A Prayer Learning Model Based on Student Development Stages: School Action Research at SDN 0109 Janjilobi

Nur Laila Annisa Lubis
Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidimpuan
e-mail: lailalubis1396@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to formulate and evaluate the effectiveness of a structured curriculum for teaching obligatory Islamic prayer (fard prayer) that is aligned with the developmental stages of elementary school students in grades 1 to 6 at SD Negeri 0109 Janjilobi. The study addresses students' resistance to conventional instructional practices that predominantly rely on lecturing and rote memorization. Employing a School Action Research approach with a pretest–posttest design conducted over one academic year, the research examines the impact of a developmentally responsive instructional model on students' learning outcomes. The instructional intervention was implemented through three progressive stages: Basic Introduction and Movement Practice for grades 1–2, Interactive Recitation Mastery for grades 3–4, and Meaning Comprehension with Independent Practice for grades 5–6. The findings reveal that the tiered instructional framework significantly enhances students' cognitive understanding, as indicated by an average increase of 20–22 points across grade levels, and improves the overall quality of students' prayer performance. These results underscore the importance of reorienting the national Islamic Education (PAI) curriculum from a cognition- and memorization-centered model toward an affective and practice-based approach that is responsive to children's developmental characteristics.

Keywords: *Curriculum Development; School Action Research; Islamic Education; Elementary Students; Developmental Stages.*

Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merumuskan dan mengevaluasi efektivitas struktur kurikulum pembelajaran salat wajib yang disesuaikan dengan tahapan perkembangan peserta didik kelas I hingga VI di Sekolah Dasar Negeri Janjilobi 0109. Fokus utama penelitian ini adalah mengatasi resistensi siswa terhadap metode pembelajaran konvensional yang masih didominasi oleh ceramah dan hafalan tekstual. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan Penelitian Tindakan Sekolah dengan desain pretest–posttest yang dilaksanakan selama satu tahun ajaran untuk menilai dampak penerapan model pembelajaran yang responsif terhadap perkembangan anak. Intervensi pembelajaran dirancang dalam tiga tahapan berjenjang, yaitu tahap pengenalan dasar dan gerakan untuk kelas I–II, tahap hafalan bacaan interaktif untuk kelas III–IV, serta tahap pemahaman makna dan praktik mandiri untuk kelas V–VI. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan pembelajaran berjenjang secara signifikan meningkatkan pemahaman kognitif siswa, yang ditunjukkan oleh peningkatan nilai sebesar 20–22 poin pada setiap kelompok kelas, serta meningkatkan kualitas praktik salat siswa. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya reorientasi kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) nasional dari pendekatan yang berfokus pada aspek kognitif dan hafalan menuju pendekatan yang lebih menekankan dimensi afektif dan praktik ibadah yang selaras dengan kebutuhan perkembangan anak.

Kata kunci: *Pengembangan Kurikulum; Penelitian Tindakan Sekolah; Pendidikan Islam; Siswa*

Sekolah Dasar; Tahapan Perkembangan.

Introduction

Learning to pray plays a fundamental role in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), particularly at the elementary school level. At this stage, students are in the early stages of developing religious character, which will serve as the foundation for their future religious attitudes. Prayer is understood not only as a ritual obligation but also as a means of internalizing the values of discipline, submission, responsibility, and ongoing spiritual awareness.(Tanjung et al., 2025).

Despite its strategic role, the practice of teaching prayer in elementary schools still faces various challenges. Initial research findings at Janjilobi 0109 Public Elementary School indicate that prayer instruction tends to be conducted using conventional methods dominated by lectures, memorization of readings, and textual approaches. This learning pattern does not provide enough space for meaningful and participatory learning experiences for students.

Approaches that overemphasize memorization and verbal explanations often don't align with the cognitive developmental stages of elementary school students. Children at this age require concrete, contextual learning that involves direct physical activity. This mismatch between learning methods and students' developmental characteristics results in low engagement in the prayer learning process.(Karimah et al., 2025).

The impact of this less adaptive learning approach is evident in the emergence of boredom, decreased concentration, and low student motivation. Islamic Religious Education teachers report that some students participate passively in prayer lessons, simply to meet academic demands, without adequately understanding or appreciating the meaning of their worship.

In fact, in the upper grades, student resistance to prayer lessons becomes increasingly apparent. Some students show resistance when asked to practice prayer directly, especially when appointed as imam or asked to lead prayers. This situation indicates a gap between students' theoretical mastery of the material and

their readiness to practice worship independently.(Lestari, 2023).

