
Evita Nur Apriliana
Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang
Address: Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka (Kampus II), Ngaliyan, Semarang, Indonesia 50185
e-mail: evitanurapriliana2021@gmail.com

Ulya Barokati Tamami
Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang
Address: Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka (Kampus II), Ngaliyan, Semarang, Indonesia 50185
e-mail: ulyabar96@gmail.com

Agus Sutiyono
Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang
Address: Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka (Kampus II), Ngaliyan, Semarang, Indonesia 50185
e-mail: agussutiyono@walisongo.ac.id

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how experiential learning theory was applied in Islamic religious education during the covid-19 epidemic. Interviews and observations are used to acquire primary data, whereas documentation studies obtain secondary data. This research was conducted at SMP Takhassus Al-Qur'an TarubTegal and SMA N 1 Karanggede, Boyolali. The data validity test is accomplished by triangulating the data analysis sources utilizing Miles and Huberman analysis, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data visualization, and data verification. The findings indicated that experiential learning theory might be applied to pandemic education in four stages: tangible experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation, both offline and online learning. Experience-based Islamic religious education helps students learn, comprehend, live, and practice Islamic teachings.

Keywords: experiential learning; Islamic religious education; COVID-19

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan penerapan teori pembelajaran pengalaman dalam pendidikan agama Islam selama pandemi covid-19. Data primer dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan pengamatan, sementara informasi sekunder dikumpulkan melalui studi dokumentasi. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMP Tarub...
Takhassus Al-Qur’an, Tegal dan SMA Negeri 1 Karanggede, Boyolali. Analisis data menggunakan analisis Miles, Huberman, dan Saldana yang terdiri dari tiga tahap: kondensi data, display data, dan verifikasi data. Uji validitas data dilakukan melalui triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa teori pembelajaran pengalaman dapat diterapkan dalam pendidikan pandemi melalui empat langkah: pengalaman konkret, pengamatan reflektif, konseptualisasi abstrak, dan eksperimen aktif, baik dalam pembelajaran offline di SMP Takhassus Al-Qur’an Tarub, Tegal dan pembelajaran online di SMA N 1 Karanggede, Boyolali. Pembelajaran pendidikan agama Islam berbasis pengalaman berkontribusi untuk mendorong siswa untuk mengetahui, memahami, hidup, dan mempraktikkan ajaran Islam.

Kata Kunci: experiential learning; pendidikan agama Islam; COVID-19

A. Introduction

Since 11 March 2020, Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) has been spread globally and designated a pandemic by the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO). Based on WHO’s report in the past week (6-12 September), the cumulative number of reported cases globally is now more than 224 million people.\(^1\) In addition, the cumulative number of deaths is more than 4.6 million\(^2\) during the pandemic’s breakout. WHO recommended that travel restrictions, quarantine, curfew restrictions, accident prevention in the workplace, and the closure of public facilities be applied. Following these recommendations, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture created a policy on remote learning in The Ministry of Education Circular Letter No. 4 of 2020 on Education Implementation During the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Emergency Period.\(^3\) There are three critical policy considerations regarding online education. First, online or distance learning enables students to engage in meaningful learning without being burdened by the responsibilities of fulfilling all curricular requirements for class advancement and graduation. Second, it might be centered on life skills education, including teaching about the Covid-19 epidemic.


Third, learning activities and assignments may change according to students' interests and circumstances, including access gaps/home study opportunities.4

In the face of the covid-19 pandemic, of course, Religious Education as one of the compulsory subjects must also continually innovate in response to the challenges of phenomena in the community. Islamic religious education has a significant role in forming the character and morals of learners. Character education is essential to the formation of a strong character. A strong character will not be formed if the learning process only focuses on activities emphasizing the cognitive aspect5 under the opinion expressed by Saptono in Samrin, which states that character education is crucial. Character is higher in value than intellectuality. For this reason, effective Islamic religious education is needed so that the success of the implementation of religious education contributes to the preparation of a generation that has ethics, morals, and good behavior. On the contrary, failure to implement religious education will result in the decline of the morals of the next generation in the future and will extinguish the nation's character.6

The existence of this Covid-19 phenomenon requires Islamic Religious Education learning activities to be transformed by utilizing digital technology. So teachers creatively strive to design exciting learning. Because the success of learning depends on the design of learning,7 in line with what Muhammad Yaumi said, that learning will not get maximum results without a systematic learning design. Good learning must be designed to be student-centered, goal-oriented, focused on developing or improving learners' competencies, leading to a measurable outcome through reasonable and trustworthy, empirical, repetitive, and self-correcting means, and has the principle of cooperating in a team.8

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8Muhammad Yaumi, Prinsip-prinsip Desain Pembelajaran: Disesuaikan Dengan Kurikulum 2013, 2 ed. (Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, 2013), hlm. 5-16.
The design of learning must be developed in line with the progress of the times so that education results follow the demands and developments. In this regard, the level of depth, imagination, and practice of society to the teachings of Islam depends mainly on the level of quality of Islamic education it receives. Therefore, one of the efforts that can be done to live more religious teachings is to improve the learning process. Experiential learning theory David A. Kolb is considered one of the alternatives in increasing the imagination of learners in practicing Islamic teachings. Because through this theory, learners will transform knowledge based on their experience.

