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Improving Students' Social Studies Learning Outcomes through the Role Playing Method in Fifth Grade of MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo

Irnalita[1], Agusti Amelia[2]
[1]Geography Teacher, SMAN Modal Bangsa Aceh, Aceh, Indonesia
[2]Geography Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Almuslim University (Umuslim) Bireuen, Aceh, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to improve Social Studies learning outcomes and student participation through the implementation of the Role Playing method in fifth-grade students of MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo, particularly on historical material about the Indonesian proclamation of independence.

Methodology: This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR) model by Suharsimi Arikunto conducted in two cycles. Data were collected through tests, observation sheets, interviews, and documentation. Instruments included pre-test and post-test, observation sheets, and school records. Data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative and qualitative techniques supported by simple calculation software such as Microsoft Excel.

Main Findings: The findings show a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes after the implementation of the Role Playing method. Student mastery increased from 23% in the preliminary stage to 80% in Cycle II, with average scores rising from 61.6 to 73.6. Teacher activity improved from 61% to 82%, while student activity increased from 59% to 81%. The method also enhanced students' participation, motivation, and understanding of historical learning materials.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study is novel because it applies the Role Playing method specifically to Indonesian proclamation history in a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah context using Classroom Action Research. It not only focuses on cognitive improvement but also emphasizes active student participation. This research contributes new insight into integrating dramatization-based learning in elementary Social Studies education to enhance engagement and outcomes.

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Corresponding Author:
Agusti Amelia,
Geography Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Almuslim University (Umuslim) Bireuen
Jl. Tengku Abdurrahman No. 37, Matangglumpangdua, Desa Uteun Bunta, Kecamatan Peusangan, Kabupaten Bireuen, Aceh, 24261, Indonesia
Email: agustiamelia97@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Elementary education plays an important role in developing students' thinking skills, social attitudes, and abilities to face social life development. One of the subjects that contributes to these competencies is Social Studies. Social Studies learning does not only emphasize conceptual understanding but also encourages students to comprehend social and national events contextually [1], [2]. Therefore, the learning process should be

designed in an active and enjoyable way to encourage students' participation during classroom activities [3], [4]. In this regard, teachers are required to apply innovative learning methods to improve students' learning outcomes effectively.

One of the common problems found in Social Studies learning at the elementary level is the low participation of students during the learning process. Students tend to be passive, reluctant to express their opinions, and less enthusiastic about classroom activities [5], [6]. This condition is influenced by the use of conventional teaching methods that mainly rely on lectures and assignments. As a result, the learning atmosphere becomes monotonous, causing students to feel bored and less motivated to understand the learning materials [7]. This problem can be seen in the Social Studies learning outcomes of fifth-grade students at MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo, where most students failed to achieve the Minimum Mastery Criteria established by the school.

Several previous studies have shown that the role playing method can improve students' learning outcomes in various subjects. A study conducted by Sri Wahyuningsih revealed that the use of role playing improved Social Studies learning outcomes on cultural diversity materials at the elementary school level [8], [9]. Another study by Ammi Thoibah Nasution also found significant improvement in Social Studies learning outcomes through the implementation of the role playing method in madrasah ibtidaiyah students. In addition, research conducted by Vicky Ihsananda demonstrated that role playing effectively improved students' activities and learning outcomes in Bahasa Indonesia subjects. These findings indicate that the role playing method has great potential to create active, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences for students [10].

Although many previous studies have discussed the effectiveness of the role playing method, there are still several research gaps that need further investigation. Most previous studies focused on general Social Studies materials, cultural diversity topics, or subjects other than Social Studies [11], [12]. Research specifically examining the implementation of role playing in learning national historical events surrounding the Indonesian proclamation of independence at madrasah ibtidaiyah is still limited. Furthermore, each school has different student characteristics and learning environments, meaning that previous findings may not be directly applicable to different contexts [13], [14]. Therefore, further research is necessary to examine the effectiveness of the role playing method in improving Social Studies learning outcomes among fifth-grade students at MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo.

This study is important because Social Studies learning requires strategies that actively involve students in understanding learning materials. The role playing method is considered effective in helping students understand social and historical events through contextual and engaging learning activities [15]. Students' direct involvement in learning activities can increase motivation, collaboration, and critical thinking skills during the learning process. In addition, the use of varied teaching methods can reduce students' boredom and create a more enjoyable classroom atmosphere [16], [17]. Therefore, the implementation of the role playing method is expected to become an effective solution for improving Social Studies learning outcomes at the elementary education level, particularly in madrasah ibtidaiyah.