This phenomenon indicates that prayer instruction has not been fully designed as an educational process oriented toward developing comprehensive worship competencies. To date, instruction has focused more on the cognitive aspects, such as mastering the recitations and pillars of prayer, while the affective and psychomotor aspects have not received equal attention.

Based on these conditions, this research stems from the urgent need to design a more adaptive, tiered, and appropriate prayer learning structure for students' age levels and psychological characteristics. Prayer learning needs to be systematically structured from the early to the final grades of elementary school to ensure continuity and gradual deepening of competencies.

A learning structure that is responsive to children's development is expected to create a more enjoyable, meaningful, and applicable learning experience. This way, students will not only be able to memorize prayer recitations but also understand their meaning, perform the movements correctly, and develop the courage and independence to practice prayer in real life.(Afriyanto et al., 2021).

The ultimate goal of this research is to ensure that all students complete basic education with comprehensive prayer competencies, encompassing knowledge, reading skills, and the ability to practice prayer independently and responsibly. These competencies are expected to provide a lasting spiritual foundation for students' lives at subsequent levels of education and within the community.

Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of the national Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum. These findings can serve as a reference in formulating a more contextual, practice-oriented prayer learning model that aligns with the developmental needs of elementary school students.

Research Methods

This study employed a School Action Research approach with a pre-experimental (pretest–posttest) design. The study spanned two semesters, aiming to observe the impact of the ongoing implementation of a prayer learning structure and assess the long-term effects of the intervention. This approach was chosen because it allowed researchers to systematically improve learning based on real-world conditions in the school.

The research subjects involved all students of Janjilobi 0109 Public Elementary School, from grades I to VI. The involvement of all grade levels was intended to obtain a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the prayer learning structure, tailored to the developmental stages of students at each age level.

The data collection instruments in this study consisted of several components. Cognitive tests were used to measure students' understanding of prayer concepts and recitations. Furthermore, observations of prayer practices were conducted using a checklist to assess the accuracy of students' movements, sequence, and recitations. Interviews and student feedback sheets were also used to identify students' comfort levels, challenges encountered, and preferences regarding the learning methods implemented.

The tiered learning structure, a form of intervention, is based on Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development and is supported by empirical findings obtained through initial observations in schools. Learning is structured systematically and in stages to align with the psychological characteristics and learning abilities of students in each age group.

For students in grades I–II, learning focuses on the basics of prayer and prayer movements. Methods used include visualization, role-playing, singing, and interactive stories. This approach aims to create a fun learning environment so students feel connected, comfortable, and unburdened in learning the basic

282

concepts of prayer.

In grades III–IV, the focus of learning is directed toward mastering complete prayer recitations and introducing basic tajwid. The learning methods employed include drills, flashcards, competitive quizzes, and structured repetition. This approach is intended to strengthen students' memory while improving the accuracy of their prayer recitations.

Meanwhile, in grades V–VI, learning is directed at understanding the meaning of the recitations and strengthening independent prayer practice. Students are encouraged to discuss the meaning of prayer recitations, practice acting as imams or muezzins, and engage in peer mentoring. Furthermore, students are given the opportunity to practice prayer independently to build self-confidence and readiness to worship consistently and responsibly.

Results and Discussion

The first research problem is how a prayer learning structure adapted to students' developmental stages can overcome resistance to conventional learning methods. This problem arose from initial findings that prayer learning dominated by lectures and textual memorization tends to be uninteresting for elementary school students and even gives rise to a rejection of the practice of worship itself. This resistance is not only evident in low learning motivation but also in students' reluctance to actively engage in prayer practices.(Rahmawati & Dwikoranto, 2022).

In early grades, resistance often manifests as boredom and inattention during learning. Children at this age are still in the concrete operational stage, making abstract and verbal learning difficult for them to grasp optimally. When the concept of prayer is presented solely through verbal explanations and memorization, students are unable to connect the material to their real-life experiences.

The research results show that when prayer instruction in grades 1–2 was

283

designed using visualizations, role-playing, singing, and interactive stories, student resistance significantly decreased. Children became more enthusiastic, actively engaged, and showed a strong curiosity about the movements and basic meaning of prayer. This confirms that a fun and concrete learning approach can create a positive learning experience.(Setlight et al., 2018).