David A. Kolb was born in 1939 in New York City. Kolb earned a BA from Knox College in 1961, earned an MA in 1964, and a Ph.D. in 1967 from Harvard University in Social Psychology. He is an educational theorist researching interest and publication that focuses on individual learning experiences and social change. Kolb sparked experiential learning theory in 1984. In its development, Kolb’s experiential learning cycle is the most influential model and is often cited in research related to experiential learning theory. He also classified students' learning styles by triggering learning style inventory. Experiential learning defines learning as the process by which knowledge is created through experiential transformation.

Experiential learning can also be described as obtaining something through a series of changing experiences to enhance the benefits of the learning outcome. The purpose of this experiential learning paradigm is to affect students in three main ways: (a) by altering their cognitive structures, (b) by altering their attitudes, and (c) by augmenting their present talents. This methodology actively involves students in the issues and subjects studied. According to the experiential learning model, learning

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is creating knowledge through experience and experiential transformation.\textsuperscript{14} Experiential learning encourages students to examine common situations critically, undertake a modest investigation to ascertain what occurred, and then make conclusions. In experiential learning, the study proceeds are divided into four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.\textsuperscript{15}

Based on the search conducted in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning, this experiential learning theory has been adopted in IRE learning steps\textsuperscript{16} and the instructional design of PAI teaching materials.\textsuperscript{17} This article completes the study's results; this article seeks to uncover the application of Experiential Learning Theory in Islamic Religious Education learning during the covid-19 pandemic. This research is vital because learning design is one of the determining factors for the success of the learning process. Therefore, applying experiential learning theory during this pandemic is assumed to contribute to Islamic religious education in schools positively. Furthermore, this research is interesting because it was conducted on two loci with different characteristics: offline learning at Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior High School, Tegal, and online learning at N 1 Karanggede High School Boyolali. Therefore, this article will answer two questions: first, how is the implementation of experiential learning theory in Islamic education during the pandemic? Second, what are the implications of applying experiential learning theory in PAI learning during the covid-19 pandemic? Thus, this study can consider stakeholders and provide a picture of learning during the pandemic while providing recommendations to teachers in improving the quality of learning during the covid-19 pandemic.


\textsuperscript{15}David A Kolb, Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development, 2 ed. (United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc, 2015), hlm. 32.


\textsuperscript{17}Lihat misalnya: Rahmawati, “Pemanfaatan Bahan Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Model Experiential Learning Terhadap Hasil Belajar Peserta Didik Di SD Inpres Kampung Mejang.”
B. Method

This research used a descriptive qualitative research design. Primary data was collected through in-depth interviews with two Islamic religious education teachers and observations of the learning process. Through both data collection techniques, researchers get information related to Islamic Religious Education challenges, obstacles, and learning practices during the covid-19 pandemic. Secondary data was collected through documentary studies. This research was conducted at two schools with different levels, namely at Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior High School, Tegal, and State High School 1 Karanggede, Boyolali. Both loci were selected so that researchers obtained more varied and comprehensive data for the validity of the data using the triangulation of the source. Through triangulation, researchers compare data from one to another. Then the data is analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldana analysis techniques consisting of three stages: data contingency, data display, and data verification.

C. Result and Discussion

In general, the application of experiential learning theory in Islamic education in two schools has been implemented since compiling the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP). The teacher arranges the RPP by the components and procedures in the syllabus. Teachers also prepare to teach materials and learning and assessment media. Experiential learning strategies are used in Islamic education learning because it is considered more helpful in understanding learners. Experience-based learning facilitates students to experience and know the subject matter of Islamic religious education. Simply put, the process of learning Islamic education based on experience can be observed in table 1.