The novelty of this study lies in the implementation of the role playing method in teaching national historical events surrounding the Indonesian proclamation of independence for fifth-grade students in madrasah ibtidaiyah through a Classroom Action Research approach. This study focuses not only on improving students' cognitive learning outcomes but also on increasing students' active participation during the learning process [18]. In addition, the research was conducted in the context of madrasah ibtidaiyah, which has different learning characteristics compared to general elementary schools [19]. The application of role playing in national history materials provides students with more concrete and meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the development of innovative and effective Social Studies learning methods in elementary education.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the model developed by Suharsimi Arikunto. The research was conducted collaboratively between the researcher and the fifth-grade teacher of MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo during the 2022/2023 academic year. The study consisted of two cycles, and each cycle included four stages, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting [20]. In the planning stage, the researcher prepared lesson plans, learning materials, observation sheets, and role playing scenarios related to national events surrounding the Indonesian proclamation of independence. Through this research design, the implementation of the role playing method was expected to improve students' Social Studies learning outcomes effectively and systematically.



Figure 2.1 Classroom Action Research Cycle

2.2. Participants and Research Setting

This research was conducted at MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo, East Lampung, Indonesia, during the second semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. The participants of this study were 30 fifth-grade students consisting of 17 male students and 13 female students. The study focused on Theme 7 "Events in Life," especially Subtheme 2 concerning national events surrounding the proclamation of Indonesian independence in Social Studies learning. The participants were selected based on the preliminary observation results indicating low student participation and low learning outcomes in Social Studies subjects. Most students had not achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) score of 70 established by the school.

2.3. Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Data collection in this study was conducted through interviews, observations, and documentation techniques [21]. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the principal, teachers, and students to obtain detailed information regarding the learning strategies implemented in the classroom. Observations were conducted directly during Social Studies learning activities to examine students' social interaction and classroom participation. Documentation techniques were used to collect supporting data, including school profiles, lesson plans, photographs, and other educational documents related to the study. The combination of these techniques enabled the researcher to obtain comprehensive and reliable data regarding the implementation of Social Studies learning strategies.

Table 1. Data Collection Techniques

Technique	Instrument	Purpose
Test	Pre-test and Post-test	Measuring students' learning outcomes
Observation	Observation sheets	Observing teacher and student activities
Documentation	School documents and photographs	Supporting research data

2.4. Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. Quantitative data obtained from the learning achievement tests were analyzed by calculating the mean scores and the percentage of students' learning mastery. Qualitative data obtained from classroom observations were analyzed descriptively to evaluate teacher activities and students' participation during the implementation of the role playing method. The success indicator of this study was determined based on the achievement of at least 75% of students obtaining scores equal to or higher than the Minimum Mastery Criteria of 70. Therefore, the improvement of students' learning outcomes and classroom participation became the primary indicators of the success of this research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Preliminary Findings

The preliminary observation conducted in Grade V of MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo revealed that students' Social Studies learning outcomes were still relatively low. Most students experienced difficulties in understanding historical events related to the Indonesian proclamation of independence because the learning process was still dominated by lecture and assignment methods. As a result, students tended to feel bored, less active during classroom discussions, and showed limited participation in the learning activities. Only a small number of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 70 during the preliminary stage. Therefore, the implementation of the Role Playing method was considered necessary to create a more interactive and student-centered learning environment.

Table 2. Preliminary Learning Outcomes of Students

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Achieved KKM (≥70)	7	23%
Did Not Achieve KKM (<70)	23	77%

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Total	30	100%

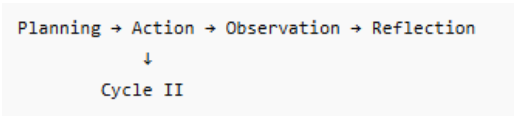


Figure 2. Research Procedure of Classroom Action Research

3.2. Implementation of the Role Playing Method

The implementation of the Role Playing method was carried out through two cycles, and each cycle consisted of three meetings. During the learning process, students were actively involved in dramatizing historical events related to the proclamation of Indonesian independence. The teacher prepared drama scenarios, divided students into several groups, and guided them to perform the assigned roles in front of the classroom. Through this activity, students were encouraged to collaborate, communicate, and express their understanding of the learning material more confidently. The learning activities also became more interactive because students not only listened to explanations from the teacher but also directly experienced the learning process through role enactment.

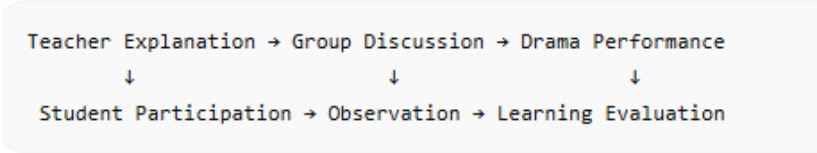


Figure 3. Learning Activities Using the Role Playing Method

3.3. Observation Results of Teacher and Student Activities

The observation results showed that both teacher and student activities improved significantly from Cycle I to Cycle II. In Cycle I, the teacher still experienced some difficulties in managing the Role Playing activities because the method had not been implemented previously in the classroom. However, after reflection and improvement in Cycle II, the teacher became more confident and systematic in guiding students during the learning process. Similarly, students showed increased participation, enthusiasm, and cooperation during classroom discussions and drama performances. The improvement indicated that the Role Playing method successfully created a more active and meaningful learning atmosphere.

