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# Improving the Understanding of Taharah Material in Students of MTS Negeri 4 Aceh Tengah through Active Learning Methods

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# **ABSTRACT**

Students' understanding of taharah material is an important aspect in learning Islamic religious education, especially at the madrasah level. This study aims to improve students' understanding of MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah on taharah material through the application of active learning methods. This study uses a classroom action research (CAR) method which is carried out in several cycles. Data collection interviews, techniques include observation, understanding tests. The active learning methods applied include group discussions, simulations, and direct practice in understanding the concept of taharah. The results of the study showed that the use of this method significantly increased student involvement in the learning process and deepened their understanding of the concept of taharah. In addition, active learning methods also have a positive impact on student learning motivation, making them more enthusiastic and confident in understanding and applying the material taught. This increase can be seen from the evaluation results which show an increase in student understanding scores from the first cycle to the last cycle. Thus, active learning methods can be used as an effective strategy in improving the quality of learning taharah material in madrasahs. The application of this method is expected to be a reference for educators in developing more interactive and meaningful learning.

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# Introduction

Understanding the concept of taharah in Islamic religious education is very important for students, especially in supporting the implementation of legitimate

worship. However, the reality is that there are still many students who have difficulty in understanding and applying the concept of purification correctly. This is due to learning methods that are still conventional and lack of active involvement of students in the learning process (Rahman & Sari, 2021). As a result, students' understanding of taharah is limited and has an impact on the lack of awareness in applying it in daily life. To overcome this problem, a more interactive and effective learning method is needed so that students can understand the concept of taharah in depth.

Active learning methods have been proven to be able to increase student understanding and participation in the learning process (Setiawan, 2022). Therefore, this study aims to apply an active learning method to improve the understanding of MTsN 4 Central Aceh students towards taharah material. This method involves a variety of strategies, such as group discussions, simulations, and hands-on practice, which allows students to be more active in learning. With the application of this method, it is hoped that students will not only understand the theory of taharah, but also be able to apply it in daily life. The results of this study are expected to be a reference for educators in developing more effective and applicable learning strategies in madrasas.

Understanding the concept of taharah in Islamic religious education is very important for students, especially in supporting the implementation of legitimate worship. Taharah is one of the main requirements in worship, such as prayer and reading the Qur'an, so a good understanding of this concept is a basic need for every Muslim student (Azizah, 2021). However, the reality is that there are still many students who have difficulty in understanding and applying the concept of purification correctly. This can have an impact on inaccuracies in carrying out their daily worship. Many factors cause students' low understanding of taharah. One of them is a learning method that is still conventional and teacher-centered. This type of learning model tends to involve students less actively in the learning process, so students become passive and find it difficult to understand the concepts taught (Rahman & Sari, 2021). In addition, the lack of hands-on practice in learning makes it difficult for students to apply the theories they have learned in their daily lives.

Active learning methods are an alternative that can be applied to improve students' understanding of taharah material. Active learning encourages students to be more involved in the learning process through various activities that require direct participation, such as group discussions, simulations, and hands-on practice (Setiawan, 2022). With this method, students not only understand the theory of taharah, but also gain direct experience in applying the concept. Several studies show that active learning methods can significantly improve students' understanding. According to Hidayat and Lestari (2023), students who learn with the active learning method have a better understanding compared to students who learn using the lecture method. This is due to the more intense interaction between students and the subject matter, as well as

opportunities for students to clarify their understanding through discussion and practice.

In MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah, challenges in taharah learning are still found, especially in terms of student learning motivation. Many students are less enthusiastic in participating in lessons because they feel that the material presented is less interesting and difficult to understand. Therefore, the application of active learning methods is expected to overcome this problem by creating a more fun and interactive learning environment (Zahra & Fadli, 2022). Active learning strategies that can be applied include group discussions, where students can exchange understanding and solve problems together. In addition, the simulation of purification practices can also help students understand the taharah procedure better. With hands-on practice, students can gain real experience that helps them remember concepts that have been studied longer (Mulyani, 2021).

Through this research, it is hoped that the active learning method can increase the understanding of MTsN 4 Central Aceh students towards taharah. In addition to improving the cognitive aspect, this method can also strengthen students' attitudes and skills in applying taharah in daily life. Thus, students not only understand the theory, but also have clean and holy living habits in accordance with Islamic teachings.

The results of this study are also expected to be a reference for educators in developing more effective and applicable learning strategies. Teachers can apply active learning methods as the main approach in teaching materials that require conceptual understanding and hands-on practice. Thus, the quality of learning in madrassas can continue to be improved in order to create a generation that better understands and practices Islamic teachings well.

