

THE ROLE OF ICE BREAKING ON STUDENT ENTHUSIASM IN LEARNING ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Nora Afnita¹; Martin Kustati²; Rezki Amelia³, Firda Khairati Amris⁴, Farida Ariani⁵

^{1,4,5}Institut Agama Islam Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

^{2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

¹Corresponding E-mail: noraafnita@gmail.com

Abstract

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is often faced with the challenge of low student enthusiasm, which has an impact on the lack of active participation and understanding of the material. One of the efforts to overcome this problem is by applying ice breaking as a fun and interactive learning strategy. This study aims to determine the effect of using ice breaking on students' learning enthusiasm in PAI learning. The approach used was quantitative with a quasi experimental design, with a sample of 40, namely the experimental group that received treatment and the control group that did not receive treatment. Data were collected through questionnaires, then statistically analyzed using t-test. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the learning spirit of students who were given ice breaking and those who were not. Students in the experimental group showed increased motivation, engagement, and higher enthusiasm during the learning process. In this finding, the use of ice breaking can be an effective strategy in creating a more interesting learning atmosphere for PAI. These results serve as a reference for teachers in integrating more creative approaches to build students' learning enthusiasm in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: *Ice Breaking; Passion For Learning; Islamic Religious Education*

A. Introduction

Learning is a process that supports students in achieving an understanding of the material provided by the teacher so that learning objectives can be well received (Kurniati et al., 2022; Suardi, 2018). In addition, according to (Abuhassna et al., 2022; Hutchins & Hode, 2021) learning is also a way in which individuals develop new knowledge, skills, attitudes, or understanding through interactions with various information, experiences, and environments, which can occur anywhere and anytime. A fun and interactive learning atmosphere is important in the learning process, especially for grade IV students. (Fauzi & Mustika, 2022; Naismith et al., 2004). Various ways have been applied by educators to increase students' enthusiasm for learning, one of which is the use of interactive learning media, discussion methods, and project-based learning models (Barokah et al., 2024; Jufri et al., 2023; Newell et al., 2009). Although these efforts make a positive contribution, an interactive and fun learning atmosphere has not yet emerged because there are still many students who are not supported by the enthusiasm that arises from within students in

following the learning provided by the teacher. This is closely related to the methods used by teachers in increasing students' enthusiasm in participating in PAI learning (Fahlevi, 2022; Nurdin, 2018). In addition, the enthusiasm possessed by a teacher will provide a positive atmosphere in the classroom environment so that it has a positive effect on student enthusiasm and there is an increase in student learning scores (Wilson & Beard, 2013). Based on the results of initial observations made at SDN Istiqomah Sicincin, it was found that the behavior of students tended to be passive, lack of enthusiasm, felt bored, lazy, and showed a decrease in enthusiasm in participating in learning. They are more active in less positive behavior, such as disturbing friends in front or behind, not focusing, and engrossed in themselves without paying attention to the teacher's explanation. To overcome this problem, one method that can be applied by teachers is to use the ice breaking method. As described (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. Ice breaking helps build relationships between students and create a zone of proximal development (ZPD) through a supportive and collaborative atmosphere.

The ice breaking method aims to relieve tension among students, strengthen relationships between fellow students and teachers, and increase the spirit of learning. Ice breaking methods are activities carried out to create a more relaxed atmosphere, build communication, and increase interaction between teachers and students. (Gururajan & Fink, 2010; Kneebone, 2003; Paulson, 2011). (Kamp, 2006; Sukoyo, 2025) said that ice breaking is an activity in the teaching and learning process that changes the atmosphere from boring, boring, and sleepy to more fun, energetic, relaxed, and not sleepy. This activity aims to create a more enthusiastic and fun learning atmosphere by using certain techniques when the situation starts to feel saturated. Activities carried out in using ice breaking methods such as clapping, gymnastics, games, songs, and games (Maulida & Maslikhah, 2022; Sawitri & Susanti, 2024).

This ice breaking method can be applied in various subjects, not only in Islamic Religious Education. Activities such as clapping, singing, games, and fun yells can increase students' interest and enthusiasm for learning, because they feel learning becomes more fun. (Boling et al., 2012; Kiryakova et al., 2018; Woolfolk, 2013) emphasizes that positive emotions strengthen memory formation and attention. Ice breaking creates positive emotional moments that can improve focus and retention of material. Learning by using the ice breaking method provides many benefits, namely (1) providing opportunities for students to be actively involved in learning activities and increasing students' enthusiasm in interacting directly in learning activities. (Durohmah & Feriyanto, 2024; Slavin, 2006) (2) Reduce anxiety and create a relaxed and pleasant learning atmosphere (Aziz, 2019; Maslow, 1943) and (3) Increase good interactions between each other so as to create a conducive learning atmosphere (Ha, 2021; Mulia et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2023) The application of the ice breaking method at the beginning or middle of learning, can reduce

student boredom and increase student enthusiasm in learning Islamic Religious Education.

