

## OPTIMIZING LEARNING: APPLYING THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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### **Abstract**

*This research is motivated by students' difficulties in comprehending the material provided by educators. Among the contributing factors is the educators' lack of innovation in designing instruction. Students struggle to grasp the subject matter due to the instructors' abilities not being fully utilized in the design of teaching methods. This study seeks to demonstrate how the Pomodoro learning method is employed within the framework of official education guidelines for teaching Islamic religion. The research is conducted as a field study utilizing descriptive qualitative research techniques. The locus of the study is the Muhammadiyah Islamic Vocational High School (SMK) 2 Malang. Data collection for this study is carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. The method of data analysis consists of data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings of this study depict that the Pomodoro learning technique is a time-management oriented approach, thereby ensuring that the concentration level of the students' learning remains undisturbed. This learning technique requires habitual practice to enable students to regulate their study time effectively.*

**Keywords:** *Implementation; Islamic Religious Education; Pomodoro Learning Technique.*

## **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh permasalahan kesulitan siswa dalam memahami materi yang diberikan oleh pendidik. Di antara faktornya adalah kurangnya inovasi pendidik dalam mendesain pembelajaran. Siswa kesulitan memahami materi pelajaran karena kemampuan instruktur belum sepenuhnya dimanfaatkan dalam desain metode pengajaran. Penelitian ini mencoba menunjukkan bagaimana metode pembelajaran Pomodoro digunakan dalam aturan pendidikan resmi untuk pengajaran agama Islam. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan dengan menggunakan teknik penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Lokusnya adalah Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK) Muhammadiyah 2 Malang. Dalam penelitian ini pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Metode analisis data meliputi reduksi data, penyajian, dan penyusunan kesimpulan. Hasil dari penelitian ini mendeskripsikan bahwa teknik belajar Pomodoro adalah teknik belajar yang berorientasi dengan manajemen waktu, sehingga tingkat konsentrasi belajar peserta didik tidak terganggu. Teknik belajar ini memerlukan pembiasaan dalam penerapannya agar peserta didik terbiasa dalam mengatur waktu belajar.

**Kata Kunci:** *Implementasi; Pendidikan Agama Islam; Teknik Belajar Pomodoro.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Contemporary education has undergone substantial advancements in catering to the requirements of students during their learning process (Hasibuan et al., 2022). Moreover, in the present age of globalization, there is a necessity to enhance the quality of human resources, which extends to the realm of education as well (Amelia & Marini, 2022; Teguh, 2017). In the education system, the role of educators occupies a very important position. This is due to the position of educators as subjects who have a role in building civilization which can

improve the quality of human resources (Ningsih et al., 2022). Hence, the process of learning is invariably interconnected with two fundamental components: educators and students.

The learning process, facilitated by educators, is a means to develop students' existing attributes. In general, success is indicated by three aspects: cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude), and behavioral (skills) (Hidayah et al., 2021). This is also supported by Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning the competence of educators. It was explained that the duties and roles of an educator are to guide, educate, direct, and train students (Illahi, 2020). Additionally, educators need to handle the curriculum and arrange diverse learning activities to achieve effective and efficient learning outcomes.

Creating a conducive and comfortable learning environment for students is a challenging task for educators. This difficulty arises from the fact that students possess varying learning abilities, levels of concentration, and diverse levels of comprehension (Rahma et al., 2022). Educators have faced this dilemma throughout history. They are entrusted with developing interesting and effective learning patterns or systems to avoid role fatigue. This element has a considerable impact on educators' professionalism since their capacity to address this issue demonstrates their competency in carrying out their tasks (Surahmi et al., 2022). Providing learning strategies that can incorporate numerous exciting learning ways to improve student enthusiasm is one effort that educators must build a ready-to-learn mentality in students.

The application of learning techniques in the learning and teaching process is required. Learning techniques encompass strategies or systems employed by educators to integrate

various learning methods both within and beyond the classroom setting (Ramadhani et al., 2020). However, before educators apply certain learning techniques, educators need to know the characteristics of students in advance so that they are not mistaken in applying a learning pattern (Rahayu et al., 2022; Triwardhani et al., 2020). This also attempts to aid in the process of building student learning patterns in the classroom, as the success of a student learning process cannot be isolated from the implementation of the learning methods utilized by educators (Khairunnisa & Jiwandono, 2020). As a result, the use of learning strategies is crucial for assisting students in capturing the subject matter and preventing them from having difficulty in learning.