## Methods

This research aims to explore the effectiveness of active learning methods in improving students' understanding of the Taharah (purification) material at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah. Taharah is a fundamental concept in Islamic studies, focusing on cleanliness and rituals of purification that are essential for performing prayers and other acts of worship. The study is designed to implement active learning strategies to engage students more effectively in the learning process, fostering better understanding and practical application of the Taharah concepts. The research will be conducted with a class of students at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah, where the focus will be on improving their comprehension of Taharah, which includes topics such as the rules of wudu (ablution), ghusl (ritual bathing), and tayammum (dry ablution). These topics are critical for students to learn as they form the foundation for performing other acts of worship in Islam. Active learning methods will be employed to create an engaging classroom environment where students actively participate in their learning process rather than passively receiving information.

Active learning strategies, such as group discussions, problem-solving tasks, case studies, and hands-on activities, will be utilized in this study. These methods encourage students to interact with the material, collaborate with peers, and apply their knowledge in practical situations. Through these activities, students will have opportunities to actively practice the steps and rules associated with Taharah, ensuring a deeper and more lasting understanding of the material. The goal is to make learning more relevant and accessible by involving students in the process of exploration and discovery. This research will adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Pre-tests will be conducted to assess the students' baseline knowledge of the Taharah material before implementing the active learning methods. After the intervention, post-tests will be administered to evaluate the improvement in their understanding. In addition to tests, classroom observations will be made to monitor student engagement and participation in the learning activities, while interviews with students and teachers will provide qualitative insights into their perceptions of the effectiveness of the active learning methods.

The study will span a period of one semester to allow sufficient time for students to engage with the material using active learning strategies. During this time, various active learning techniques will be integrated into the lessons on Taharah. The researcher will regularly assess students' progress through quizzes, activities, and class discussions to ensure that they are grasping the concepts being taught. This ongoing assessment will provide a clear picture of how well the active learning methods are working and whether they are helping students improve their understanding of the subject matter.

The research will focus on students in one class of MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah, and data will be analyzed using both statistical methods for the test results and thematic analysis for the qualitative data collected from observations and interviews. This combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis will help to understand both the measurable academic progress of the students and the subjective experiences of students and teachers regarding the use of active learning methods in teaching Taharah.

In conclusion, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of active learning methods in improving the understanding of Taharah among students at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah. By integrating interactive, student-centered teaching strategies, the research hopes to contribute valuable insights into the best practices for teaching Islamic studies, particularly in the area of purification. The results of this study could serve as a guide for educators in similar institutions to adopt active learning methods to enhance student engagement and understanding in religious education. This research aims to improve students' understanding of the Taharah material (purification in Islam) at MTs Negeri 4 Aceh Tengah through the implementation of Active Learning methods. Active Learning, characterized by student-centered activities and engagement, is known to encourage deeper comprehension and retention of the material. This methodology was chosen because it emphasizes active participation and promotes a more dynamic and

interactive learning environment, making the study of Islamic teachings, such as Taharah, more relatable and accessible to students. The research employs classroom action research, which is a reflective, systematic approach that allows the teacher-researcher to make continuous improvements in the learning process. The CAR cycle involves planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, enabling adjustments based on students' responses and progress. This approach is well-suited to enhancing the understanding of religious subjects like Taharah, where student engagement and comprehension are critical.

In the initial phase, a baseline assessment was conducted to measure students' prior knowledge of Taharah and their level of engagement during lessons. This assessment included both written tests to evaluate factual knowledge and observational notes to assess students' participation in classroom activities. By establishing a baseline, this initial data allowed the researcher to gauge the areas in which students struggled and identify the most effective strategies to address these challenges. The intervention phase focused on applying Active Learning strategies during the Taharah lessons. The Active Learning approach used in this study involved various strategies, such as group discussions, role-playing, hands-on activities, and problem-solving tasks. These activities were designed to foster interaction and collaboration among students, encouraging them to engage with the material actively rather than passively listening to the teacher. The goal was to create a learning environment where students were more involved in the process of discovering and applying the principles of Taharah.

For example, in one lesson, students were divided into small groups and asked to demonstrate the process of performing Wudu (ablution), a key aspect of Taharah. Each group was tasked with performing the steps correctly, while other students observed and provided feedback. This hands-on activity helped students to practice the procedure in a practical way, reinforcing their understanding of the importance of each step in the purification process. Another Active Learning strategy employed was problem-based learning. Students were presented with real-life scenarios where they had to determine whether or not a person was in a state of Taharah based on the given situation. For example, students were asked to decide if someone was still in a state of ritual purity after eating, sleeping, or engaging in certain activities. This approach required students to apply their theoretical knowledge to practical situations, enhancing their critical thinking skills and reinforcing their understanding of the material.

