

## The Effect of the Discovery Learning Model on The Understanding Concept of Fasting and Character of Piety in Junior High School Students

Siti Mulikhah<sup>1\*</sup>, Eges Triwahyuni<sup>2</sup>, Ahmad Zaki Emyus<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas PGRI Argopuro Jember, Indonesia

\*e-mail: [sitimulikhah72@gmail.com](mailto:sitimulikhah72@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

*This research is motivated by the fact that students understand fasting only as a ritual of worship without understanding the deep meaning and implications in everyday life, so that more interactive learning innovations are needed and motivate students to seek and find knowledge independently and actively, one of which is the discovery learning model. The purpose of this study was to determine whether there is a significant influence of Discovery Learning on students' understanding of the concept of fasting and whether there is a significant influence on students' character. This study uses a quasi-experiment type with a Pretest-Posttest with a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The research sample was grade VIII junior high school students. Data collection techniques, tests, and questionnaires. It was concluded that discovery learning has significantly influenced students' understanding of fasting and the development of students' character.*

### Keywords:

Discovery Learning; Concept of Fasting; Character of Piety.

### ABSTRAK

*Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kenyataan bahwa siswa memahami puasa hanya sebagai ritual ibadah tanpa memahami makna dan implikasi yang mendalam dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, sehingga diperlukan inovasi pembelajaran yang lebih interaktif dan memotivasi siswa untuk mencari dan menemukan ilmu pengetahuan secara mandiri dan aktif, salah satunya adalah model pembelajaran penemuan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui ada tidaknya pengaruh yang signifikan Pembelajaran Penemuan terhadap pemahaman siswa tentang konsep puasa dan ada tidaknya pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap karakter siswa. Penelitian ini*

*menggunakan jenis eksperimen semu dengan Pretest-Posttest dengan Desain Nonequivalent Control Group. Sampel penelitian adalah siswa kelas VIII Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP). Teknik pengumpulan data, tes, dan angket. Disimpulkan bahwa pembelajaran penemuan berpengaruh secara signifikan terhadap pemahaman siswa tentang puasa dan pengembangan karakter siswa.*

**Kata kunci:**

Discovery learning; Konsep puasa; Karakter bertaqwa.

## 1. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education and Character Education in Junior High Schools (SMP) are important in shaping students' understanding of spiritual and moral values (Umiarso & Makhful, 2018). One of the essential aspects of this subject is understanding fasting as one of the pillars of Islam that every Muslim must understand and practice. Fasting is not just about refraining from eating and drinking, but also teaches noble values such as patience, honesty, and devotion (Ngaisah, Aulia, & Fadillah, 2023). A deep understanding of fasting can help students form pious behavior, namely, behavior that always tries to carry out Allah's commands and avoid His prohibitions. In education, developing a pious character is one of the important goals that need to be achieved, considering that high school students are in a crucial phase of moral development (Dzofir, 2020; Desyandri, Muhammadiyah, Mansurdin, & Fahmi, 2019). Therefore, a correct understanding of fasting and the development of pious character needs special attention in the learning process at school.

In Islamic teachings, fasting has the main aim of achieving a degree of piety, as stated in Al-Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 183 (Al-Qur'an, 2019): "O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become pious" (Al-Qur'an, 2019). By carrying out the fast, students carry out their religious obligations and develop the emotional and spiritual aspects essential in community life (Harianto, 2021). Furthermore, the significance of fasting in Islamic teachings also lies in its ability to form good habits and internalize noble values consistently. According to Syaifi (2019), fasting regularly can improve self-discipline, build positive thinking habits, and foster awareness of the importance of maintaining good relationships with God and fellow human beings. In schools, teaching fasting is not just about teaching the procedures for its implementation, but also instilling moral and ethical values that support the creation of a pious character (Martaida, Bukit, & Ginting, 2017).