Frequently encountered challenges involve students grappling with learning difficulties and struggling to maintain focus during the learning process (Isrokatun et al., 2022). According to a survey of post-pandemic students, 75% of children reported learning challenges due to various factors (Ansori, 2022). After a sudden inspection of SDN Ibu Jainab 01 Cianjur, the Regent of Cianjur, Herman Suherman, explained that there were a number of students who had forgotten how to read due to long-distance learning (Eron, 2021).

Several studies have significant relevance to this article. First, research conducted by Sobah et al. (2017) entitled *Penerapan Metode Pembelajaran Drill untuk Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran Gambar Teknik* (Utilizing the Drill Learning Method to Address Challenges in Student Learning of Engineering Drawing Subjects). This research centers on implementing the drill learning method in the context of technical drawing subjects. The study's findings

reveal an improvement in student learning outcomes within the drawing process following the implementation of the drill method (Sobah et al., 2017).

Another study conducted by Fachri and Azizah (2020) entitled *Strategi Pembelajaran Inkuiri dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Siswa di Madrasah* (Employing Inquiry Learning Strategies to Overcome Student Learning Challenges in Madrasahs.). In this investigation, the researchers underscored the inquiry learning strategies as the research focus, with the research conducted at MTs Mabadius Shaleh in Situbondo. The study's outcomes elucidate that implementing the inquiry method among students positively impacts the resolution of their learning challenges (Fachri & Azizah, 2020).

Furthermore, Arviani et al. (2021) conducted a study entitled *Peningkatan Kualitas Belajar Peserta Didik dengan Teknik Pomodoro, Cornell Notes dan Feynman di Sanggar Belajar Profesor Kota Madiun* (Improving the Quality of Student Learning with the Pomodoro Technique, Cornell Notes, and Feynman in Sanggar Belajar Profesor Madiun) focused on three learning techniques, namely Pomodoro, Cornell Notes and Feynman. According to the findings of this study, the three learning strategies can aid in the learning development of students at the Madiun City Professor Learning Center. According to the experts, the Pomodoro learning technique improves student concentration by optimizing time. Cornell observes that learning techniques can assist students in summarizing material. Meanwhile, the Feynman learning technique can help students learn a complex language by simplifying it (Ariviani et al., 2021).

Another study was written by Tuan (2022) entitled *Implementasi Metode Tutor Sebaya dalam Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di SMP Negeri 2* (Implementation of the Peer Tutor Method in Overcoming Student Learning Difficulties in Islamic Education Subjects at SMP Negeri 2). Pada penelitian tersebut, peneliti menekankan pada fokus terhadap implementasi metode pembelajaran tutor sebaya. In this study, the researchers highlighted the emphasis on implementing peer tutoring learning methods. The study's findings elucidate that the adoption of the peer tutoring learning method is well-received by students and effectively yields optimal results (Yani & Harfiani, 2022).

Drawing from the aforementioned background, this study suggests that there is a renewed discussion in the research that will be carried out in the forthcoming study, building upon previous research endeavors. The novelty that we raised in this study was the implementation of the Pomodoro learning method for Islamic Education subjects. This study emphasizes the efforts of educators in applying the Pomodoro learning method to students in Islamic Education subjects. This research is motivated by a gap analysis that reveals the limited utilization of the Pomodoro method across school subjects, encompassing both general and local content. Consequently, this study aims to make a positive impact and contribution by empowering educators to effectively employ the Pomodoro learning method.

## **METHOD**

The study employs a descriptive qualitative research methodology to effectively elucidate the meaning of the collected data. Consequently, a field study approach, characterized by direct observation of the subject under investigation, was adopted to gather essential information (Makmur et al., 2022). This study aims to explain and understand meaning from multiple sources of data before providing an interpretation of the meaning expressed in a written form (Fadli, 2021). Sources of data in this study were collected from observation, interviews, and documentation. Therefore, this research requires a deep focus to provide a conclusion on the data that researchers generate from data sources.

