

## **BREAKING BARRIERS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM THE PROBING PROMPTING MODEL'S IMPLEMENTATION IN A JOMBANG SCHOOL**

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**Abstract.** This study investigates the effectiveness of the Probing Prompting learning model in the instruction of Akidah Akhlak in class X-C at MAN 1 Jombang. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach and a case study methodology, the research examines the implementation stages, effectiveness, challenges, and specific modifications made during the application of this model. The findings demonstrate a substantial improvement in student learning outcomes, particularly in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Challenges such as students' shyness, varied public speaking skills, and feelings of saturation with extensive material were identified. However, the educator's innovative instructional strategies and modifications effectively mitigated these issues. The study concludes that the Probing Prompting model, which focuses on in-depth inquiry and active student engagement, significantly enhances the learning environment, improving overall educational outcomes in Akidah Akhlak instruction. These results underscore the model's potential applicability across various subjects and educational contexts.

**Keywords:** *Probing Prompting; Student Engagement; Instructional Strategies*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The inculcation and development of "akhlakul karimah", or noble character in students, are acquired through their participation in learning activities, particularly in Akidah Akhlak. This subject is integral to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and crucial in shaping students' character. Substantially, it also motivates the application of values of monotheism and noble behaviour (Hasbullah, 2005, p. 18). The characteristic nature of the Akidah Akhlak subject is its focus on the realms of knowledge, understanding, and the student's appreciation of faith and how this faith is actualized and visualized through their behaviour. Ultimately, this contributes to the specific objective of the Akidah Akhlak subject: to nurture and enhance students' faith, encouraging them to exhibit commendable behaviour.

The teaching of Akidah Akhlak at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1 Jombang has a significantly urgent influence on forming the religious character of its students. Geographically, the school is situated in the heart of the Jombang District, making it susceptible to various external influences, both positive and negative. Moreover, MAN 1 Jombang stands as one of the favoured schools in the district, evidenced by its acceptance of 516 new students in the year (Humasy MAN 1 Jombang, 2022).

In terms of curriculum, MAN 1 Jombang adopted the independent curriculum in its teaching activities starting in July 2022. However, this curriculum was initially implemented only at the tenth-grade level, as its adoption was phased and relatively new. The school was among

the pioneers in employing the independent curriculum in Jombang District, as several other schools in the area continued using the 2013 curriculum at the time.

Based on observations made by researchers at MAN 1 Jombang, researchers found that in terms of teaching, Aqidah Akhlak educators at MAN 1 Jombang used the lecture method and asked students to look for examples of behaviour based on the material discussed. This teaching method is often used, so that some students become less active in the learning process because they feel bored and do not understand the material presented, especially since the Aqidah Akhlak subject in class X-C is in the last hour, namely 9-10 (13.05-14.25), so that it influences student learning outcomes. During the daily tests, the class received unsatisfactory grades and was considered far from the expected target grades. This was reinforced when researchers obtained data from class X-C MAN 1 Jombang. The highest score obtained by class X-C during the daily exam was 83, the lowest score was 29, and the average score was 54 from the total number of class X-C is 36 students. There were only 3 students who achieved completeness, the remaining 33 students had not achieved the completeness score (Pre-Research Observations at MAN 1 Jombang on 10 August-11 October 2022).

Implementing values in the Akidah Akhlak subject is crucial in shaping the students' good religious character. Furthermore, a strong understanding and character in religion, derived from the Akidah Akhlak lessons, enable students to discern and filter external influences. Given these issues, educators must create an active learning atmosphere. Indicators of such an atmosphere include students' engagement, demonstrated by their willingness to inquire about the lessons. The ability to ask questions is not only a measure of how well students receive and comprehend information but also aids them in obtaining complete information and exercising their cognitive abilities.

Therefore, educators must establish a pleasant learning environment to foster students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. One approach to achieving this is by selecting an appropriate model and strategy for the Akidah Akhlak subject that can accommodate the subject's content. Occasionally, educators should vary the learning models to maintain students' interest in the lessons. Inappropriate selection of learning models can impact students' learning outcomes, underscoring the importance of careful selection before conducting lessons.

The researcher employs the "probing prompting" learning model to enhance learning outcomes in this study. This model stimulates students' minds to present arguments, fosters self-confidence in expressing opinions, and encourages critical thinking, especially when the educator poses questions that need to be resolved or answered by the students.

The rationale for choosing the probing-prompting model is manifold: first, it involves students directly in the teaching and learning activities; second, it offers an alternative to conventional teaching methods that can lead to student disengagement and issues such as copying classmates' assignments, thereby affecting learning outcomes; third, the model ensures that no student can avoid participating in learning activities, as they may be engaged in a question-and-answer session at any moment. Therefore, students must maintain focus and full concentration during lessons, as the educator may query them anytime. Fourth, the Akidah Akhlak teacher for class X-C at MAN 1 Jombang has yet to utilize the probing-prompting learning model.

