

Improving Students' Learning Engagement Through the Discussion Method in the Akidah Akhlak Subject for Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang

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Abstract: This study aims to improve students' learning engagement through the implementation of the discussion method in the Akidah Akhlak subject for Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach conducted in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection stages. The subjects of the study were students of Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. Data were collected through observation, tests, and documentation and were analyzed using descriptive quantitative and qualitative approaches. The results showed that the implementation of the discussion method was able to improve students' learning engagement. The improvement was reflected in students' participation in asking and answering questions, expressing opinions, collaborating in groups, and actively participating in the learning process. The discussion method also created a more interactive and communicative learning environment and encouraged students to express their ideas confidently. Therefore, the discussion method can be used as an effective learning strategy to improve students' learning engagement in the Akidah Akhlak subject.

Keywords: Learning Engagement; Discussion Method; Akidah Akhlak; Students; Classroom Action Research

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keaktifan belajar peserta didik melalui penerapan metode diskusi pada mata pelajaran Akidah Akhlak kelas XII A di MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus, dengan setiap siklus meliputi tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi. Subjek penelitian adalah peserta didik kelas XII A MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, tes, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan metode diskusi mampu meningkatkan keaktifan belajar peserta didik.

Artikel Info

Received:

25 May 2026

Revised:

14 July 2026

Accepted:

19 August 2026

Published:

10 September 2026

Peningkatan terlihat dari keterlibatan peserta didik dalam bertanya, menjawab pertanyaan, menyampaikan pendapat, bekerja sama dalam kelompok, serta mengikuti proses pembelajaran secara aktif. Penerapan metode diskusi juga menciptakan suasana pembelajaran yang lebih interaktif, komunikatif, dan mendorong peserta didik untuk berani mengemukakan gagasan. Dengan demikian, metode diskusi dapat digunakan sebagai salah satu strategi pembelajaran yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keaktifan belajar peserta didik pada mata pelajaran Akidah Akhlak.

Kata Kunci: Keaktifan Belajar; Metode Diskusi; Akidah Akhlak; Peserta Didik; Penelitian Tindakan Kelas

A. Introduction

Education plays a fundamental role in developing students' potential comprehensively, including their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and character. Education is not merely intended to enable students to master academic concepts but also to develop their ability to think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and make responsible decisions. Therefore, learning activities in schools need to be designed to provide students with meaningful opportunities to participate actively in the learning process rather than simply receive information from teachers. Student-centered learning can create a more meaningful educational experience and support the achievement of learning objectives.

Student learning engagement is one of the important indicators of successful learning. Active students are not simply those who are physically present in the classroom but those who are mentally, emotionally, and socially involved in learning activities. Learning engagement can be demonstrated through students' willingness to ask questions, answer questions, express opinions, participate in discussions, complete assignments, respond to their peers, and collaborate in groups. Therefore, learning engagement reflects the extent to which students participate in constructing their own knowledge and learning experiences.

Active learning provides several advantages compared with learning that is completely teacher-centered. When students are given opportunities to express their ideas and solve problems, they develop not only cognitive abilities but also

communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Such activities can also increase students' confidence because they gain experience in presenting their ideas and responding to different perspectives. Consequently, teachers need to select learning methods that transform students from passive recipients of information into active participants in the learning process.

In practice, however, students' level of engagement in classroom learning is not always optimal. Some learning activities remain dominated by teacher explanations, while students tend to listen, take notes, and complete assignments provided by the teacher. Such conditions may limit classroom interaction and reduce opportunities for students to develop their thinking and communication skills. Previous studies on Akidah Akhlak learning have indicated that teacher-centered learning can result in limited student participation, low confidence in expressing opinions, and difficulties in developing deeper understanding of learning materials (Putri & Hurmaini, 2026).

The issue of learning engagement becomes particularly important in Islamic Religious Education, including the subject of Akidah Akhlak. Akidah Akhlak is not only concerned with students' understanding of Islamic beliefs and moral values but also aims to develop attitudes and behaviors that reflect Islamic teachings in everyday life. Consequently, Akidah Akhlak learning requires instructional processes that enable students to understand concepts, relate them to real-life situations, and discuss their application in various social and personal contexts.

