



Strengthening Students' Character in *Akhlaq* Subject Through Problem Based Learning Model

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Abstract: This study examines the development of *Akhlaq* learning based on character strengthening through Problem Based Learning (PBL) model in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. Character learning is the value engraved within a person that determines his attitude and behavior; this character can usually be shaped by education, experience, habituation, and environmental influences. *Akhlaq* education is an education that prioritizes the aspect of manners that always involves aspects of knowledge, feelings, and actions. Through this moral education, it is hoped to achieve a better character and can help to foster the emotional intelligence of learners in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. The method used in this study is literary study located at Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. The results showed that *Akhlaq* learning through PBL approach can shape the students' thinking activities naturally and can solve the learning problem concerned with the learners' morality. So that learners can learn about how to think critically and can be skilled in solving problems.

Keywords: *Akhlaq*, Character, Problem based learning

Accepted: January 27th, 2018 | Approved: May 11th, 2018 | Published: June 29th, 2018

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' professionalism in teaching determines students' learning outcomes, both in the field of cognitive (intellectual), the field of attitude (effective) and the field of behavior (psychomotor) (Dimiyati & Mudjiono, 2009). The purpose of teaching is to educate people to be clever and possess good morality (C. Anwar, 2015; Muthoifin & Jinan, 2015). An educator can produce bright and noble learners (Imam, 2013). Learning is considered successful when there is a change in the individual, influenced by the ability of the students and the quality of teaching (C. Anwar, 2014; Krismiyati, 2017).

Education has an important role for mankind (M. K. Anwar, 2010; Hasan

Baharun, 2016). Islam as the religion of *rahmatan lil-alamin* sees education as the main foundation and priority in order for someone to be prioritized and glorified. As stated in the QS. Al-Mujadalah verse 11 (Al-qur'an dan terjemahannya, 2008):

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

Meaning: "Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do."

Based on Al-Quran Surah Al-Mujadillah verse 11, science or education holds a very important role in human life, whether in religious development, nation, state, and especially it can educate human

beings to be intelligent and possess noble character.

Moral education can realize better character in the learners' daily life, including moral education, character education, and so forth. *Akhlaq* education aims to develop students' thinking skills in dealing with the character degradation. To strengthen the character of learners, it needs to be emphasized on moral education. The main goal of *Akhlaq* education is to form students' good personalities and morals, not only for them to have intellectual intelligence (IQ) but also have emotional intelligence (EQ) as well as spiritual intelligence (SQ) (Luneto, 2014).

The quality of education can be enhanced by developing the students' potential, in order to be able to be a perfect human being who possesses faith and devotion to Allah SWT, good morality, knowledge, capable, creative, independent, and democratic and responsible citizen.

Learning will be said to succeed if there is a change in a person. Learning that is done as it is and not through systematic planning will not get maximum results (Yaumi, 2013). Even the activity of students in learning activities becomes predictor in measuring the success of learners (H Baharun, 2015).

Abdurrozak in his research stated that there is an increase in students' creative thinking ability by using Problem Based Learning (PBL) model, which has implication on improving student learning outcomes. His research suggests that students' creative thinking skills using the PBL model are better than using conventional models (Abdurrozak, 2016).

Likewise with Nafiah research which states that the application of PBL model in computer settings and maintenance learning material can improve students' critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills increase after the application of LBC is applied (Nafiah,

2014). The results of these studies became the basis for determining the focus of this study, namely on learning *Akhlaq*. Therefore, in learning *Akhlaq* subject in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo, need a systematic design, in order to obtain a maximum learning, as well as to see the condition of learners, teacher competence, existing facilities, and environment, in order to be attractive and innovative (Erlinda, 2017; Wekke & Hamid, 2013).

One of the ways to foster and improve students' *akhlaq* through learning activities, it needs a proper learning approach that is Problem Based Learning (PBL). With the PBL approach, learning activities can shape the students' thinking activities naturally, and can solve the problem *akhlaq* subject concerned with the learners' moral. The result of learning through PBL is expected to help the learners to think critically and skilled in solving problems.

METHOD

The method used in this study is literary study. Literary study is a series of activities related to collecting literature data, reading and recording, and processing of library materials (Khatibah, 2011; Sugiyono, 2014). This research located at Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. *Akhlaq* Learning

Learning is an effort to educate individuals or groups through various efforts, strategies, methods, and approaches to achieve predetermined goals (C. Anwar, 2015; Majid, 2014; Nashikhah, 2016). Learning is the process of interaction between students and their environment so that there is a change of behavior to be better (Hasan Baharun, 2017).