## **B. METHODS**

In this research, researchers used a qualitative descriptive approach. The specific type of research used in this research is a case study. The reason for choosing a qualitative descriptive approach in the form of a case study was the researcher's aim to obtain comprehensive and detailed data regarding the uniqueness and background of the process of implementing the probing prompting learning model on the Aqidah Akhlak subjects in class X-C MAN 1 Jombang. Next, the characteristic features of this process are generalized (Rusandi & Rusli, 2021).

The researcher will conduct detailed observations of the teaching process in class X-C, focusing on applying the probing prompting learning model. This involves both passive observations (without interaction) and active ones (with interaction), depending on the session and the necessity for clarification or deeper understanding.

In-depth interviews with the Akidah Akhlak teacher, students, and relevant school administrators will be carried out to gather first-hand accounts and perspectives on the learning model's implementation and effects. These interviews will be semi-structured, allowing for pre-planned questions and the flexibility to explore topics further based on the interviewee's responses (Hardani & dkk., 2020). The researcher will review relevant documents, such as lesson plans, student assignments, and assessment records, to understand the planning, execution, and outcomes of the probing prompting learning model.

The data collected will be analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves coding and categorizing data into themes that emerge from the data itself (Helaludin & Wijaya, 2019). This helps identify patterns and draw meaningful interpretations related to the implementation and effectiveness of the probing prompting model. Given the qualitative nature of the data, narrative analysis will be used to construct a cohesive story that depicts the learning process, challenges, successes, and unique instances experienced during the implementation of the probing prompting model.

A comparison might be made between the probing prompting model's outcomes and other teaching methods previously or concurrently used. This helps in understanding the relative strengths and weaknesses of the models. Combining these techniques aims to provide a holistic understanding of the probing prompting learning model's application in the Akidah Akhlak lessons at MAN 1 Jombang.

## **C. RESULT & DISCUSSION**

### **1. Planning Phase**

Before implementing the learning model, the researcher conducted preparations, including arranging learning tools such as the Learning Activity Plan (RKP) in alignment with the intended teaching material. Coordination with the Akidah Akhlak educator of class X-C was essential, considering they would be the ones to carry out this learning model. Preparation is a crucial initial step for educators, as it is the foundation upon which all basic skills, knowledge, and profound understanding of the learning situation and objects are built. Therefore, educators need to possess adequate preparation skills for teaching.

#### **a. Implementation Process Phase**

Regarding the syntax of the probing prompting learning model, the researcher adopted the theory from Nur Awaliyah (Awaliah et al., 2021). The researcher presents a discussion about the syntax of the probing prompting learning model in a descriptive analysis based on the research results as follows; first, Giving New Situation. At this stage, the educator first gave students a material orientation about Islam Wasathiyah. This method proved effective in delivering a good stimulus. As Setyati Puji W. opined, providing stimuli to students is essential for fostering a learning interaction that aids students in exploring the material or subject matter. This effort can unlock the students' knowledge reservoirs about the material, making the learning process more interactive.

Second, Formulating and Discussion. This stage, where the educator allows students to formulate answers regarding problems (Muthmainnah, 2019), also involves ice-breaking activities to invigorate the learning atmosphere. Effective learning requires optimal concentration (Marzatifa & Agustina, 2021). Sometimes, students lose focus due to various internal and external factors. Therefore, occasional Ice Breaking is necessary to revive enthusiasm and restore students' concentration.

Third, Asking Questions. In this step, the educator poses questions to the students, who will then formulate the answers (Muthmainnah, 2019). Questions are posed to a randomly selected student. An example of a question asked was, "How can one practice religion amidst different beliefs and convictions?" Here, the educator posed the Question with friendly gestures, ensuring the students were not scared or intimidated (Theriana, 2020).

Fourth, Answering Questions. This is the phase where students respond to the posed questions. Based on the researcher's observation, during the first term, students could answer without referring to notes, although some hesitated. However, in the second term, many students referred to their discussion notes with their desk mates. This outcome

resulted from the educator's previous policy, where, during the second term, problem formulation was conducted through discussion with desk mates, leading to two students producing one answer from their discussion, typically written down.

Fifth, giving a Hint Relating to the Question. If a student's answer is incorrect at this stage, the educator poses guiding follow-up questions to help the student get closer to the intended answer (Muthmainnah, 2019). Based on this, the educator must provide clues that students can understand, assisting them in responding to the initial question posed.