Akidah Akhlak has learning characteristics that differ from subjects that primarily emphasize factual knowledge. Much of its content is related to values, attitudes, morality, behavior, and decision-making. Students need to understand why particular behaviors are considered good or bad and how Islamic moral principles can be applied in everyday situations. Therefore, learning becomes more meaningful when students are given opportunities to express their perspectives, provide arguments, respond to others' opinions, and reflect on issues related to faith and morality.

One learning method that can be implemented to improve students' engagement is the discussion method. The discussion method provides students with opportunities to exchange ideas and examine particular issues collaboratively. Through discussion,

students do not obtain information solely from the teacher but can also learn from their peers through communication and interaction. The discussion method creates a more dialogical learning environment because students are encouraged to ask questions, provide answers, express arguments, and respond to different viewpoints.

The discussion method is also highly relevant to the development of students' critical thinking skills. During discussions, students are confronted with issues that require them to understand information, analyze problems, formulate arguments, and draw conclusions. Such processes encourage students to become intellectually active during learning. In Akidah Akhlak, these abilities are particularly important because many moral issues encountered in everyday life require students to consider values, understand consequences, and determine appropriate attitudes and behaviors.

In addition to developing cognitive abilities, discussion activities can strengthen students' social skills. When participating in group discussions, students learn to listen to others, respect different perspectives, cooperate, divide responsibilities, and take accountability for group outcomes. These values are closely connected to the objectives of Akidah Akhlak because discussion can simultaneously serve as a means of practicing Islamic moral behavior in social interactions. Siswoyo (2024) found that the implementation of discussion methods in Aqidah Akhlak learning could improve students' engagement, critical thinking, cooperation, mutual respect, and understanding of the principle of deliberation.

The discussion method can also transform a passive classroom atmosphere into a more interactive learning environment. Students are no longer required merely to wait for instructions from the teacher but are given responsibilities to participate in the learning process. In this context, the teacher functions primarily as a facilitator who guides discussions, provides learning stimuli, clarifies students' understanding, and ensures that all students have opportunities to participate. This shift in instructional roles can create more communicative and meaningful interactions between teachers and students.

In Akidah Akhlak learning, discussion can be implemented through various activities, including group discussions, whole-class discussions, case studies, problem-

solving activities, and discussions of contemporary issues related to students' everyday experiences. Teachers can present cases concerning social behavior, interpersonal ethics, responsibility, honesty, tolerance, or other moral issues. Students can then be guided to analyze these cases based on Islamic principles of faith and morality. In this way, learning does not stop at theoretical understanding but becomes connected to real-life experiences.

The discussion method can also encourage students to become more confident in expressing their opinions. Some students may have adequate understanding of learning materials but may not be accustomed to communicating their ideas orally. Discussion activities provide a supportive environment in which students can gradually develop their communication skills. When classroom interactions are managed positively, students can learn to express their opinions without excessive fear of making mistakes. This is important because effective communication is an essential competence in both academic and social contexts.

Previous studies have demonstrated that discussion-based learning can positively influence students' engagement and learning achievement in Akidah Akhlak. Qolbiyyah and Wardoyo (2024), for example, reported that the discussion method could increase students' interest, motivation, and participation during Akidah Akhlak learning. Their findings indicate that learning activities that provide opportunities for interaction can create more engaging learning experiences and encourage students to participate actively in classroom activities.

Other research has also demonstrated that group discussion can contribute to improvements in students' learning outcomes and classroom participation. Putri and Hurmaini (2026) found that the implementation of group discussion in Akidah Akhlak learning improved students' learning achievement, engagement, confidence in expressing opinions, and ability to cooperate with others. These findings suggest that improvements in learning engagement can occur alongside improvements in academic achievement when instructional methods are systematically designed and implemented.

Similar findings were reported by Hikmawati et al. (2023), who examined the relationship between the discussion method and learning outcomes in Akidah Akhlak.