In addition to group work and problem-solving, \*\*peer teaching\*\* was also implemented. In this method, students who demonstrated a stronger grasp of the Taharah material were given the opportunity to teach their peers. This allowed students to reinforce their own learning while helping others. Peer teaching also encouraged collaboration and mutual support among classmates, fostering a positive learning environment where students learned from one another. The teacher's role was to act as a facilitator and guide throughout the Active Learning process. Rather than delivering

information through traditional lectures, the teacher encouraged students to explore, discuss, and discover the material on their own. The teacher used questioning techniques to provoke thought and guide discussions, ensuring that students engaged with the content deeply and meaningfully. Feedback and encouragement were given regularly to motivate students and provide them with a sense of accomplishment as they progressed in their understanding of Taharah. After the implementation of the Active Learning strategies, a post-assessment was conducted to evaluate the impact on students' understanding of the material. This included written tests, group discussions, and observations of student engagement during lessons. The results of the post-assessment were compared to the baseline data collected earlier, allowing the researcher to measure improvements in both knowledge and participation.

The results indicated a significant improvement in students' understanding of the Taharah material. Many students showed greater confidence in their ability to explain the steps of Wudu, Ghusl (ritual bath), and other aspects of purification. Observations during class activities revealed that students were more engaged in discussions and activities, contributing their thoughts and asking insightful questions. The use of Active Learning strategies not only improved students' factual knowledge but also enhanced their ability to apply what they had learned in practical contexts. The students' attitudes towards the subject also changed. They reported feeling more motivated and interested in learning about Taharah because the lessons were more interactive and relevant to their daily lives. The hands-on approach, particularly the opportunity to practice Wudu and other purification rituals, made the topic more concrete and less abstract. As a result, students became more enthusiastic about applying the principles of Taharah in their own lives, which reflected in their increased participation and deeper understanding.

In conclusion, the application of Active Learning methods at MTs Negeri 4 Aceh Tengah was highly effective in improving students' understanding of Taharah. Through group discussions, hands-on activities, problem-solving, and peer teaching, students were able to engage more actively with the material, which led to greater comprehension and retention. This research demonstrates the importance of using student-centered, interactive teaching strategies in religious education and highlights the potential of Active Learning to enhance students' engagement and understanding of Islamic teachings. Based on these findings, it is recommended that Active Learning be implemented in other areas of the curriculum to promote deeper learning and foster a more engaging educational environment.

# Result

The results of this study indicate a significant improvement in the understanding of Taharah material among students at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah after the implementation of active learning methods. The pre-test results showed that many students had limited

knowledge and understanding of key concepts related to Taharah, including wudu (ablution), ghusl (ritual bathing), and tayammum (dry ablution). However, after the application of active learning strategies, students demonstrated a marked improvement in both theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to these topics.

In the pre-test, students averaged a score of 55%, which reflected their basic understanding of the Taharah material but highlighted significant gaps in both detail and application. Many students struggled to recall the correct sequence of steps in performing wudu and ghusl, and a number of students lacked clarity on when and how to use tayammum. These results were expected, given that the material had primarily been taught through traditional lecture methods without much interactive engagement.

Following the intervention, which included active learning methods such as group discussions, problem-solving tasks, case studies, and hands-on practice sessions, the students' post-test scores showed a notable increase. On average, students' scores rose to 80%, demonstrating a substantial improvement in their comprehension of the subject. This indicates that the active learning strategies had a positive impact on the students' ability to grasp both the theoretical concepts and the practical applications of Taharah.

The improvement was particularly noticeable in students' practical understanding of wudu and ghusl. In the post-test, most students were able to correctly perform the necessary steps of these rituals, something that was not consistently achieved in the pre-test. During the active learning sessions, students had the opportunity to practice wudu and ghusl under the teacher's guidance, which allowed them to correct mistakes and refine their technique. This hands-on experience helped students build confidence in their ability to perform these important rituals accurately.

Similarly, students' understanding of tayammum improved significantly after participating in group discussions and case studies. In these sessions, students were given scenarios where they had to decide whether tayammum was the appropriate form of purification. This scenario-based learning approach helped students understand the conditions under which tayammum should be used, such as when water is unavailable or when a person is unable to use water due to illness. The discussions fostered deeper insights into the practical applications of Islamic teachings on purification.

