervous brain of students due to external factors, the lack of control from parents both in terms of playing time and also the use of misused android cellphones will have an impact on the brain or behavior. Due to unstable conditions that resulted in the student sleeping when the teacher explained the material (Che Ahmad & Amirul, 2017; Baafi, 2020).

Based on interviews with students, it is known that students feel not interested in learning Islamic Religious Education because of extrinsic factors. Such as problems with parents, close friends that caused us to lack concentration in following monotonous learning with lectures. In addition, we are not interested in it because sometimes we sleep too late at night, so Islamic education at school is sluggish because we feel sleepy. Such conditions make students sometimes leave the classroom during the learning process, parents at home also do not supervise the way students repeat their lessons.

Students and school principals provide explanations for researchers that the strategy taken to increase interest in learning Islamic Religious Education students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the Covid-19 pandemic has been carried out in various ways. These include using the WA application that is recommended by the government, dividing groups or study classes, and saving assignments on Google Drive. So that the delivery of tasks when offline or online is easily accessible. However, there are weaknesses, such as HP or IT users, not all students are there and understand, as well as the use of media is underutilized. In addition to the above, according to a student's admission that there is a lack of interest in learning Islamic religious education because it is considered a scary thing with verses and also cannot read Quranic verses and economic limitations to use applications suggested by teachers, so that time should be used for learning diverted to play games.

Increasing Interest in Learning Islamic Religious Education Students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the Covid 19 Pandemic

Talking about increasing student interest in learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, that according to the findings in the field and the results of the author's interview with Islamic Religious Education teachers, it is known that "many students do not understand the use of applications and the lack of mobile phone capacity they have, so the teacher still provides opportunities for collection of assignments when face-to-face meetings are held".

Like previous research, that learning encountered several obstacles and also had supporters in the implementation process. In this case, the researcher found several different things, the geographical factor of where the students of SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur lived was a factor in the inhibition of the learning process because it was constrained by the internet network which was not strong. The economic factor of the community which is still dominated by the lower middle class and also the understanding of students related to IT makes learning a little disturbed. Researchers also found several things related to learning supporting factors, teachers became very helpful with distance learning.

Given that there are still existing problems, teachers can still provide Islamic education with good information through existing media. If the learning materials are presented in an attractive manner with appropriate methods, it can stimulate the enthusiasm of students to learn so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively because students are active in the classroom. Students whose motivation is stronger is due to intrinsic motivation from within, because in students there is a very strong sense of curiosity about new things, the desire to try and the independent attitude of students.

Furthermore, the researcher also interviewed 2 students of class XI 3 Social Sciences, in order to determine the validity of the information and the level of certainty of the data obtained from the informants, namely Elna Harefa and Arif Rahman. Elna Harefa stated that "She is happy with the teaching method used by Islamic religious education teachers, even with the teacher's teaching method she has a high motivation to study Islam".

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In addition, the presentation of students also felt that their interest in learning was lacking during the Covid-19 pandemic, this was due to a lack of time and understanding of the explanation of the material being studied. So that when there are assignments and exams they feel that their knowledge is in android without sticking in their heads.

The statement from one of the students and observations in the field as well as the explanation of one of the Islamic Religious Education teachers at SMA Negeri 1 Sungai Aur during the current covid-19 pandemic that students' interest in learning is not seen due to several factors described above. Thus it is clear that the increase in student interest in learning during Covid-19 is still experiencing the same thing, namely, there is still a lack of interest in learning Islamic Religious Education as seen in table 1 below:

Table 1.

Learning Outcomes of Islamic Religious Education Class XI.1 Social Sciences

No	Name	Knowledge	Skills	Presence
1	Amelia Kartika	70	75	3
2	Arif Rahman	80	80	0
3	Beni Saputra	40	30	10
4	Dian Waneskusuma	80	78	0
5	Dimas Tegar Ramadhan	70	75	1
6	Dimas tegar Nduru	60	70	3
7	Elna Harefa	85	80	0
8	Fuziah Nurhasanah	80	78	0
9	JuiddaLayya Fitri	88	85	0
10	Lika Nurusita	80	80	2
11	Mulanang Lanang	10	60	10
12	M. Andika lbs	65	65	4

Table 1 above shows that it is seen that cognitive and skill scores are still low and lacking. Even experiencing a setback from PAI learning outcomes achieved by students before the learning process was carried out online. However, among students, there is also an increase in grades. The data in table 1 above proves that through the strategies used by the teacher, the PAI learning outcomes achieved by students do not decrease drastically even though the learning process is carried out in difficult times.

Conclusion

The description and analysis that has been explained in the results of the research and discussion, it is known that learning in difficult situations such as COVID-19 can be overcome by making innovations such as changes in strategy. With the use of the right strategy, the low interest of students can be increased. Likewise, strategies that are suitable for students can minimize things that are feared to happen, such as concerns about a drastic decrease in learning outcomes learning during the Covid-19 period, this does not happen because teachers use learning strategies that are suitable for students.

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