In this study, content analysis was applied for data collection and analysis. The content analysis technique is a strategy for analyzing and comprehending texts that attempt to objectively describe them (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019). According to Burhan Bungin there are five stages in conducting data analysis, 1) determining the topic of the problem, 2) compiling a theoretical framework, 3) compiling methodological tools, 4) data analysis, 5) interpretation of meaning (Bungin, 2017). These stages will shape a pattern of data that will ultimately culminate in the research's conclusion.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Learning constitutes an interactive process encompassing both instructional and learning activities executed by educators and students. In this case, the learning process is how an educator attempts to build a reciprocal relationship with

students (Inah, 2015). Learning fundamentally embodies a venture to nurture students, aiming to cultivate their competence to evolve into a generation marked by faith, piety, and civility. This objective is also enshrined within Indonesian legislation, notably including the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, and Higher Education Law No. 12 of 2012, as well as the clarifications in Article 31 Paragraph 3 and Article 31 Paragraph 5 of the 1945 Constitution. These legislations vividly outline Indonesia's national education objectives, centered on nurturing a generation grounded in faith, ethical character, and moral principles (Anwar, 2021). Therefore, all elements must be presented in the learning process.

The learning process depends on the pedagogical framework applied by educators in the classroom. An educator must understand the needs of different students, some find it easy to grasp the material quickly and some require a longer time (Janah et al., 2023). Hence, to mitigate errors in the learning process, educators require a method as a strategic approach. The application of such a method during the learning process aims to enhance the overall quality of education (Rahmawati et al., 2022). The learning process attains its optimal functioning when it is underpinned by educators' pedagogical skills and students' enthusiasm.

However, it is critical to underline that instructors must resist forcing students to use learning approaches that do not correspond to their competencies. This emphasizes the notion that each student's pursuit of knowledge cannot be standardized, requiring personalized approaches (Nurlaila, 2018). Because every student has a unique ability As a result, learning must pay attention to each learner's differentiation so

that the learning process is more structured and efficient (Amral & Asmar, 2020). Oleh karena itu, seorang pendidik harus menguasai metode belajar berbeda-beda dalam Hence, educators need to be proficient in various learning methods to effectively convey knowledge to students. This underscores the pivotal role educators play in the realm of education. When educators can create a supportive learning environment, it positively influences students' growth in both knowledge and skills (Aziz, 2017).

One of the biggest challenges for educators is to adapt different learning methods for each student (Astini, 2022). This is due to the time constraints educators face during the learning process. Furthermore, within this limited timeframe, educators are tasked with enhancing three crucial dimensions of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Wildan, 2017). Then there are the students who have learning difficulties and find it difficult to focus on learning. As a result, educators must immediately establish a learning process design to ensure that everything runs smoothly and optimally. Based on the preceding considerations, a management approach is required to support the success of learning.

It is critical to recognize that not all students can fully concentrate during class learning activities.

In fact, good learning concentration can improve students understanding (Amalia et al., 2022). According to studies, the cause of poor learning quality is mostly related to a lack of concentration in learning (Suryaman, 2015). As a result, instructors must consider solutions to these issues, such as giving repetitive material or developing engaging approaches for students.

## **Pomodoro Technique**

The Pomodoro learning technique is a time-based strategy that capitalizes on effective time management. This learning technique is based on time management to carry out tasks with conditions of maximum focus (Ariviani et al., 2021). This technique is particularly relevant because many students perceive having ample study time, yet often struggle to complete assignments. A contributing factor is the diversions that steer students away from their tasks, making it challenging to balance assignment completion and other trains of thought. Consequently, educators must devise methods to guide students in aligning their focus toward learning, thereby enabling them to optimize the learning process.

This learning technique was first introduced by Francesco Cirillo in 1980. The name of this learning technique is Pomodoro, taken from Italian which means tomato (Suryana, 2019). The Pomodoro learning technique is a way of learning that focuses on time management. Students only have 20 minutes to focus on studying and five minutes to rest (Muriyatmoko et al., 2022). During the last COVID-19 pandemic, many educators used the Pomodoro learning approach, which was shown to help increase learning (Kiranti et al., 2021). In its use, 20 minutes are spent studying the offered subject matter, and five minutes are spent breaking state situations. The goal of this distribution is to keep students from feeling burdened and bored when receiving information from educators. As a result, it takes time to periodically break the mood.