Learning, in this case, is interpreted as a process of interaction between

learners with educators through learning resources, to exchange information so that learners could acquire the knowledge and could form good attitude in the aspects of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. To manage the situation so that learners can easily achieve the learning objectives, a teacher must show his ability in designing the subject matter so that it can generate interest and cultivate the students' talent in teaching and learning process by using appropriate learning strategy and media (Irwandani, 2016; Smaldino, Sharon, & Et.al, 2011).

There are several factors that influence the success of learning, namely; internal factors and external factors. It at least gave birth to 3 theories in learning, namely behaviorism (learning as response mastery), cognitivism (learning as knowledge mastery), and constructivism (learning as knowledge construction). Related to the aspect of education and learning, Rasulullah Saw said:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ

Meaning: "Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim."

From the Hadith, it can be concluded that is obligatory to pursue knowledge. When someone has the knowledge, he has an obligation to teach and practice it. In teaching, a teacher should have a broad insight into the learning system in order for the learning to run effectively and efficiently. In this hadith, it is affirmed that the seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim (H Baharun & Mundiri, 2011). The phenomenon that exists nowadays is the lack of students' spirit in learning, especially in Islamic Education, although the hadith also motivate us to learn all types of science. The obligation in studying the world of science also depends on its purpose. If it is used in

goodness then it is good, and vice versa if it is used in harmless then it is bad.

Basically, looking for that knowledge is to get the blessing of Allah the Almighty, not just to get the happiness of the world. Allah the Almighty has affirmed in the Qur'an, that fortune, mate, and death is an irreversible destiny. If seeking knowledge aimed to have a good future is good, then seeking knowledge is intended for the hereafter in the hope of entering heaven and meet the God the Almighty.

While the word *akhlaq* in the Indonesian language is adopted from the Arabic, *akhlak*. Etymologically, *akhlaq* is a plural form of *khuluq* which means manners, temperament or character. It is rooted from the word *klalaqa* which means creating, same as the word *Khaliq* (creator) and *makhluk* (creation) and *Khalq* (creating). The notion implies that *akhlaq* is the rules or norms of behavior that governs the relationship of man with his God, a man with another man, and a man with the surrounding environment (Kurniawati, 2015).

Of the several definitions, there are four traits of *akhlaq*, namely: first, *akhlaq* is deeds or behaviors that have been strongly imprinted on a person's soul to be his identity. Second, *akhlaq* is an activity or deed done spontaneously. Third, *akhlaq* is an act that arises from within a person without any outside intervention. Fourth, *akhlaq* is deeds or behaviors done based on the truth.

Akhlaq is very important in Islam. Because the noble character is reflecting the maturity of one's faith to achieve the success of life in the world and the hereafter. *Akhlaq* can reflect a person. While the moral reality that exists at this time is very damaged. So there is a need for a countermeasure to solve the problem.

Rasulullah sent by God to perfect human morality and to improve and refine the morals. One of them is the prayer, in

which the goal is to form a person who is protected from evil and deeds of evil. Allah SWT says;

لقد كان لكم في رسول الله أسوة حسنة لمن كان يرجو
الله واليوم الآخر وذكر الله كثيرا

Meaning: "Verily, in the Apostle of God you have a good example for everyone who looks forward [with hope and awe] to God and the Last Day, and remembers God unceasingly."

Prophet Muhammad is a reflection of noble character, through *akhlaq* learning, it is expected to create noble mankind, both to God and beings. The purpose of *akhlaq* learning is for the interests and development of society in which education is implemented. A simple example of the purpose of *akhlaq* education was at the time of the Prophet, with the dynamics of a simple society, much different from the goal of moral education in the 4th Hijri century, especially in the modern age today.

From the above objectives, it can be seen that the purpose of *akhlaq* learning is to educate learners to have the knowledge, appreciation, and true beliefs on things to be believed, in the attitude and daily behavior based on Al-Qur'an and Hadith through the practice of good morality (both related to God, self, between man and with the natural environment) and trying hard to leave bad morality.

B. Character Education Development in *Madrasah*

The word Character is defined as nature, the psychological traits of a person, the morality or character that distinguishes one from another (Wiyani, 2017). A character is the mental or moral strength of the individual who has become a special personality that distinguishes an

individual from other individuals (Hidayatullah, 2009).

According to Khan, a character is a stable person's personal attitude as a result of a progressive and dynamic consolidation process (Khan, 2010). Meanwhile, a character is the same as personality, where personality is regarded as a characteristic, style, or unique characteristic of a person that comes from the formations from the environment (Ainiah, 2013; Koesoema, 2011; Walid, 2011).