Their study indicated that discussion allowed students to participate actively in processing learning materials rather than simply listening to teacher explanations. Students were given opportunities to exchange ideas and develop their understanding through interaction. Thus, discussion can serve as an alternative instructional strategy for addressing learning conditions in which students have limited opportunities to participate.

Nevertheless, the implementation of discussion does not automatically guarantee that all students will become active. Poorly managed discussions may be dominated by particular students, while other students remain passive. Several obstacles can occur, including domination by more confident students, limited participation from other group members, insufficient time, and discussion topics that are not sufficiently aligned with learning objectives. Burhanuddin et al. (2023) reported that these challenges need to be addressed through appropriate classroom management and careful instructional planning.

Therefore, the effectiveness of the discussion method largely depends on teachers' ability to design and manage learning activities. Teachers need to establish clear discussion objectives, select relevant learning materials, formulate stimulating questions, organize students into appropriate groups, distribute responsibilities among group members, and establish reasonable time limits. Teachers also need to monitor the discussion process to ensure that each student has an opportunity to participate. With appropriate management, discussion can become an effective strategy for increasing students' engagement in learning.

Another important factor is the quality of questions or problems presented to students. Questions that are too simple may fail to stimulate meaningful discussion, whereas excessively complex problems may make students feel overwhelmed. Therefore, discussion questions should be adjusted to students' cognitive development and the competencies targeted by the learning process. In Akidah Akhlak, questions can be directed toward the analysis of moral cases and the application of Islamic values in everyday life, enabling students to develop contextual and meaningful learning experiences.

Contextual learning is particularly important in Akidah Akhlak because successful learning should not be measured solely by students' ability to recall concepts but also by their ability to apply Islamic values in real-life situations. Discussion provides opportunities for students to connect learning materials with experiences encountered in their families, schools, communities, and digital environments. Consequently, students can understand that Islamic beliefs and moral values are not merely academic content but principles that can guide them in dealing with various challenges in everyday life.

At the Class XII level, active learning becomes increasingly important because students are at a developmental stage that requires greater opportunities to think independently, formulate arguments, communicate ideas, and make responsible decisions. Class XII students also encounter various academic and social challenges that require critical thinking and personal responsibility. Therefore, Akidah Akhlak learning needs to be directed toward instructional processes that simultaneously develop students' intellectual abilities and moral attitudes. The discussion method represents one potential strategy for addressing these educational needs.

In the context of MAS PAB 4 Klumpang, Akidah Akhlak learning in Class XII A requires particular attention to students' level of engagement. Active participation is necessary not only to create a dynamic classroom environment but also to provide students with opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of learning materials through interaction and learning experiences. Learning activities that encourage participation are expected to increase students' involvement in classroom activities and create a more communicative learning environment.

The problem of low learning engagement needs to be addressed through systematic instructional improvement. One approach that can be employed is Classroom Action Research (CAR), which enables teachers to identify classroom problems, implement improvement strategies, observe changes, and conduct reflection continuously. Through action research cycles, teachers can evaluate the effectiveness of the discussion method and improve instructional strategies based on observations and reflections obtained during each stage of the research process.

Classroom action research concerning discussion methods in Akidah Akhlak has demonstrated promising results. Previous studies indicate that discussion can increase students' participation while providing opportunities for them to think, communicate, collaborate, and engage directly with learning materials. Recent research has also emphasized that discussion can help overcome excessively teacher-centered learning by creating a more active and constructive classroom environment (Fauzi et al., 2025). These findings provide a strong theoretical and empirical basis for implementing discussion-based learning in Akidah Akhlak.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the benefits of discussion methods in Akidah Akhlak learning, there remains an opportunity to examine their implementation in specific classroom contexts. Each class has different student characteristics, learning cultures, classroom dynamics, and educational environments. Therefore, research conducted in Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang is important to obtain empirical evidence regarding how the discussion method can be implemented as an instructional improvement strategy and how it can contribute to increasing students' learning engagement.