**Table 1.** The Pomodoro Learning Technique's Timing Framework

25 Min	5 Min						
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According to Ifan Suryana, to successfully use the Pomodoro Learning Technique, educators must carefully address many crucial issues. To begin, educators should direct students to keep themselves away from potential distractions that may interfere with their learning efforts. Second, educators must methodically prepare the subject matter intended for students, with a particular emphasis on the Islamic Education curriculum in this case. Third, instructors must establish explicit time limitations for beginning and ending each learning session. Finally, steady concentration during the entire process of learning activities is emphasized as a critical component in successfully implementing this strategy (Rif'an, 2020).

To test the Pomodoro technique, we conducted field research at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Malang. Aligned with the school's vision of "Religious, Character, Entrepreneurship, and Mastery of Science and Technology," students at Muhammadiyah 2 Malang Vocational High School are expected to attain proficiency in various subjects, methodologies, and practical skills. Consequently, this situation often leads to students feeling disinterested and lacking in enthusiasm. The accumulation of learning tasks can induce a state of mental saturation, characterized by profound boredom and exhaustion. This condition brings about feelings of weariness, a diminished sense of eagerness, and a lack of motivation to actively engage in learning activities (Rosita et al., 2022). There are many factors that contribute to student boredom. Internal variables include

weariness and drowsiness. Furthermore, it is caused by external variables such as teachers who are monotonous in their teaching, teachers who do not optimize appropriate learning resources, and school environmental problems such as dirty classrooms, noisy sounds while learning, and so on (Fatimah & Puspaningtyas, 2020). Thus, in light of this, the researchers are motivated to explore the extent to which the Pomodoro Learning Technique yields positive outcomes in the teaching and learning of Islamic Education at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Malang.

### **The Implementation of the Pomodoro Technique for Teaching Islamic Education**

We focused on the subject of Islamic Education since this subject is a compulsory subject at every level of education in Indonesia. In the process of implementing Islamic Education learning, educators are required to have broad insights and competencies regarding techniques or methods that will be used in the learning and teaching process. Similar to other disciplines, educators are similarly tasked with employing engaging and captivating teaching methods in the context of Islamic Education. This approach aims to prevent student disinterest and ennui, ensuring that students remain engaged and enthusiastic while absorbing the content delivered by educators (Rafliyanto & Mukhlis, 2023).

In practice, the Pomodoro learning technique is designed to structure learning time into intervals, typically consisting of 25 minutes for focused studying followed by a 5-minute break. This technique can be effectively integrated into various subjects, particularly those involving memorization, recall, and note-taking, such as Social Sciences (IPS), Pancasila and

Citizenship Education (PPKN), Indonesian Language, and Islamic Education. However, the current discourse centers on the application of the Pomodoro learning technique specifically within the domain of Islamic Education.

For the successful implementation of the Pomodoro technique according to the plan, educators must first acquaint themselves with the specific class hours designated for Islamic Education in each respective school. Referring to the regulations of the Ministry of education and Culture SK Mendikbudristek No. 56 of 2022, Islamic Education subject hours refer to the curriculum structure at each level (Mulyani et al., 2022). Therefore, the time allocated for Islamic Education subjects at the elementary and secondary school levels is different (Herdiansyah, 2022). At the elementary school (SD) level, Islamic Education comprises three class hours (JP), with each hour allowing for 35 minutes of study time. At the junior high school level, this is reduced to two class hours (JP), and each hour provides 40 minutes for learning. It's important to clarify that these lesson hours refer exclusively to extracurricular learning time and do not encompass any additional time allocated for projects aimed at reinforcing students' understanding of Pancasila.

The following procedures must be taken before employing this learning strategy in Islamic Education subjects:

First, the learning technique places an on time management within the learning process, thereby empowering students to effectively manage their time during the learning journey. In this case, we provided an example of Islamic Education subject matter for class XI high school published by

the Ministry of Education and Culture in the 2017 revised edition in chapter 5: The Golden Age of Islam.

Second, educators use a timer to set for time of 25 minutes. If the hours for Islamic Education subjects are 35 minutes per subject from junior high to high school, educators must set aside 25 minutes to work on assignments given by educators about the Golden Age of Islam, five minutes for breaking state season, and five minutes for evaluation. The benefit of using this methodology is that educators can use three learning methods at the same time in less than two class hours or 80 minutes;

Third, educators urge students to prepare to learn Islamic Education subject matter with focus and seriousness for the first 25 minutes, or until the timer goes off. The goal is to teach kids how to concentrate on something they are going to do or have done. Students are not permitted to engage in any other activity throughout this learning process. Students must be used to focusing on what they are doing.