Character education is an education that seeks to regulate a person's attitude to have a good personality (M. K. Anwar, 2010). In short, it leads to something that exists in each individual human being that makes a person's uniqueness. Through the *akhlaq* learning, the learners are assisted to guide their characters to form a good nature or character. Moral education is education oriented to the process of fostering the potential that exists in the learner, developed through the habituation of good traits that is the learning of good character values so that it can lead to the strengthening of the learner's character.

In this moral learning, each individual is trained in order to maintain good nature, so that the character will be strongly attached through practice (Wekke & Astuti, 2017). With the *akhlaq* learning, learners are expected to actualize themselves with the ability they have and can change and shape their character independently, intelligently and fully.

In the process of *akhlaq* learning, it is necessary for the development of learners' behavior and moral values such as justice, honesty, sense of responsibility, and concern for others. This is an element that should be instilled in the learners to be able to make careful consideration of the behavior in everyday life, both at school and in the community.

Akhlaq education teaches learners in terms of distinguishing between right and

wrong and embedding good habit, so that moral education component not only involves aspects of "knowing the good" (moral knowing) but also "desiring the good" or "loving the good" (moral feeling) and "acting the good" (moral action) (Hasan Baharun, 2017).

The purpose of moral education in the perspective of the Qur'an is emphasized more on habituation in practicing good values and avoiding bad values, it is described in Quran surah Ali Imran verse 110 (Al-qur'an dan terjemahannya, 2008):

كنتم خير امة اخرجت لناو تأمرون بالمعروف
وتنهون عن المنكر وتؤمنون بالله

Meaning: *"You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah."*

Based on the verse, the purpose of strengthening the character through moral education is for the realization of noble human beings who possess intellectual intelligence (IQ), as well as emotional intelligence (EQ), spiritual intelligence (SQ), and as the God's *khalifah* on earth who has the responsibility and divine message to be performed.

C. Problem Based Learning: Alternative Strategies

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a learning process in the classroom. Students must first observe a phenomenon, and then record the various problems found (González & Batanero, 2016). While the teacher is tasked to stimulate the students' critical thinking in solving the problems they face (De Graaff & Kolmos, 2003). PBL is a learning strategy that seeks to empower students in conducting research activities, integrating acquired theories with practice, and practicing the knowledge and skills to

develop a practical solution (Chiang & Lee, 2016). PBL is one type of learning strategy that is a learner-centered learning (Sanjaya, 2006).

PBL is a learning model that provides learners with opportunities to explore authentic experiences that encourage them to actively learn, construct knowledge, and integrate learning contexts in school and real life scientifically (Yoon, Woo, Treagust, & Chandrasegaran, 2014). PBL is a learning that stresses on giving problems to the student that must be solved through investigation, to one student's thinking ability in solving a problem, so that essential knowledge and concept from learning can be formed.

Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that the PBL model is a learning approach that focuses on students or student-centered. The PBL learning model emphasizes the investigation activity in solving the problem, where the students are faced with a problem which then through solving it, the students can learn skills using their own inquiry and thinking so that learners can learn to solve problems. The problem-based learning model is conducted by dividing learners into groups with a problem in akhlaq learning. The division of groups is also done heterogeneously so it is expected to motivate students to interact with other students. PBL model is interpreted as a series of learning activities that emphasize the process of solving problems scientifically (Wina, 2011).

There are three main characteristics of the PBL model conducted in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo:

1. In the implementation of PBL, there are a number of activities that must be done by the students. Through PBL model, the students are expected not only able to listen, record, and then memorize the akhlaq learning materials, but students are also expected to actively think,

- communicate, search, process data, and make conclusions.
2. PBL provides a problem as the key to the learning process. Activity in *akhlaq* learning is directed to solve the problem, especially in the field of morality and moral degradation to further strengthen the character of the learners.
 3. Problem-solving is done by using a scientific thinking approach. Thinking by using the scientific method through the process of deductive and inductive thinking. This thinking process is done systematically and empirically. Systematic means scientific thinking is done through certain stages, while empirical means the process of problem-solving is based on clear data and facts.

D. Development of *Akhlaq* Learning Model Based on Character Strengthening Through Problem-Based Learning

Development of *akhlaq* learning model based on character strengthening through problem-based learning in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo was done in a planned and systematic manner, in accordance with the steps in PBL activities. In this case, the *akhlaq* learning material done through PBL approach was *Hubbu Ad-Dunya*, which learning design was done through:

1. Finding Problems

Finding the problem of *akhlaq* learning in *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* material, to strengthen the learners' character through PBL in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. The problem of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* is very common so that it impacts negatively on a person's character and morals because they prefer the world so that they do not have time to do something useful for him in the afterlife. One of the main duties that must be carried out by parents and teachers is

to preserve and teach moral values in children.