Sixth, Ensure Competency is Achieved. This stage involves the educator ensuring students have met the learning indicators, commonly called the evaluation phase. Therefore, during the observation, the educator tasked the students of class X-C with creating examples of current events or behaviours of radicalism. This method was employed to gauge the student's level of understanding following their learning experience.

## **2. Effectiveness of Implementing the Probing Prompting Learning Model in Akidah Akhlak Lessons in Class X-MAN 1 Jombang**

To assess the learning outcomes of class X-C students, researchers referred to Bloom's classification of learning outcomes, encompassing three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Halimah, 2022).

### **a. Cognitive Domain**

Bloom defines the cognitive domain as all efforts related to brain activities, consisting of six levels of thinking processes: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Halimah, 2022). The researcher assessed these aspects by conducting daily evaluations comprising ten multiple-choice and five descriptive questions. The results showed that class X-C experienced an improvement in Akidah Akhlak post-implementation of the probing prompting learning model. Initially, the average score was 54, with only three students passing. After implementing the new learning model, the average score rose to 87.4, with 34 out of 35 students passing.

### **b. Affective Domain**

This domain consists of values and attitudes (Sudjana, 2010). Affective learning outcomes were observed through students' behaviour towards lessons, learning motivation, discipline, social relationships, and the way they respect educators and peers. During field observations, particularly in class X-C, students were genuinely focused. There were no instances of playing, chatting, or indifference towards the educator's explanations, indicating that the students well-interpreted points of discipline and respect for the educator. Regarding learning motivation, students were enthusiastic about participating in the lessons. The researcher noted that students were motivated because they anticipated being questioned by the educator during the probing prompting learning model implementation, compelling them to pay attention and focus on the educator's instructions so as not to miss any material and be able to answer the questions posed.

### **c. Psychomotor Domain**

Learning outcomes in the psychomotor domain involve skills and the ability to act. Moreover, these outcomes follow cognitive and affective learning outcomes (Sudjiono, 2011). The researcher measured the psychomotor learning outcomes of class X-C students from their skills and physical activities. For instance, when students were chosen to answer the educator's questions, they always responded based on their knowledge and experience, even though some answers were less than perfect, according to the educator. This indicated that class X-C students had gained confidence in taking action.

## **3. Evaluation Phase**

In this phase, the author discusses the challenges and supporting factors encountered while implementing the probing prompting learning model in Akidah Akhlak lessons in class X-C MAN 1 Jombang.

a. Inhibiting Factors; first, Shyness due to a lack of understanding of the material. Some students who were not chosen to answer questions did not ask questions about the

discussed material. Consequently, the educator needed help determining which students had not understood the material on Islam Wasathi. Those students were actually confused but too embarrassed to ask questions. This embarrassment, identified as cognitive shyness, stems from feeling inferior or believing others have greater influence (Afandi et al., 2014). This was evident when students saw their peers answering the educator's questions well.

Second, Students' inability to articulate well. The public speaking abilities of class X-C students were uneven, posing a challenge when the educator employed a student-centred learning model (Marlina & Sholehun, 2021). While the students' answers were correct, their delivery needed improvement. This aligns with Dale Carnegie's opinion (Khoriroh, 2018) that becoming a public speaker requires practice and learning. The learning model used in class X-C often involved creating examples from discussed commendable or reprehensible behaviours, limiting opportunities to foster public speaking skills.

Third, students feel overwhelmed due to excessive material explanations. One of the syntaxes of the probing prompting learning model is "Giving new situation," where educators present a new problem-related situation. Before doing this, the educator explained the material on Islam Wasathi. However, the lengthy explanation led to students feeling overwhelmed.

Fourth, students feel panicked when selected by the educator. Based on interviews with class X-C students, they felt panic when randomly chosen by the educator to answer questions, fearing their answers might be incorrect. Sigmund stated that such panic or anxiety falls under neurotic anxiety, where an individual fears losing control of their instincts (Karauwan, Matthew Zico., 2020), leading to actions that might result in punishment or sanctions. The students' fear of giving the wrong answer and facing the consequences was unwarranted, as the educator did not penalize incorrect responses but helped by providing additional guiding questions.

b. Supporting Factors; first, Students' understanding of the material. Students' comprehension of the material is a primary asset in following the probing prompting learning model, especially during the probing question phase, where educators randomly select students to answer questions. According to Yusuf Anas, understanding means using existing knowledge or recalling something similar to previously taught material (Alfiani & Firmansyah, 2022). Thus, students relied on their understanding to answer the educator's questions. Therefore, the educator initially explained the material to equip students with material comprehension, as done by Mrs. Ida Inayahwati, the Akidah Akhlak teacher for class X-C. Consequently, the implementation of the probing prompting learning model was successful, with most selected students answering the educator's questions.