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Table 1
Experiential learning process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning steps</th>
<th>SMP</th>
<th>SMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concreate experience</td>
<td>The teacher instructed the students to pick up the trash-strewn across the school grounds.</td>
<td>The teacher instructed students to read the news related to Covid-19 and observe the comments written by netizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective observation</td>
<td>The teacher asks the learner to reflect on his experience when picking up trash.</td>
<td>Learners reflect on their experience in reading Covid-19 news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract conceptualization</td>
<td>Together with the student, the teacher constructs the concept related to sanctifying from unclean and hadats by connecting the student's experience in the previous two stages.</td>
<td>Students discuss related aspects that exist in critical thinking and being democratic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active experimentation</td>
<td>Students practice the ordinance of sanctifying from unclean.</td>
<td>Students respond to covid-19 news following the principles of critical thinking and prioritizing democratic attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject matter</td>
<td>Fiqh Thaharah</td>
<td>Q.S. Ali Imran (3): 190-191, and Q.S. Ali Imran/3:159 on critical thinking and being democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning design</td>
<td>Limited face-to-face learning</td>
<td>Online learning based on Google Classroom and WhatsApp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 describes differences in material characteristics and learning design in the two schools. At the junior level, learning is done offline, and students are directly involved in motor activities. While at the high school level, learning is done online and more involves abstract activities, namely thinking. In addition, Table 1 illustrates that implementing experiential learning methods in Islamic Religious Education in general consists of four steps.

First, the substantial experience stage is the earliest, a student experiencing something (just feeling, seeing, and retelling the event).21 At this stage, students do not

yet know the nature of the event, what happened, and why it happened. Second, the stage of reflection observation A student already has observations of the events experienced at this stage. Students also actively develop questions and seek answers, carrying out reflections. In other words, at this stage, students have curiosity, why did something happen? Furthermore, please start thinking about understanding it. Third, the stage of conceptualization of the abstract. At this stage, the student seeks to make an abstraction or theory about what he has observed and develop a theory, concept, and procedure about something the object of attention. Students are expected to make various examples of events that seem different but have the same basis of rules at this stage.

Fourth, the stage of active experimentation; this stage is the most fundamental in experiential learning. At this stage, students are already trying to actively conduct experiments and apply concepts and theories to real situations. In Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior High School, The application activity begins when the learner has arrived at the class again. The teacher instructs the learners to sit in their respective places. Learners are asked questions about what they see and what media is used in sanctifying small hadats and large hadats. Students give their answers: some answer that the medium used in sanctification is holy water that purifies and soil for tayammum.

The teacher instructs each student to practice sanctification with the two media and record their stages. The teacher explained that they do a religious activity to eliminate hadats, where the media used holy water that purifies and soil. The teacher explained that the sanctification they do with the medium of the holy water bucket is ablution. In contrast, the sanctification that uses ground media is tayammum. The teacher also explained that their activities to strewn in the schoolyard are one example of the prophet Muhammad's attitude that must be exemplified, namely clean living, under the saying "clean is part of faith."
The results of observations at Takhassus al-Qur'an Junior High School, Tegal on September 21, 2021.

While in SMAN 1 Karaggede, in the stage of active experimentation, teachers encourage students to practice the concepts that have been learned, namely about thinking critically and being democratic. The teacher gives reading material to the students and directs them to respond to the reading with a critical and democratic attitude as to what can be taken. Thus in this stage students actively, apply concepts, theories to real situations.

We can conclude from our observations that experiential learning theory is practical when it demonstrates a person's development through a four-stage cycle: from (1) having the substantial experience to (2) observation and reflection on experiences, which results in (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions), which are then (4) used to test hypotheses in future situations, resulting in new experiences.

Education as a vital sector is required to continue running, even though it is a pandemic. Indonesian society, in general, has the perception that religion is an essential factor in building an ordinary life amid the plurality of the nation. In addition, religious values are expected to become a dynamic, competitive, materialistic, and increasingly pragmatic moral foundation in modern life. In such situations, religious education can reconcile, motivate, and guide learners in determining life choices according to their religious guidance. It is not religious education that burdens its students with various memorization or simply carrying out the routine of spiritually dry rites of worship. So Islamic education must be able to instill spiritual values to learners. The learning process becomes an essential part of achieving optimal learning outcomes. Instructional design is one of the determinants of the success of the learning process. One form of learning design innovation reviewed in this research is Experiential Learning Theory, implemented at Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior High School, Tegal, and SMA Negeri 1 Karanggede.

As a school affiliated with pesantren, the implementation of learning at Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior High School allows it to be held offline. However, the implementation of learning is still carried out by implementing government policies contained in the Decree of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia No. 382 of 2020 on health protocols for the public in public places and facilities in order to

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26 Anggreni, “Experiential Learning (Pemelajaran Berbasis Mengalami).”
prevent and control coronavirus disease 2019 (covid-19) including wearing masks, washing hands using soap, maintaining distance, and avoiding crowds. Therefore, the learning process is not significantly different between before and when there is a pandemic.

The energetic experience learning theory at SMA N 1 Karanggede is done online. The learning policy from home causes the learning system to initially face-to-face in school into online learning from home. Online learning is a teaching and learning activity between teachers and students that can be done anytime and anywhere without being limited by distance and time. Moreover, online learning allows the absence of direct physical contact between teachers and students or fellow students, so that this learning method is expected to reduce the spread of covid-19.