Research (Ilham & Supriaman, 2021) on the Effect of Ice Breaking Method on Learning Interest of Fifth Grade Students of SD Negeri 26 Dompu. This study shows that the application of the ice breaking method can stimulate and increase students' enthusiasm for learning because students are invited to learn while playing so they don't feel forced to learn. So it can be said that the learning process by applying ice breaking can make students happy and more fun when doing the learning process. The difference between this research and Ilham and Supriaman's research is that this research is more about the effect of ice breaking methods on student interest in learning.

Furthermore, Lena et al.'s research (2023) on the Implementation of Ice Breaking Techniques in Increasing Elementary School Students' Learning Interest. The results showed that ice breaking techniques can increase students' interest in learning, especially in subjects that are considered difficult. In addition, this technique can also strengthen the relationship between students and teachers. The difference between Lena et al.'s research and this research is that this research emphasizes more on the application of ice breaking techniques to increase students' interest in learning. Although both still discuss the ice breaking method in the learning process, this study emphasizes more on increasing students' interest in learning while this study emphasizes more on increasing students' enthusiasm for learning. (Harianja & Sapri, 2022) on the Implementation and Benefits of Ice Breaking to Increase Elementary School Students' Learning Interest. The results showed that ice breaking can be applied to all subjects, including non-formal education. Ice breaking can be integrated or combined with the Cooperative Realistic Setting (Resik) learning model and other learning models. With the application of ice breaking, it can attract students' interest in learning, learning motivation, absorption, learning outcomes. The difference between this research compared to Harianja & Sapri's research is that this research is more about the implementation of ice breaking in increasing students' interest in learning, while this research is about how to increase students' enthusiasm for learning. Fatihani et al., (2024) on the Application of Ice Breaking to Increase Learning Motivation in Class III Thematic Lessons at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Ma'had Al Zaytun.

The results of this study indicate that there is an increase in the learning motivation of students in class 3 B 05 after the application of ice breaking. The first test results showed an average score of 68.5, while the second test showed an average score of 83, with a difference of 14.5. Therefore, it can be concluded that students in class 3 B 05 experienced an increase in learning outcomes with the aim of increasing learning motivation in class III thematic lessons. The difference between Fatihani's research and this study is that the emphasis is on the application of ice breaking to increase student learning motivation in thematic lessons, while this study emphasizes more on increasing students' enthusiasm for learning in PAI subjects. Application of Ice Breaking in the Learning Process to Increase Learning Motivation of Grade IV Students of Sugihan State Elementary School. The results

of this study indicate that learning activities using ice breaking in learning activities can increase student learning motivation. Students feel motivated and happy in participating in the learning process (Zakiyyah et al., 2022). The difference between Zakiyyah's research and this research is more emphasis on the application of ice breaking methods to increase student learning motivation, while this research is more able to increase students' enthusiasm for learning.

Based on the explanation of the findings, it can be concluded that the Ice Breaking method is able to create a more positive learning environment and increase students' active participation in the learning process. Although several previous studies have discussed the effectiveness of Ice Breaking in a general context, these studies generally have not specifically examined its impact in the context of learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI), which has material characteristics, value approaches, and the goal of forming a distinctive spiritual attitude. The main difference of this study lies in the focus of the study which specifically explores the significant effect of the Ice Breaking method on students' learning spirit before and after treatment in the context of Islamic Education learning. The purpose of this study is to empirically determine the effect of using the Ice Breaking method on increasing students' learning enthusiasm in learning Islamic Religious Education, as an innovative effort in improving the effectiveness and quality of the learning process.

B. Method

This research uses a quantitative approach with a type of quasi experiment research. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for measuring the effect of certain treatments on the variables under study in a systematic and controlled manner. According to Priadana and Sunarsi (2021), quantitative research aims to reveal symptoms objectively, holistically, and contextually through quantitative data collection, with researchers as instruments designing and controlling the research process. The research location was at Istiqomah Sicincin Elementary School located in Kecamatan 2 x 11 Enam Lingsung, Padang Pariaman Regency, West Sumatra. The population in this study were all fourth grade students at the school, and the sampling technique was carried out by purposive sampling, so that a sample of 40 students was obtained, consisting of class IV A as many as 20 students and class IV B as many as 20 students.

Data collection was conducted using three techniques, namely observation, documentation, and questionnaire. Observation was used to observe student activities during the learning process, documentation was used to obtain supporting data such as syllabus, lesson plans, and student attendance lists, while questionnaires were used to measure student perceptions and understanding of the material provided. The questionnaire instrument was prepared based on indicators that had been validated and tested for reliability. The validity test of the instrument was carried out with Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis, while the reliability test used the Cronbach Alpha formula (Sugiyono, 2010).