In the middle grades, namely grades 3–4, the form of resistance that emerges is different. Students begin to be able to follow more systematic learning, but still show boredom when reading memorization is delivered monotonously. Memorization without varied methods is often perceived as a tiring academic burden.

Through the implementation of interactive memorization methods, structured drills, educational card games, and competitive quizzes, students in grades 3–4 demonstrated significant behavioral changes. Memorization was no longer viewed as a burdensome obligation, but rather as an engaging and enjoyable challenge. This approach helped reduce student resistance to prayer recitation and increased active participation in learning.(Nourma, 2024).

The most complex resistance is found among students in the upper grades, namely grades 5–6. At this stage, the main obstacle is no longer boredom, but rather embarrassment, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence when asked to practice prayer in front of their peers. Many students are reluctant to lead prayers even though they have mastered the recitations theoretically.

Peer mentoring, discussions about the meaning of readings, and role-playing as an imam or muezzin have proven effective in overcoming this resistance. When students feel supported by their peers and are not afraid of being blamed, they become more courageous and confident in their prayer practices. This suggests that student resistance is often rooted in affective aspects, not solely cognitive limitations.(Mahzani & Nurma, 2022).

These findings confirm that resistance to learning about prayer is not a negative attitude toward worship, but rather a result of a learning approach that is

not aligned with students' psychological and developmental needs. When learning methods are tailored to age characteristics, resistance can be significantly minimized.

Thus, the tiered and adaptive structure of prayer learning has been proven to create a more student-friendly learning environment. Learning is no longer perceived as a formal obligation, but as a meaningful activity close to the child's world.

This problem formulation emphasizes the importance of a paradigm shift in prayer instruction, from a uniform, textual approach to a differentiated approach that considers students' cognitive, affective, and social development. Without this shift, student resistance to prayer instruction will persist and hinder the achievement of the overall goals of religious education.

The second research question is to what extent the structure of tiered prayer learning can comprehensively improve students' worship competencies, encompassing both cognitive and psychomotor aspects. This issue is important to examine because the success of prayer learning is measured not only by the ability to memorize recitations but also by students' readiness to practice worship independently and meaningfully.

The results of the study showed a significant improvement in students' cognitive aspects after implementing a tiered learning structure. The relatively low average pre-test scores across all grade levels increased by 20–22 points in the post-test. This improvement indicates that a developmentally appropriate learning approach is more effective in improving students' understanding than conventional methods.(Fauzi, 2021).

In grades 1–2, cognitive improvement occurs because students are no longer forced to memorize abstractly, but are introduced to the concept of prayer through direct experience. Understanding the sequence of movements and basic recitations develops naturally through enjoyable repetition, enabling students to retain the material better.

285

In grades 3–4, cognitive development is influenced by the use of structured and interactive memorization methods. Drills accompanied by games and light evaluations help students master prayer recitations more systematically. Memorization is not merely a mechanical activity, but part of a directed learning process.

Meanwhile, in grades 5–6, cognitive improvement is seen not only in reading comprehension but also in understanding the meaning of prayer. Discussions about the meaning of readings and the purpose of worship help students develop a deeper spiritual awareness, ensuring that their knowledge is not superficial.

In addition to cognitive aspects, significant improvements were also seen in students' psychomotor skills. As many as 90% of sixth-grade students were able to perform prayers independently with correct movements and recitations. This demonstrates that the tiered learning structure successfully transforms knowledge into practical skills.(Damayanti & Sanjaya, 2025).

Changes in students' attitudes toward prayer practice are also important indicators of learning success. The shame and fear of making mistakes that previously held them back gradually transformed into a sense of responsibility and self-confidence. Students no longer avoided the practice but instead demonstrated a readiness to lead prayers.

These findings confirm that prayer instruction that emphasizes practice and hands-on experience is more effective in developing worship competence than a purely cognitive-memorization approach. Affective aspects, such as comfort and courage, have been shown to play a significant role in successful prayer practice.

The implications of these findings are highly relevant for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum development. Curricula that place too much emphasis on written assessments and memorization are insufficient to develop comprehensive worship competencies. Evaluations that emphasize students' spiritual practices and experiences are needed.(Fallo et al., 2020).

Thus, the tiered prayer learning structure not only improves learning outcomes quantitatively but also substantively shapes the quality of students' worship. The resulting competencies are sustainable and relevant to students' daily lives.

This problem formulation emphasizes that the success of prayer instruction must be measured by the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Without integration of these three aspects, prayer instruction risks producing partial understanding and having no long-term impact on students' religious lives.