SMA N 1 Karanggede is one of the schools located in Boyolali Regency, Central Java. During the pandemic, this school implemented online learning and applied the theory of Experiential Learning. Some of the tools used include Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Zoom, and Youtube. The subject matter taught during observation is Q.S. Ali Imran (3): 190-191, Q.S Ali Imran/3:159, and hadiths on critical thinking and being democratic.27 In SMA Negeri 1 Karanggede, online learning is less able to run well because of the limitations of the facilities owned by students, ranging from inadequate quotas to difficult signal access. In addition, there is the fact that online learning is not a standard learning system in Indonesia because so far, learning is done face to face. Teachers and students are unfamiliar with the online learning system, a newly adapted learning system. Teachers are required to deliver the material well to understand the material as learning in the classroom. Student learning achievement is also expected not to decrease and even be better, so some requirements are needed so that the online learning system can be implemented smoothly.28

Although the learning process has referred to Experiential Learning Theory, students have not been actively involved in learning. Therefore, there need to be improvements in online PAI learning at SMA N 1 Karanggede. There are several requirements needed for online learning to be carried out properly, namely: (1) a good classroom design or online learning model; (2) good interaction or communication

27 The results of observations at SMA N 1 Karanggede, Boyolali on October 25, 2021.
between teachers and students; and (3) rapid technological development. The development of technology must undoubtedly be coupled with the ability of teachers and students to use the technology well in learning.\textsuperscript{29}

One of several aims of online courses is to improve students' choices online by providing access to accurate answers and more information. LIPI education sociologists say that its efforts to optimize distance learning require support from various parties, including the government, teachers, parents, and students. In this case, according to him, teachers must have creativity in designing distance learning so that students remain passionate about learning even though they are not directly dealing with their teachers. Learning should be designed with fun, meaningful, and generate creativity and the critical power of students.\textsuperscript{30} The energetics of Experiential Learning Theory in learning during pandemics make a positive contribution. Learning activities become more systematically directed under students' cognitive phase and psychological condition.\textsuperscript{31}

At the second research locus of Experiential Learning Theory offline at SMP Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub, Tegal went well, and most students were active in learning. While in SMA N 1 Karanggede, Experiential Learning Theory can be adapted in online learning. Learning is done online, making students less able to respond well to learning. Proven by the minor students who ask questions and answer questions in google classroom.

Kolb's experiential learning (EL) model is a way of study that emphasizes experiential learning, the quality and amount of learning that exist naturally. The fundamental teaching process controls both crucial factors in the learning process, the environment and interaction, which are positioned equally as the fundamental unit of learning, namely the "learning experience." Thus, an educator's primary duty is to provide a rich environment where learners can absorb as a source of learning. Thus, the task of Islamic education teachers is how to help students who are passionate about religion which is not only a religious concept. In order to form students' character into peace-loving human beings, raise the spirit of unyielding, galvanize their mentality to


\textsuperscript{31} Interview with Mr. Juma'in, M.Pd, on October 26, 2021.
dare to dream and aspire and achieve their dreams. This purpose requires Islamic education teachers to focus on their learning orientation experience.

Islamic education that applies the four stages of experiential learning David A. Kolb will focus on the religious process. Students do not just learn Islam. Nevertheless, more than that, students’ experience during learning Islam can form a response to understanding in Islam and form physical and mental actions. So the experience here is used as a basis in Islamic Education. Learners are directed to learn Islam through experience.

Islamic education requires the basis of an experience-oriented teaching and learning process. Therefore, experience is used as a goal and medium of learning, encouraging learners to learn from every religious experience. Then this religious experience will deepen the dimension of spiritual intelligence in learners. Therefore, experiential learning theory is considered relevant and contributes positively to Islamic religious education.

D. Conclusion

The application of experiential learning theory in the learning process of Islamic religious education during the pandemic in Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior High School, Tegal and Sma Negeri 1 Karanggede was carried out through four stages, namely: concrete experience (feeling), reflective observation (watching), abstract conceptualization (thinking), and active experimentation (doing). In practice, Takhassus Al-Qur'an Tarub Junior high school learning is done offline because the school is integrated with boarding school. Therefore, the application of experiential learning theory can run well because communication and interaction between teachers and students can run intensively. In comparison, Islamic religious education learning during the pandemic at SMA N 1 Karanggede was done through online learning based on Google Classroom and WhatsApp. Therefore, although experiential learning theory can be adapted to online learning, the student response has not been expected.

This research has limitations in taking short relative data so that it is possible that the reality related to the application of experiential learning has not been finally revealed. This research recommends further research related to the application of experiential learning theory, which is not only limited to the realm of learning strategies.

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but can also be poured into the design of materials or teaching media so that learning can run more systematically. With the concept of experience-based Islamic Education, learners know and understand the teachings of Islam, but more than that with habituation through experience will encourage learners to practice every Islamic religion.

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