Based on the preceding discussion, this study aims to improve students' learning engagement through the implementation of the discussion method in the Akidah Akhlak subject for Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. Learning engagement in this study focuses on students' participation in asking questions, answering questions, expressing opinions, responding to others, collaborating with peers, and participating actively in classroom activities. The study is expected to provide practical contributions for teachers in selecting and developing more interactive strategies for Akidah Akhlak learning and to provide academic contributions to the development of research on discussion-based learning in Islamic Religious Education.

B. Research Methodology

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach to improve students' learning engagement through the implementation of the discussion method in the Akidah Akhlak subject for Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. Classroom

Action Research was selected because it provides a systematic framework for identifying problems in the learning process, implementing instructional interventions, observing their effects, and reflecting on the results to determine further improvements. The research was conducted collaboratively between the researcher and the classroom teacher to ensure that the implementation of the discussion method was consistent with the learning objectives and classroom conditions.

The research subjects consisted of all students in Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang who participated in Akidah Akhlak learning activities. The research focused on students' learning engagement, particularly their participation in asking questions, answering questions, expressing opinions, responding to peers, participating in group discussions, cooperating with group members, and completing learning activities. The research was conducted in the classroom during the regular Akidah Akhlak learning schedule. Before the action was implemented, the researcher conducted an initial observation to identify students' learning engagement and the problems encountered during the existing learning process.

The research was conducted in two cycles, and each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, the researcher and teacher prepared lesson plans, discussion materials, learning scenarios, observation instruments, and evaluation activities. During the action stage, the discussion method was implemented by presenting relevant Akidah Akhlak topics and problems for students to discuss in groups. Students were encouraged to analyze the topics, exchange ideas, formulate arguments, and present the results of their discussions. The teacher acted as a facilitator who guided the discussion, provided clarification, encouraged participation, and ensured that the learning process remained focused on the intended objectives.

The observation stage was conducted simultaneously with the implementation of the learning activities. The researcher observed students' behavior and participation using an observation sheet designed to measure several indicators of learning engagement. These indicators included students' attention to learning materials, participation in discussions, willingness to ask and answer questions, ability to express

opinions, responses to other students' ideas, cooperation within groups, and involvement in presenting discussion results. Documentation was also used to collect supporting evidence, including photographs of learning activities, students' assignments, lesson plans, and other relevant classroom documents.

Data were collected through observation, learning achievement tests, and documentation. Observation data were used to determine changes in students' learning engagement before and after the implementation of the discussion method. Learning achievement tests were used as supporting data to determine students' understanding of the Akidah Akhlak materials following the learning process. Documentation was used to strengthen the research findings by providing evidence of the implementation of classroom activities. The quantitative data obtained from the observation sheets and tests were analyzed descriptively by calculating scores, percentages, and changes between the initial condition and each research cycle, while qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

The success of the research was determined based on the improvement in students' learning engagement following the implementation of the discussion method. The action was considered successful when the predetermined indicators of learning engagement showed a meaningful improvement from the initial condition to the first and second cycles. In addition, successful implementation was reflected in students' increasing willingness to participate actively, express ideas, cooperate with peers, and respond to questions during the learning process. The results obtained in each cycle were then reflected upon to identify weaknesses and determine necessary improvements for the subsequent cycle. Through this cyclical process, the research sought to establish that the discussion method could effectively improve students' learning engagement in Akidah Akhlak learning in Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang.

C. Results and Discussion

The results of this Classroom Action Research demonstrate that the implementation of the discussion method improved students' learning engagement in the Akidah Akhlak subject in Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. The research was

conducted in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The main indicator of success was students' active participation during the learning process, including asking questions, answering questions, expressing opinions, responding to peers, participating in group discussions, cooperating with group members, and presenting discussion results. The findings indicate a gradual improvement in student engagement from the pre-cycle condition to Cycle I and subsequently to Cycle II.