Moral values embedded will form the noble character. *Akhlaq* learning in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo is one of the subjects directed to form the learners' good value both when dealing with Allah the Almighty, another human being, and other creatures and the natural environment and to form a moral action applied in the daily life.

Thus, what should be done by teachers in the process of moral learning is to present stories that contain decreasing moral behavior caused by the nature of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya*. In the process of learning through the story or example of events of moral degradation caused by *Hubbu Ad-Dunya*, it will make students understand the learning process of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya*.

One example of problem-solving is when an individual or a group is confronted with a conflict, which then they make a decision caused by *Hubbu Ad-Dunya*. By using problem-based learning, it will provide an opportunity for the students to involve students' multiple intelligence in solving problems associated with *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* that adversely affects morale and emphasizes the completion of the problem. The PBL learning model in the theme of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* is expected to strengthen the character so that the learners could form better characters.

2. Defining the Problem

Defining the problem of *akhlaq* learning in the theme of the disgraceful morality of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through PBL in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. The purpose of defining the problem is to equip the learners in order to solve the problem by finding the cause of the occurrence of the problem.

An example of how to define the Hubbu Ad-Dunya problem is that they are more concerned with the world, resulting in the neglect of prayer. Through PBL, students are expected to find both the cause and effect of the problem. PBL Model of akhlaq learning in the theme Hubbu Ad-Dunya is expected to strengthen the learners' character so that a good character could be formed.

3. Gathering Facts

Gathering the facts of *akhlaq* learning in the themes of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through PBL. Gathering facts in akhlaq learning through PBL was done by instructing the students to collect facts about *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through observation of the real life situation. Gathering facts aims to equip learners in adding insight into their knowledge and understanding of the *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* problem. PBL Model of *akhlaq* learning in the theme of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* is expected to strengthen the learners' character so that a better character could be formed.

4. Preparing the Hypothesis

Prepare the hypothesis of *akhlaq* learning in the theme *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through PBL in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo. The purpose of preparing hypotheses in *akhlaq* learning of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through PBL is to equip the learners to be able to know and understand the causes of problems, background, and solutions to solve the problem. From the results of the hypothesis, it is expected to strengthen the learners' character so that they could form a better character.

5. Conducting an Investigation

To investigate the *akhlaq* learning in the problem of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through PBL through empirical facts that exist in the surrounding, they that seek to find the suspected event of the hypothesis

as a follow-up in solving the problem. The purpose of this investigation is to provide a clearer definition of the problem.

From the results of the investigation of the problem, learners are expected to find problems through observations directly in their surrounding. It is expected to strengthen the learners' character. Through PBL learning, they are not only guided by the book but also through observation.

6. Completing the Defined Problems

Completing the problems that have been defined in *akhlaq* learning of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* through PBL in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo by collecting facts, data, and references that exist. The result of the completion of the definition of the problem is expected for the students to be able to understand that the morality of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* has been practiced both in the school environment and outside the school so that learners are encouraged to avoid morals *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* and it is also expected for them to strengthen their character.

7. Summing up Alternative Solutions Collaboratively

Summing up the alternatives solutions collaboratively in *akhlaq* learning of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* material through PBL in Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo that was done by make a conclusion to solve the problems of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya* in groups.

The purpose of the discussion is to determine the action taken to solve the akhlaq problems of *Hubbu Ad-Dunya*. Then the students discuss the reason in solving the problem with their peers. The best answers would then be followed up. Follow-up activities are expected for each student to perform activities that provide feedback after the PBL was done through cards game. So that they could strengthen

their character through self-thinking activity.

8. Evaluating the Results (Problem Solving Solution)

The purpose of evaluating the results of problem-solving is expected to emphasize the activities of self-thinking and problem-solving in groups. It is expected to improve the students' character based on the group thinking activity. The results of the learners' thinking are directed by the teacher into more accurate problem-solving. It is expected to grow learners' self thinking to achieve the optimum competence that should be mastered by learners regarding the Hubbu Ad-Dunya. The learning experience is also expected to strengthen the learners' self-thinking character of Madrasah Aliyah Nurul Jadid Paiton.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Learning is not an accidental and purposeless activity. But consciously and carefully planned to produce certain goals. Thus, planning and design are required in all activities related to teaching and learning activities, both at the planning stage, implementation of learning in the classroom, as well as the assessment of student learning outcomes.

The results showed that *akhlaq* learning through PBL approach can shape the students' thinking activities naturally and can solve the learning problem concerned with the learners' morality. Strengthening students' character in *akhlaq* subject through Problem Based Learning Model: finding problems, defining the problem, gathering facts, preparing the hypothesis, conducting an investigation, completing the defined problems, summing up alternative solutions collaboratively, evaluating the results. The teachers and students are advised to use this model because can improve their character.

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