Developing a pious character in Islamic teachings has a central role, especially in efforts to form a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also has strong moral and spiritual integrity. Islamic education aims to transfer religious knowledge, build a personality with noble morals, and contribute positively to society (Setiawan, Alwi, Aziz, Fajar, & Yurna, 2023). In formal education in schools, developing a pious character must be an integral part of the learning process.

Character education in junior high schools is very important because students are transitioning towards adulthood, where they are vulnerable to negative influences from the social environment and the media (Abbas & Afifi, 2021). Therefore, character education that focuses on forming a pious attitude effectively solves moral and social challenges in the modern era. In addition, developing a pious character is also important to prepare students to face the challenges of globalization and rapid technological developments. A pious character provides a solid moral foundation for students in overcoming the negative influences of globalization, such as hedonism, individualism, and materialism. With a pious character, students will be able to protect themselves from actions that are not in accordance with Islamic values, and play an active role in building a more just and harmonious society (Herawati, Sinta, Marati, & Sari, 2025).

However, the challenges faced in forming an understanding of the concept of fasting and the character of *tawqaf* today are that conventional learning methods are less effective in fostering deep understanding and character formation. The results of observations and interviews conducted by researchers in class VIII of SMP Negeri 2 Umbulsari Jember showed that students understood fasting only as a worship ritual without understanding the deep meaning and implications in everyday life. Overcoming this problem requires interactive learning innovation and motivating students to seek and find knowledge independently. One of the learning concepts relevant to modern education's needs is the Discovery Learning Model (Wagiyanto, Komalasari, & Syahindra, 2024; Laila & Gusniadi, 2019). This model encourages students to participate in the learning process actively, finding concepts independently through exploration, analysis, and problem solving (Laila & Gusniadi, 2019). In the Discovery Learning Model, students are not only given information directly by the teacher, but are directed to find knowledge independently through search, analysis, and problem-solving activities (Ozdem-Yilmaz & Bilican, 2020). The students' activeness in this learning process is expected to increase deeper and more sustainable understanding, especially in understanding abstract concepts such as fasting and developing pious character in Islamic education (Sunarto & Amalia, 2022). According to a study by The Last Supper (2024), the Discovery Learning model in Islamic religious education and character education can increase spiritual awareness and help students better understand the meaning of worship, such as fasting, and its relevance in character building. By implementing the Discovery learning model, students must understand the fundamentals comprehensively and internalize the values until a strong, pious character is formed.

With various explanations regarding the Discovery learning model above, researchers believe that this model positively influences students' understanding of fasting and significantly contributes to developing a pious character (Muna, 2019; Fikriyah, 2019). This aligns with the research results of Nusantari et al. (2021), which show that constructivist approaches such as the Discovery learning model encourage students to construct their knowledge actively, improving long-term memory and understanding. Other studies also highlight the potential of the Discovery Learning Model in developing student character Khutomi et al. (2024), in their research on Islamic religious education and character education, found that the discovery learning model not only improves students' understanding of religious concepts, but also helps develop spiritual, moral character and critical

thinking (Sahid & Riva'i, 2023)(Kurniawati, Oktradiksa, & Shalikhah, 2021). By allowing students to reflect on and explore religious values, this model has proven effective in forming pious characters, such as patience, self-control, and a sense of social responsibility.

This finding is reinforced by research by Husemahu (2021), which states that using the Discovery learning model in Islamic Religious Education and Character Education in secondary schools helps students internalize religious values better, especially when facing everyday challenges. In addition, Chamidah et al. (2022) in their research on character learning in Islamic schools emphasized that the Discovery Learning Model allows students to experience more meaningful learning by connecting abstract concepts with real experiences. Furthermore, Chamidah et al. (2022) also emphasized that this model not only improves cognitive understanding but also plays an important role in developing positive characters through self-reflection and exploration. These studies support the conclusion that the Discovery Learning Model effectively improves conceptual understanding and develops students' characters, especially in learning contexts that require appreciating moral and spiritual values (D. N. Sari, Sesmiarni, Arifmiboy, & Junaidi, 2023).