Before the implementation of the discussion method, the classroom learning process tended to be teacher-centered. Students generally listened to explanations, took notes, and responded to questions only when directly invited by the teacher. Based on the initial observation, the average level of student learning engagement was 56.25%, indicating that student participation was still relatively low. Only a limited number of students actively asked questions or expressed their opinions, while several students tended to remain silent throughout the learning process. This initial condition became the basis for implementing the discussion method as an instructional intervention.

The initial observation also revealed differences in students' participation levels. Some students demonstrated relatively good confidence in communicating their ideas, whereas others were reluctant to speak in front of their classmates. Students with stronger communication skills tended to dominate classroom interactions, while less confident students were more likely to remain passive. This condition indicates that the problem was not necessarily a lack of students' understanding of the subject matter but also the limited learning environment that encouraged them to participate. Similar problems have been identified in previous Akidah Akhlak research, in which teacher-centered learning was associated with low participation and limited confidence in expressing opinions (Putri & Hurmaini, 2026).

In Cycle I, the discussion method was introduced through small-group activities. The teacher prepared discussion topics related to the Akidah Akhlak learning materials and divided the students into several heterogeneous groups. Each group received a specific problem or question to analyze collaboratively. Students were instructed to exchange ideas, identify relevant arguments, formulate conclusions, and present their

findings to the class. The teacher acted as a facilitator by explaining the discussion procedures, monitoring group activities, providing guidance, and encouraging students who were less active to participate.

The implementation of Cycle I resulted in an increase in student learning engagement. The average engagement score increased from 56.25% in the pre-cycle to 70.83% in Cycle I. The improvement was particularly visible in students' willingness to communicate with their group members and participate in the preparation of group presentations. Several students who had previously remained silent began to contribute ideas during group discussions. Nevertheless, participation was not yet evenly distributed because some students continued to depend on more active group members to complete the discussion tasks.

The observation of Cycle I showed that the discussion method had begun to change classroom interaction. Students became more involved in talking about the learning material, asking questions, and comparing their interpretations with those of their classmates. The learning process was no longer dominated entirely by teacher explanations. Instead, students had opportunities to construct understanding through interaction with peers. This finding is consistent with Warisah (2025), who reported that group discussion in Akidah Akhlak learning increased student participation, critical thinking, and understanding by allowing students to exchange ideas and connect Islamic teachings with real-life situations.

Although Cycle I produced improvement, several weaknesses were identified during the reflection stage. First, some groups were dominated by one or two students, while other members participated minimally. Second, several students were still hesitant to express their opinions during the presentation session. Third, some groups required excessive time to formulate their conclusions. Fourth, the questions provided by the teacher needed to be more contextual and stimulating so that students could develop deeper arguments. These findings demonstrate that the implementation of a discussion method requires systematic classroom management rather than simply placing students into groups.

Based on the reflection from Cycle I, several improvements were made in Cycle II. The teacher provided clearer instructions regarding the responsibilities of each group member and assigned specific roles, such as discussion leader, recorder, presenter, and respondent. The teacher also prepared more contextual questions related to situations that students could encounter in their daily lives. In addition, each group was encouraged to ensure that all members contributed at least one idea during the discussion. These modifications were intended to distribute participation more evenly and prevent the discussion from being dominated by particular students.

The implementation of Cycle II demonstrated a more substantial improvement in students' learning engagement. The average engagement score increased from 70.83% in Cycle I to 86.46% in Cycle II. Students demonstrated greater confidence in expressing their opinions, responding to their peers, and asking questions. Group cooperation also became more organized because students understood their individual responsibilities. The improvement indicates that the discussion method became more effective when combined with clear instructions, structured roles, contextual questions, and continuous teacher facilitation.

The improvement can also be seen in individual indicators of student engagement. Students' attention to learning activities increased from 68% in Cycle I to 88% in Cycle II. Participation in group discussions increased from 72% to 89%, while students' willingness to ask questions increased from 64% to 82%. The indicator of expressing opinions increased from 67% to 85%, and cooperation within groups increased from 75% to 91%. These findings indicate that the improvement was not limited to one dimension of engagement but occurred across several aspects of classroom participation.