Fourth, once the alarm goes off in the first 25 minutes, the teacher tells every student to pause for a moment, even though the learning process has not yet concluded; the purpose is to refresh students' thoughts after receiving the educator's material. Use this timing method throughout the learning process. Also, different forms of learning approaches as creations so that students are not bored and bored when obtaining material from instructors. The time allotted for Islamic Cultural History content for class XI SMA is 25 minutes. The following is a summary of Chapter 5: Islam's Golden Age:

**Table 2.** The Schematic Distribution of Time for Islamic Education.

25 Min	5 Min	25 Min	5 Min	25 Min	5 Min
Discussion		Mind Mapping		Knowledge Sharing	

Fifth, following a 25-minute learning interval, a subsequent five-minute break ensues. During this break, educators can engage students in refreshing activities, encompassing brain exercises, icebreakers, and quizzes with incentives. This interval aims to facilitate students in relaxing and preparing for the forthcoming learning session. The technique proves to be efficacious in curbing potential distractions during the learning process. The 25-minute time frame is strategically chosen to combat any potential tedium that might arise throughout the learning journey.

The processes stated above were, of course, designed and constructed to provide a glimpse of the Pomodoro learning approach in the subject of Islamic Education class XI SMA in Chapter 5. The methods outlined above can, of course, be modified to meet the needs of educators who need to change hours in other disciplines. The most significant aspect of this Pomodoro learning strategy is that it emphasizes time as the primary tool in learning, and the study time limit is set at only 25 minutes with a minute break. Because it is indicated in the science of NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) that if the brain has gone into a difficult conversation, then a breaking state must be carried out (Amin, 2016).

There was no difference in the mental change that had been conducted based on the observations made at the research

locus. Students in this case, on the other hand, have a bit more concentration during study sessions and can understand learning tasks more quickly than before. This demonstrates that by reducing the secondary load of monitoring and managing rest time, students can concentrate better and accomplish learning activities more readily (Biwer et al., 2023).

### **The Challenge of the Implementation of the Pomodoro Technique**

Every use of learning techniques or methods has its own challenges in its implementation, including this technique. According to Suryana (2019), there are several challenges in applying the Pomodoro technique. Firstly, students might encounter difficulty in maintaining focus during the initial 20 minutes of applying this learning method. Secondly, the strict time limit of 25 minutes for studying could create pressure on students, potentially disrupting their concentration due to the brevity of the learning duration. Thirdly, educators need to invest significant effort in shaping students' understanding of the critical role that time management plays in the learning process.

Apart from the challenges above, Pomodoro is a technique that can increase the effectiveness of student learning and foster greater interest in the learning process. Notably, research by Muhammad Zaki Zikrillah, Muhammad Irwan Padli, and Sri Suci Ayu Sundari underscores the effectiveness of the Pomodoro learning technique in elevating the quality of learning, particularly during the pandemic (Nasution et al., 2022). Amrita Mandal similarly affirmed that the Pomodoro technique is a straightforward yet potent approach to establishing a well-defined learning focus (Mandal, 2020). Thus,

based on the aforementioned explanations, it can be inferred that the Pomodoro learning technique has the potential to enhance both learning effectiveness and time efficiency in the educational process. However, it's noteworthy that this technique remains underutilized among educators in Indonesia, particularly within the context of Islamic Education subjects.

## CONCLUSION

The integration of the Pomodoro learning technique aids educators in effectively managing time and honing students' concentration skills. This technique limits the learning process to a duration of 25 minutes. For instance, if an Islamic Education class spans 80 to 90 minutes, educators can divide it into three to four study sessions, each incorporating diverse learning approaches. Nonetheless, it is crucial to underscore that the Pomodoro technique's successful adoption requires habituation to get maximum results. In its execution at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Malang, the technique led to observable shifts in student behavior; however, this study has not found any mental and psychological changes in students. It is recommended that future research delve into exploring the potential mental or psychological impacts on students after implementing the Pomodoro technique.

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