Table 3. Comparison of Teacher and Student Activities

Observation Aspect	Cycle I	Cycle II	Improvement
Teacher Activity	61%	82%	21%
Student Activity	59%	81%	22%

The findings also demonstrated that students became more active in asking questions, expressing opinions, and participating in group discussions during Cycle II. Students who were initially shy and passive gradually became more confident in presenting the results of their discussions in front of the class. In addition, students were able to perform drama activities more effectively without depending heavily on written scripts. These improvements suggest that the Role Playing method can encourage collaborative learning and strengthen students' social interaction skills during the learning process.

3.4. Improvement of Students' Learning Outcomes

The implementation of the Role Playing method also contributed positively to students' cognitive learning outcomes in Social Studies subjects. Based on the results of the post-test evaluation, the average score of students increased significantly from Cycle I to Cycle II. In Cycle I, only 47% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM), whereas in Cycle II the percentage increased to 80%. The improvement showed that students understood the learning material better after participating actively in the Role Playing activities. Therefore, the research indicator of success, which required at least 75% of students to achieve mastery learning, was successfully accomplished in Cycle II.

Table 4. Improvement of Students' Learning Outcomes

Category	Cycle I	Cycle II
Students Achieving KKM	14 Students (47%)	24 Students (80%)
Students Not Achieving KKM	16 Students (53%)	6 Students (20%)
Average Score	61.6	73.6

The increase in students' learning outcomes occurred because the Role Playing method enabled students to learn through direct experience and active engagement. Students became more motivated to participate in classroom activities because the learning process was enjoyable and interactive. Furthermore, the method helped students understand historical concepts more concretely through dramatization and group collaboration. These findings support the idea that Role Playing can improve students' understanding, participation, and academic achievement in Social Studies learning.

The findings of this study show that the initial condition of Social Studies learning in Grade V MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo was still relatively low. Most students were passive during learning activities because the teacher mainly used lecture-based instruction. Only 23% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) in the preliminary stage. In Cycle I, although the Role Playing method had been introduced, student achievement only increased to 47%. This indicates that the initial implementation of the method had begun to improve learning outcomes but was not yet optimal.

In Cycle II, the implementation of the Role Playing method showed a significant improvement in both learning process and learning outcomes. Teachers became more structured and confident in guiding students during dramatization activities. Students also showed higher enthusiasm, active participation, and better collaboration in group activities. The percentage of students achieving the KKM increased to 80% with an average score of 73.6. These results indicate that the learning improvement target was successfully achieved in Cycle II.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research that found the effectiveness of the Role Playing method in improving student learning outcomes. Studies by Sri Wahyuningsih, Ammi Thoibah Nasution, and Vicky Ihsananda also reported that Role Playing can enhance student engagement and academic achievement. These findings support the idea that active and interactive learning strategies are more effective than conventional methods [22], [23]. However, most previous studies focused on general Social Studies topics or different subjects. Therefore, a gap still exists in the application of Role Playing for historical material on the Indonesian proclamation in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah contexts.

The novelty of this study lies in the application of the Role Playing method specifically to teach national historical events of the Indonesian proclamation of independence in a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah setting. This research not only focuses on cognitive learning outcomes but also emphasizes student participation and engagement during learning [24]. The study was conducted using Classroom Action Research with two improvement cycles. The context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah provides a unique learning environment compared to previous studies in general elementary schools [25], [26]. Therefore, this study contributes to enriching innovative learning strategies in Social Studies education.

The implications of this study suggest that teachers should consider using the Role Playing method as an alternative strategy in Social Studies learning. This method can create a more interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment for students [27], [28]. It also helps students develop communication skills, collaboration, and critical thinking through direct involvement in learning activities. Schools can integrate this method into lesson planning to improve overall learning quality [29], [30]. Therefore, Role Playing can be an effective approach to support student-centered learning in elementary education.

However, this study still has several limitations that need to be considered. The number of participants was limited to only 30 students from one school. The research was also conducted within a relatively short period consisting of two cycles only [31]. In addition, the observation process may still contain a degree of subjectivity despite using structured instruments. Therefore, further research is needed with a larger sample size and broader scope to strengthen the findings of this study.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to improve Social Studies learning outcomes through the implementation of the Role Playing method for fifth-grade students at MI Islamiyah Sumberrejo, and the results successfully aligned with the objectives stated in the introduction. The findings showed that students' learning participation and understanding of historical events increased significantly after the implementation of the method. This is evidenced by the improvement of students' learning outcomes from the preliminary condition to Cycle II, where the mastery learning reached 80% of students achieving the KKM. In addition, classroom observations indicated that students became more active, confident, and engaged in collaborative learning activities. Therefore, the Role

Playing method proved effective in creating an interactive and meaningful learning environment in Social Studies learning. Furthermore, the results of this study indicate that this method has strong potential to be developed and applied in other historical and Social Studies materials in future research.

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