Students' ability to answer questions also showed improvement. During Cycle I, students tended to provide short answers that were directly derived from the learning materials. In Cycle II, however, students began to provide explanations and examples to support their answers. This change suggests that discussion activities encouraged students to process information more deeply rather than merely recall information. Discussion requires students to listen to different viewpoints, compare ideas, and

formulate responses, thereby creating opportunities for more meaningful cognitive engagement.

Another important finding concerns students' confidence in expressing opinions. In the initial condition, several students were reluctant to speak because they were afraid that their answers might be incorrect. During Cycle I, some students began to express ideas within their groups, although they remained hesitant during whole-class presentations. By Cycle II, students demonstrated greater confidence in presenting their group findings and responding to questions from other groups. The supportive group environment appears to have reduced students' anxiety and provided opportunities for them to practice communication before speaking in front of the entire class.

The discussion method also strengthened cooperation among students. During group activities, students were required to divide responsibilities and work toward a common conclusion. Students who understood the material more quickly could explain concepts to their peers, while students who experienced difficulties could ask questions and receive assistance from group members. This peer interaction created a collaborative learning environment in which students were not solely dependent on the teacher. Research on Akidah Akhlak learning similarly indicates that collaborative instructional strategies can improve student engagement and cooperation through structured peer interaction (Saidah & Wahyuni, 2026).

The improvement in students' participation also affected the overall classroom atmosphere. During the pre-cycle stage, classroom interaction was relatively limited and learning tended to be monotonous. After the implementation of the discussion method, the classroom became more communicative because students were actively exchanging ideas. In Cycle II, students appeared more enthusiastic about responding to questions and listening to the presentations of other groups. This finding is consistent with research showing that active-learning strategies in Akidah Akhlak can transform passive classroom environments into more active, communicative, and enjoyable learning settings (Kusnandar, 2025).

The findings further demonstrate that discussion can support the development of critical thinking. Students were not merely asked to memorize concepts related to

Akidah Akhlak but were encouraged to analyze problems and provide reasons for their opinions. When students discussed moral issues, they needed to relate Islamic principles to particular situations and explain why a particular behavior was appropriate or inappropriate. Such activities encourage students to move from simple recall toward analysis and evaluation. Previous research on group discussion has similarly emphasized its potential to improve students' understanding, motivation, participation, and critical thinking through the exchange of perspectives (Nabila & Utama, 2025).

The results are also consistent with previous research specifically examining discussion in Akidah Akhlak. Putri and Hurmaini (2026) found that group discussion increased students' activity, confidence in expressing opinions, cooperation, and learning outcomes. Their findings support the present result that discussion can create opportunities for students to participate more actively in classroom learning. The similarity of the findings suggests that the effectiveness of discussion is not limited to a particular school level but may be applicable across different Islamic educational contexts when properly managed.

Faida (2022) also found that the implementation of group discussion in Akidah Akhlak learning increased students' interest and learning outcomes. In her Classroom Action Research, the percentage of students achieving mastery increased from 79% in Cycle I to 89% in Cycle II. Although the present study focuses primarily on learning engagement rather than learning mastery, the findings demonstrate a similar pattern of improvement across research cycles. This suggests that greater participation may create conditions that support students' academic understanding as well.

The present findings can also be understood from the perspective of active learning. Discussion is essentially an active-learning strategy because students are required to interact with learning materials, peers, and teachers. Students do not merely receive information but actively process and communicate their understanding. Wilson et al. (2007) found that students who participated more actively in discussion demonstrated better learning outcomes than less active students. Their findings provide theoretical support for the observation that increased participation can contribute to more meaningful learning experiences.

The effectiveness of the discussion method in this study was strongly influenced by the teacher's role as facilitator. The teacher did not simply assign students to groups and allow them to work independently. Instead, the teacher provided instructions, monitored the progress of each group, stimulated students with questions, clarified misunderstandings, and encouraged passive students to participate. This finding confirms that discussion-based learning requires active teacher facilitation. Recent research on group discussion in Akidah Akhlak likewise emphasizes the importance of contextual material planning, structured group formation, guided discussion, worksheets, and presentations in creating a dynamic learning environment (Fauzi et al., 2025).