Second, the Educator's effective delivery of the learning model and material. Based on the researcher's observations, the Akidah Akhlak teacher for class X-C effectively implemented the probing prompting learning model, from the method of delivery to posing questions in a friendly, non-intimidating manner, respecting students' answers and providing clues through questions tailored to each student's understanding level.

Third, Students' orderly and conducive participation in learning. A well-ordered and conducive class enables students to focus optimally on lessons, enhancing their interest and motivation (Aulia Dini Hanipah et al., 2022). The researcher observed that students were attentive during the learning model's implementation, not playing, chatting or sleeping. Therefore, it is unsurprising that class X-C's learning outcomes in Akidah Akhlak improved compared to previous results, attributable to the orderly and conducive learning environment.

#### **4. Modifications During the Implementation of the Probing Prompting Learning Model in Akidah Akhlak Lessons in Class X-C MAN 1 Jombang**

The educator made several modifications while implementing the Probing Prompting learning model in class X-C. These were necessary to align the educator's teaching approach with the classroom conditions. As a result of these adjustments, certain elements outside the conventional Probing Prompting learning model concept were incorporated by the educator,

including:

a. Providing Material Orientation Related to the Subject Under Study

The educator provided material orientation to students during the "giving new situation" phase. This orientation was intentionally given to equip students with the necessary background on the subject, especially for those unfamiliar with the material. Additionally, this orientation helped students with previous knowledge of the material refresh their memory, enabling them to participate in subsequent stages of the learning process actively. As Setyati Puji W. suggests, providing stimuli to students, in this case, material orientation, helps foster a learning interaction that enables students to explore the material or subject (Kurniawan & Astuti, 2017). This approach is vital, considering the Probing Prompting learning model requires students to be at the centre of the learning activities (Student-Centered Learning), with the educator acting as a facilitator.

b. Use of Ice Breaking

Ice-breaking activities were conducted to rejuvenate the learning atmosphere. Effective learning requires optimal concentration (Marzatifa & Agustina, 2021). Sometimes, due to various internal and external factors, students lose their focus. Therefore, occasional ice-breaking is necessary to revive their spirit and concentration. While implementing the Probing Prompting learning model in class X-C, the educator occasionally initiated ice breaking, considering the Akidah Akhlak lesson was scheduled at the end of the day, and students were already exhausted from previous classes.

c. Allowing Students to Note Down Answers to Questions Posed

The educator instructed students to write down their answers. This practice was not without reason, given the uneven public speaking capabilities among class X-C students, which still needed nurturing. This was due to the infrequent use of learning models that encouraged students to speak up and express their opinions directly in previous lessons. Thus, having students write their answers facilitated them when they were called upon to respond to questions. This aligns with Smith and Ragan's theory, cited by Punaji Setyosari, that learning is a process of delivering information or facilitating activities that help students achieve specific learning goals (Setyosari, 2017). This convenience provided by the educator would positively impact the students, especially in making classroom activities more interactive.

d. More Frequently Redirecting Questions to Other Students Rather Than Providing Clues

When a student's answer was incomplete or imperfect, the educator preferred to redirect the question to another student rather than giving a clue. This strategy was adopted to save time, considering that if 3-5 students could not provide perfect answers, giving each a clue would be time-consuming. In contrast, passing the question to another student saved time and ensured that other students could respond to the educator's questions. The students who could not initially provide perfect answers could listen to their peers' responses and construct new knowledge based on the information provided by others.

## D. CONCLUSION

In this research, implementing the probing prompting learning model in Akidah Akhlak lessons at class X-C MAN 1 Jombang has proven effective in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. This model, emphasizing thorough and continuous inquiry through questioning, has facilitated a more interactive and responsive learning environment where students can be more active in the learning process. Challenges encountered during the implementation, such as students' shyness, imbalances in public speaking skills, and material saturation, have presented significant opportunities for reflection and instructional strategy adjustments. Modifications made by the educator (including providing material orientation, using ice breaking, allowing students to note down answers, and passing questions around) have effectively addressed some of these hurdles. There has been a significant increase in achievements in the cognitive domain, evident from the improvement in students' average scores and the number of students achieving academic

completeness. Moreover, the affective domain, related to values and attitudes, has also seen positive development in students' behaviour, learning motivation, discipline, social relationships, and respect towards educators and peers. In the psychomotor domain, students demonstrated courage in action, enhancing their skills and physical activities. In conclusion, the probing prompting learning model's adaptability and the educator's innovative modifications significantly contribute to a more dynamic, engaging, and effective learning experience in Akidah Akhlak lessons. This approach supports academic performance and holistically nurtures students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. Further research is recommended to explore similar strategies across diverse educational settings and subjects.

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