From the results of distributing questionnaires, validity and reliability tests were carried out. The data that has been collected is then tested for normality, homogeneity and hypothesis testing. The normality test is carried out to ensure that the information that has been collected is reasonably distributed or taken from a reasonable population. This test uses the Lilliefors approach. Homogeneity test is conducted to see how each independent variable affects the dependent variable significantly or insignificantly. And hypothesis testing is used to test the level of significance to determine how much influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable.

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Finding

The ice breaking method is a method used to break the ice and increase interaction in groups, especially at the beginning of a meeting or at the end of a meeting in the teaching and learning process. According to M.J.S.M de Vries (2020) ice breaking serves to facilitate communication and build trust and enthusiasm for student learning so as to create a comfortable and productive learning atmosphere. The instrument trial was conducted at SD Istiqamah Sicincin involving class IV consisting of 40 students. A total of 20 students came from the experimental class or class A, and the other 20 from the control class or class B. This trial aims to evaluate the reliability and validity of the previously made question instrument, with a total of 20 items.

The analysis in this study was carried out using a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. A question item is considered valid if the value of r count is greater than r table, which indicates that the item is valid. Conversely, if r count is less than r table, then the item is declared invalid. After conducting the validity test, it was found that of the 20 statements tested, there were 10 valid items based on the criteria of r count greater than r table.

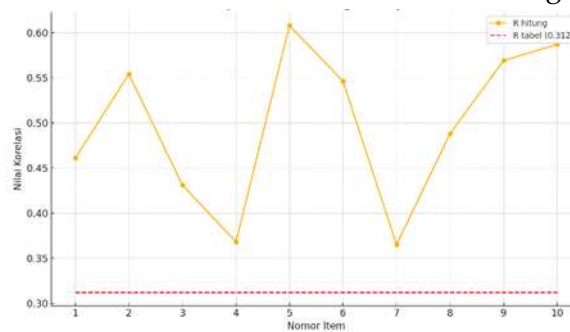


Figure 1. Test of Validity of Learning Spirit

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which a data collection tool can provide accurate, consistent, and stable results. An instrument is considered reliable if measurements made several times on the same topic produce similar results. In this study, reliability testing was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha technique, which was tested through Microsoft Excel. The decision-making criteria stipulate that if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60, then the instrument is considered reliable; conversely, if the value is less than 0.60, the instrument is considered unreliable.

The reliability test results show an alpha value of 0.6812 for the ice breaking variable and 0.647 for the learning spirit variable, which means that both are greater than 0.60, so it can be said that both variables are reliable.

Table 1. Reliability

Variabel	Reference value	Number of variants	Total Variance	Cronbach's Alpha value	Information
<i>Ice Breaking</i>	0,6	13,187	37,374	0,6812	Reliable
Eager To Learn	0,6	12,820	33,333	0,64779	Reliable

Data Analysis Requirements Test

Normality Test

The normality test is a testing process carried out to determine whether the data follows a normal distribution or not. The criterion is if the calculated L value is less than the L table, then the data is normally distributed. Conversely, if L count is greater than L table, then the data is declared not normally distributed.

Table 2. Post-test Normality Test (Liliefors Test)

Group	Average	Standard deviation	L table	L count
Eksperimen	33,6	3,65	0,19	0,139
Control	31,65	4,2	0,19	0,105

Based on the table above, it can be seen that L count is smaller than L table at the 5% level or greater than 0.05, both for the experimental and control classes. Therefore, it can be concluded that both populations are normally distributed.

Homogeneity Test.

The purpose of the homogeneity test is to determine whether the samples taken come from a homogeneous population or not. To do this test, the F test is used. The criterion is if F count is smaller than F table, then the variance is considered homogeneous. Conversely, if F count is greater than F table, then the variance is declared inhomogeneous. This test was conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 3. Post test Homogeneity Test Results

Class	F count	F table	Sig.	Information
Experiment and Control	1,97257	2,168252	0,05	Homogen

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the results of the homogeneity test of the research variables are known that the F count of the post-test value is 1.972 and the F table value is 2.168. From these results it can be seen that the value of f count < than F table and the value of F count and F table is more > than 0.05, it can be concluded that the variance value is homogeneous.

Hypothesis Test

In the experimental and control classes, the independent-sample t-test analysis of the post-test was carried out to evaluate whether there was a clear difference between the post-test scores of the two classes. The significance of the research is stated if $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$ at a significance level of 5%.