The use of contextual discussion topics was another important factor contributing to the improvement observed in Cycle II. When students discussed issues that were closely related to their daily experiences, they found it easier to express opinions and provide examples. Contextual problems allowed students to understand that Akidah Akhlak is not merely a theoretical subject but a source of moral guidance for everyday life. The discussion therefore connected cognitive learning with moral reflection and practical application, which is particularly relevant to the objectives of Islamic Religious Education.

Nevertheless, the study also identified several limitations. Not all students reached the same level of participation, and a small number of students continued to require teacher encouragement. Differences in communication skills, confidence, and prior understanding affected students' willingness to participate. In addition, group discussion required more classroom time than conventional teacher-centered instruction. These limitations are important because they indicate that discussion should be carefully planned to ensure that the benefits of active participation do not result in inefficient use of instructional time.

The overall comparison between the research stages shows a clear improvement in student engagement. The average engagement increased from 56.25% in the pre-cycle to 70.83% in Cycle I and 86.46% in Cycle II. Thus, the overall increase from the initial condition to Cycle II was 30.21 percentage points. The achievement of 86.46%

indicates that the predetermined success criterion of 80% student engagement was exceeded. Therefore, the action was considered successful and did not need to be continued to a third cycle.

The improvement observed in this study confirms that the discussion method can serve as an effective instructional strategy for increasing student engagement in Akidah Akhlak learning. The method creates opportunities for students to ask questions, express ideas, listen to different perspectives, cooperate with peers, and communicate their understanding. These activities are particularly relevant to Akidah Akhlak because the subject requires not only cognitive understanding but also reflection on moral values and their application in everyday life. The findings therefore reinforce previous evidence that participatory learning approaches can improve engagement in Islamic education contexts.

Overall, the results indicate that the implementation of the discussion method in Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang successfully transformed the learning process from a relatively passive and teacher-centered environment into a more active, collaborative, and communicative classroom. The improvement across the two cycles demonstrates the importance of continuous reflection and instructional adjustment in Classroom Action Research. The findings suggest that discussion is most effective when it is supported by clear learning objectives, contextual problems, heterogeneous groups, defined student roles, teacher facilitation, and opportunities for all students to participate. Therefore, the discussion method can be recommended as an appropriate strategy for improving students' learning engagement in Akidah Akhlak, particularly when teachers systematically manage the interaction and provide equal opportunities for participation.

D. Conclusion

The results of this Classroom Action Research indicate that the implementation of the discussion method can improve students' learning engagement in the Akidah Akhlak subject in Class XII A at MAS PAB 4 Klumpang. The implementation of the method through two cycles demonstrated a gradual improvement in students'

participation during the learning process. Students became more actively involved in asking questions, answering questions, expressing opinions, responding to their peers, participating in group discussions, and cooperating with other students. The discussion method also created a more interactive, communicative, and student-centered learning environment.

The improvement in students' learning engagement was reflected in the increase in the average engagement score from 56.25% in the pre-cycle to 70.83% in Cycle I and 86.46% in Cycle II. The improvement occurred because the discussion activities provided students with opportunities to exchange ideas, analyze problems, communicate their understanding, and work collaboratively. The implementation became more effective in Cycle II after improvements were made through clearer group roles, contextual discussion topics, more structured instructions, and greater teacher facilitation. These findings confirm that discussion can be an appropriate strategy for encouraging active participation and developing students' communication, cooperation, and critical-thinking skills in Akidah Akhlak learning.

Based on these findings, the discussion method can be recommended as an alternative instructional strategy for teachers who seek to increase student engagement in Akidah Akhlak learning. However, its successful implementation requires careful planning, appropriate selection of discussion topics, effective classroom management, equal distribution of student responsibilities, and continuous teacher guidance. Future research can examine the implementation of discussion methods in different classes, educational levels, or Islamic education subjects and combine them with other active-learning strategies to obtain broader evidence regarding their effectiveness in improving student engagement and learning outcomes.

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