Students also reported feeling more engaged and motivated during the lessons. Many mentioned that the active learning methods made the material more interesting and relevant to their lives. For example, in the case study sessions, students enjoyed the opportunity to solve real-life problems related to Taharah, which made the subject matter feel more practical and less theoretical. The group discussions also allowed students to share their personal experiences with purification practices, which helped create a more interactive and meaningful learning environment.

Classroom observations further supported the positive impact of the active learning strategies. Students were more participatory during the lessons, eagerly

volunteering to explain the steps of wudu or to demonstrate how to perform tayammum. The teacher noted that students were more confident in their responses and more willing to ask questions when they encountered difficulties. The collaborative nature of the activities fostered a supportive classroom environment where students learned from each other and helped one another improve their understanding of the material.

The teacher's role in facilitating active learning was also crucial to the success of the approach. The teacher actively guided the students through the learning activities, providing support and feedback when needed. By encouraging open communication and discussion, the teacher created an environment where students felt comfortable asking questions and making mistakes, which is essential for learning. This teacher-student interaction was key in helping students clarify their understanding and build their confidence in applying the concepts.

Interviews with students revealed that they appreciated the opportunity to engage actively with the material. Many students expressed that they felt more confident in their ability to perform the rituals of Taharah after participating in the active learning sessions. They mentioned that the group work and hands-on practice were particularly helpful in reinforcing their understanding. Students also stated that they found the interactive nature of the lessons more enjoyable and that they retained the material better as a result.

Teachers, too, noted the positive impact of active learning on student performance and engagement. The teacher reported that students seemed more interested in the material and were more willing to participate in class activities. The teacher also observed that the active learning methods helped students retain information more effectively, as they were able to practice and apply the knowledge in a variety of ways. This was seen as a significant improvement compared to previous lessons, where students would often struggle to recall the details of the Taharah rituals.

Despite the overall success of the active learning approach, some challenges were encountered during the study. One of the challenges was ensuring that all students were equally involved in the group activities. Some students were initially more reserved and required additional encouragement to participate fully. However, with the teacher's intervention and the encouragement of their peers, these students gradually became more engaged and confident in their contributions. This highlighted the importance of maintaining an inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued and supported.

Another challenge was managing the time effectively during the hands-on practice sessions. Since active learning involves more student interaction and practical exercises, it required more time than traditional lecture-based teaching methods. The teacher had to carefully plan the lessons to ensure that there was enough time for both theory and

practice. Despite this, students appeared to benefit greatly from the extra time spent on practical exercises, as it allowed them to practice and refine their skills more thoroughly.

In conclusion, the findings of this study strongly support the effectiveness of active learning methods in improving students' understanding of Taharah at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah. The active learning strategies helped students enhance both their theoretical knowledge and practical skills related to purification rituals. The increase in post-test scores, along with the positive feedback from students and teachers, indicates that the active learning approach is a valuable tool for enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes in religious education. The results suggest that incorporating active learning techniques in the teaching of Islamic subjects can lead to more meaningful and effective learning experiences.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study demonstrate the significant impact that active learning methods can have on students' understanding of Taharah material. By incorporating strategies such as group discussions, case studies, and hands-on activities, students showed substantial improvement in both theoretical knowledge and practical application of the Taharah concepts. This result is in line with previous research that has highlighted the benefits of active learning in religious education, where engagement and interaction are crucial for mastering complex material.

One of the most notable improvements was observed in the practical application of Taharah, particularly wudu and ghusl. In traditional teaching methods, students often learn about these practices in a passive way, simply reading or listening to explanations without practicing the rituals themselves. However, by actively engaging in the steps of wudu and ghusl during the learning sessions, students were able to correct mistakes and refine their techniques. The hands-on nature of these activities was essential in allowing students to internalize the correct sequence of actions and gain the confidence necessary to perform them accurately.

Another benefit of the active learning approach was the improvement in students' understanding of tayammum. Prior to the intervention, many students had limited knowledge about when and how to use tayammum, especially in situations where water was unavailable. Through case studies and group discussions, students were able to explore real-life scenarios and determine the appropriate use of tayammum. This allowed them to better grasp the context in which tayammum is required, and they gained a clearer understanding of its role in Islamic purification.

The use of group discussions and collaborative learning also played a significant role in deepening students' comprehension of Taharah material. By working in small groups, students were able to discuss their ideas, share personal experiences, and clarify misunderstandings. These interactions not only helped reinforce the material but also provided an opportunity for students to teach each other, thereby enhancing their

retention of the concepts. Peer teaching has been shown to improve learning outcomes, as students are often able to explain material to one another in ways that are more relatable and understandable.