Conclusion

A tiered, developmentally-based prayer learning structure has been shown to significantly improve students' worship skills at Janjilobi 0109 Public Elementary School. The learning, which begins with an introduction to simple movements and progresses to understanding the meaning at the final level, not only improves students' cognitive and psychomotor abilities but also their spiritual attitudes.

This research shows that children learn to pray more effectively when they feel comfortable, valued, and actively involved in the learning process. Resistance previously encountered due to rigid teaching methods can be overcome when approaches are more creative, fun, interactive, and appropriate to the child's psychological developmental stage.

The implications of this research are far-reaching, particularly for the development of the national Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum, which must shift its focus from memorization to spiritual practice and experience. When the curriculum, teachers, and family environment work in harmony, prayer education becomes not merely an academic obligation but develops into a habit of worship that remains ingrained in students into adulthood.

Reference

Afriyanto, A., Haetami, A., & Marhadi, Muh. A. (2021). Analisis Keterampilan Berpikir Kritis Siswa Pada Materi Perkembangan Model Atom Melalui Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah (Pbl). *Jurnal Pendidikan Kimia FKIP Universitas Halu Oleo*, *6*(2), 111. https://doi.org/10.36709/jpkim.v6i2.19646

Damayanti, H. A., & Sanjaya, U. P. (2025). Perbandingan Model Pembelajaran Mesin Berbasis SMOTE Meningkatkan Identifikasi Siswa Berisiko di Sekolah Menengah Pertama. *JSiI (Jurnal Sistem Informasi)*, 119–127. https://doi.org/10.30656/jsii.v12i1.10382

Fallo, I. S., Ardimansyah, A., & Hidayati, N. (2020). Dimensi Pembelajaran Permainan Kasti Berbasis Perkembangan Motorik Dengan Gaya Mengajar Komando Pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Olahraga*, *9*(1), 41. https://doi.org/10.31571/jpo.v9i1.1399

Fauzi, M. (2021). Perkembangan Sosio Emosional Siswa Mandrasah Ibtidaiyah: Pembelajaran Sekolah Berbasis dalam Jaringan di Era Pandemi. *Bidayatuna Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Mandrasah Ibtidaiyah*, *4*(1), 15. https://doi.org/10.54471/bidayatuna.v4i1.722

Karimah, L., Windi Tri Antika, & Dany Miftah M. Nur. (2025). Meningkatkan Keterlibatan Siswa Kelas VIII Menggunakan Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Game. *RUKASI: Jurnal Ilmiah Perkembangan Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, *2*(03), 107–113. https://doi.org/10.70294/nb922n30

Lestari, S. (2023). *Pengaruh Pembelajaran Berbasis Nilai Terhadap Perkembangan Moral Dan Karakter Siswa SD*. Open Science Framework. https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/rxe56

Mahzani, M., & Nurma, N. (2022). Pembelajaran Berbasis Praktikum Untuk Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Dan Keterampilan Proses Siswa Pada Materi Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Kelas Viii Mtsn Kuta Baro Aceh Besar. *Jurnal Pembelajaran Dan Sains (JPS)*, *2*(1). https://doi.org/10.32672/jps.v2i1.28

Nourma, N. Y. (2024). Perbandingan Antara Model Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek Dan Model Pembelajaran Berbasis Masalah Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Kritis Siswa. *Jtiee (Journal of Teaching in Elementary*

Education), *8*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.30587/jtiee.v8i1.8199

Rahmawati, N. W., & Dwikoranto, D. (2022). Analisis Perkembangan Kompetensi 4C Siswa dengan Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Problem Based Learning (PBL) Berbantuan E-Learning. *IPF: Inovasi Pendidikan Fisika*, *11*(3), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.26740/ipf.v11n3.p1-9

Setlight, R. S., Kalalo, V. N., Hulu, L., Tanojo, W., & Tasim, L. (2018). Perkembangan Instrumen Pembelajaran Gambar Pembelajaran Berbasis Luar Negeri Untuk Siswa. *Journal Kerusso*, *3*(1), 32–44. https://doi.org/10.33856/kerusso.v3i1.88

Tanjung, L., Salsabila, & Rahma Dewi. (2025). Studi Literatur: Efektivitas Strategi Pembelajaran Motorik Berbasis Tahapan Belajar Pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal PrestasI*, *9*(2), 89–98. https://doi.org/10.24114/jp.v9i2.71364