Table 4. T Test Results Post Test of Experimental Class and Post Test of Control Class

Class	Average	T-count	T-table
Experiment	34,6	17,910	2,0211
Control	32,5		

Based on the t-test results on the post-test, it is known that the average learning spirit in the experimental class reached 34.6, while in the control class it was 32.5. This shows that the average learning spirit in the experimental class is higher than the control class. From the table, it is known that the calculated t value is 17.910, while the t table value is 2.0211. Since t is greater than t table ($17.910 > 2.0211$), H_0 is rejected with a significance level of 0.05. In conclusion, there is a significant difference in the increase in learning enthusiasm between students in the control and experimental classes. So it can be concluded that the use of ice breaking has an effect on increasing students' enthusiasm for learning if the average enthusiasm for learning in the experimental class is higher than the control class.

2. Discussion

Students' Learning Enthusiasm Before Treatment

The pre-treatment results showed that the learning enthusiasm of fourth-grade students at SD Istiqomah Sicincin was generally in the good category. A total of 18 students demonstrated good learning enthusiasm, another 18 were in the very good category, while the rest fell into the moderate and low categories. This indicates that, in general, students already possessed a relatively high level of motivation to learn before any intervention was applied. This initial condition aligns with the findings of (Eggen & Kauchak, 2012; Mulia et al., 2021) who stated that elementary school students generally have sufficient learning motivation when the learning environment is supportive (Devanda et al., 2022; Jaleniauskiene & Juceviciene, 2015). However, this potential needs to be optimized through the application of more engaging and varied learning strategies to maintain and further enhance students' enthusiasm.

Students' Learning Enthusiasm After Treatment

After the intervention—namely, the application of the Ice Breaking method in the experimental class and the lecture method in the control class—there was a significant increase in students' learning enthusiasm. In the experimental class, 26 students demonstrated high learning enthusiasm, while 12 students showed good enthusiasm. This reflects an improvement in the quality of student engagement following the use of the Ice Breaking method.

This increase is supported by statistical analysis, including normality, homogeneity, and t-tests, which confirmed that the data were normally distributed, homogeneous, and showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($t_{count} = 17.910 > t_{table} = 1.725$). Furthermore, regression analysis confirmed the positive impact of the Ice Breaking method, with a significance value of 0.029 (< 0.05) and a positive coefficient of 0.23. These findings are consistent with the study (Ilham & Supriaman, 2021) which revealed that Ice Breaking can stimulate students' enthusiasm by incorporating elements of play into the learning process, thus making learning more enjoyable and less forced. Similarly, (Fatihani et al., 2024). found a significant increase in student motivation after the application of the same method.

Significant Influence of Ice Breaking on Learning Enthusiasm

The implementation of the Ice Breaking method was proven to have a significant effect on improving students' learning enthusiasm. Analysis revealed that the average increase in the experimental class was 34.6, higher than the control class at 32.5. Furthermore, regression analysis showed that Ice Breaking contributed 11.8% to the improvement of students' learning enthusiasm. These results support the findings of (Farhan, 2021; Harianja & Sapri, 2022; Lena et al., 2023), which emphasized that Ice Breaking not only increases students' interest in learning but also strengthens the relationship between students and teachers, fosters a more interactive atmosphere, and enhances motivation and student participation. However, the novelty of this research lies in its focus on learning enthusiasm specifically within the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), a subject that requires unique approaches in delivering moral and spiritual values.

Comparison with Previous Research

The main difference between this study and previous research lies in the context and focus of the dependent variable. While studies by (Harianja & Sapri, 2022; Ilham & Supriaman, 2021; Lena et al., 2023) focused more on learning interest and general motivation, this study specifically examined the improvement of learning enthusiasm in the subject of Islamic Religious Education. Given that PAI has distinct characteristics as a values-based subject, fostering learning enthusiasm presents unique challenges. Therefore, the use of the Ice Breaking method as an innovative approach has been shown to be effective in overcoming boredom and making the learning process more enjoyable (Tubagus et al., 2024).

E. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it is known that the learning enthusiasm of fourth grade students of Istiqomah Sicincin Elementary School in Islamic Religious Education subjects before being treated with the Ice Breaking method is already classified as good, with most students in the good and very good categories. After the application of the Ice Breaking method, there was a significant increase in students' enthusiasm for learning, where most students showed high and very high enthusiasm for

learning. The results of hypothesis testing through independent sample t-test show that there is a significant difference between students' learning spirit before and after treatment, with the t value greater than the t table. In addition, simple regression analysis showed a positive and significant influence between the application of the Ice Breaking method on increasing students' enthusiasm for learning with a contribution of 11.8%. Thus, it can be concluded that the Ice Breaking method has a significant effect on increasing students' enthusiasm for learning in Islamic Religious Education subjects.

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