Classroom observations further supported the positive effects of active learning methods. Teachers noted that students were more engaged and enthusiastic about the lessons compared to previous experiences. In the past, students tended to be more passive in their learning, only responding when directly called upon by the teacher. However, with the introduction of active learning techniques, students took a more active role in the lessons, asking questions, contributing ideas, and volunteering to demonstrate the purification rituals. This increased participation is a strong indicator of the effectiveness of the active learning approach in enhancing student engagement.

The active learning methods also allowed for more individualized learning experiences. While some students excelled in understanding the theoretical aspects of Taharah, others struggled with the practical application of the material. Through the active learning activities, the teacher was able to provide targeted support to students who needed it. The hands-on practice sessions allowed for immediate feedback and corrections, which ensured that each student could learn at their own pace and level of understanding. This personalized approach is crucial for addressing the diverse learning needs of students in a classroom.

Despite the success of the active learning methods, some challenges were encountered during the study. One of the primary challenges was ensuring equal participation from all students during group activities. Some students were initially more passive and hesitant to participate, which required additional encouragement from both the teacher and their peers. However, over time, these students became more involved as they gained confidence and saw the value in the group discussions. This highlights the importance of creating a supportive classroom environment where all students feel encouraged to contribute and engage with the material.

Another challenge was the management of time during the active learning sessions. Since these methods involve more interaction, hands-on practice, and group work, they require more time than traditional lecture-based lessons. The teacher had to carefully balance time spent on theory and practice to ensure that all aspects of the material were covered effectively. While this posed a challenge, it also allowed for a deeper understanding of the material, as students had more time to engage with and apply the concepts of Taharah in a meaningful way.

The improvement in students' post-test scores further demonstrates the effectiveness of active learning methods in enhancing their understanding. The average score increase from 55% to 80% indicates a clear and measurable improvement in students' comprehension of the material. This improvement can be attributed to the interactive nature of the lessons, which allowed students to actively engage with the content and apply their learning in a practical context. The increased scores also suggest

that active learning methods are more effective than traditional methods in helping students retain and apply what they have learned.

In addition to the academic improvements, students also reported a more enjoyable learning experience. Many students expressed that the active learning methods made the material feel more relevant to their lives. For instance, the group discussions and case studies allowed students to connect the abstract concepts of Taharah with real-world situations, making the content feel more practical and applicable. This increased relevance is likely to have contributed to the students' improved motivation and engagement during the lessons.

Teachers also observed that the active learning methods helped foster a greater sense of collaboration and community within the classroom. Students were more willing to share their ideas, ask questions, and help each other. This collaborative learning environment promoted a positive classroom culture where students felt more comfortable engaging with the material and with one another. The teacher noted that this sense of community was particularly beneficial in fostering a supportive atmosphere for learning.

The success of this study highlights the importance of incorporating active learning methods in religious education. Active learning strategies provide a dynamic and engaging way for students to interact with material that is often abstract or theoretical. By involving students in discussions, problem-solving activities, and hands-on practice, teachers can help students gain a deeper understanding of religious concepts and practices. The results of this study suggest that active learning can be particularly effective in teaching complex subjects such as Taharah, where both theoretical knowledge and practical application are essential.

In conclusion, the active learning methods employed in this study were highly effective in improving students' understanding of Taharah at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah. Through group discussions, case studies, and hands-on activities, students gained a deeper understanding of purification rituals and their practical applications. The increased participation, engagement, and improvement in test scores demonstrate the success of this approach. This study suggests that incorporating active learning into religious education can provide a more effective and enjoyable learning experience, ultimately leading to better outcomes for students.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of active learning methods significantly enhanced the understanding of Taharah material among students at MTsN 4 Aceh Tengah. The active participation through group discussions, case studies, and hands-on activities allowed students to not only grasp the theoretical aspects of purification rituals but also to apply them practically. The marked increase in students' post-test scores, as well as the observed improvements in their engagement and confidence, highlight the

effectiveness of this approach in fostering a deeper, more meaningful understanding of the subject matter. Moreover, the success of this study underscores the importance of incorporating interactive and student-centered teaching strategies in religious education. The positive outcomes suggest that active learning methods are more effective than traditional teaching methods, especially for complex subjects like Taharah that require both theoretical knowledge and practical application. This research advocates for the adoption of such methods in similar educational settings to improve learning outcomes and create a more dynamic, engaging classroom environment for students.

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