Based on the above explanation, this study focuses on the influence of the Discovery learning model on the understanding of fasting and the development of pious character of junior high school students. The discovery learning model was chosen because of its potential in encouraging active involvement of students in the learning process, allowing them to discover and internalize concepts independently (Harmita, 2023). Through this model, it is hoped that students' understanding of fasting is not only limited to the ritualistic aspect, but also includes a deeper understanding of spiritual and moral values (Mu'min, Nurhadi, & Alatas, 2024). Using this learning model, students are encouraged to explore the meaning of fasting, relate it to everyday life, and understand the role of this worship in forming a pious character (Nida, 2024). This study aims to (1) determine whether there is a significant influence of the Discovery learning model on students' understanding of the concept of fasting; and (2) determine whether there is a significant influence of the discovery learning Model on students' pious character.

## 2. Methods

Researchers use the Quasi-Experimental type. Experimental research is a study that identifies causal relationships between independent variables and dependent variables, where the independent variables are controlled in such a way as to determine their effect on the dependent variable (Indra, 2021). This study uses random sampling. The main purpose of random sampling is to ensure that the sample taken truly represents the characteristics of the population being studied. In this study, the independent variable is the Discovery Learning Model, while the dependent variable is understanding the concept of fasting and the character of piety. The experimental design used by the researcher is as follows.

**Table 1.** Pretest-Posttest with Nonequivalent Control Group Design

<b>Class</b>	<b>Pretest</b>	<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Posttest</b>
Control	$T_1$	-	$T_2$
Experiment	$T_1$	X	$T_2$

(Payadnya & Jayantika, 2018)

*Research Subjects and Objects*

The population in this study was taken from State Junior High School 2, Umbulsari, Jember, with the research sample of Class VIII students (totaling thirty students). This research was conducted in the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

*Data collection*

Data collection was carried out using questionnaires and test techniques. A questionnaire is a technique used to investigate information by providing data in a structured and numerical manner. According to Cohen et al. (2018), the questionnaire can be given without researchers in the field and is quite easy to analyze. This study's questionnaire was intended to collect data on students' pious character. While the test, according to Cohen et al. (2018), is one of the most powerful numerical data collection techniques in educational research. This study used tests to collect data on students' understanding of fasting.

After the data on students' understanding of fasting and pious character were collected, the data were first subjected to prerequisite tests (normality and homogeneity tests). The researcher conducted the normality test to check whether the normal distribution assumption is acceptable. Meanwhile, the researcher conducted the homogeneity test to confirm whether the groups to be compared have the same variability. After both prerequisite tests are met, hypothesis testing was necessary using the independent sample t-test with the following.

$$t_{hit} = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{SS_1 + SS_2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2} \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

Description:

- $M_1$  = mean score of group 1
- $M_2$  = mean score of group 2
- $SS_1$  = sum of squares of group 1
- $SS_2$  = sum of squares of group 2
- $n_1$  = number of subjects/samples in group 1
- $n_2$  = number of subjects/samples in group 2

The researcher conducted the independent sample t-test data analysis using SPSS software to measure whether there was a significant influence, understanding the concept of fasting and pious character between the experimental and control groups. The two hypotheses to be tested are as follows.

**First Hypothesis**

Ho1 = The Discovery Learning Model does not significantly influence students' understanding of fasting.

Ha1 = There is a significant influence of the Discovery Learning Model on students' understanding of fasting.

**Second Hypothesis**

Ho2 = The Discovery Learning Model has no significant influence on students' pious character.

Ha2 = There is a significant influence of the Discovery Learning Model on students' pious character.

The basis for decision-making is a comparison with a 5% error rate.  $t_{hitung} > t_{tabel}$ , If  $>$  then the proposed null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. Conversely, if  $<$ , then the proposed null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected (Sugiyono, 2020).

**3. Results and Discussion**

Below, researchers present data on students' understanding of fasting from the experimental and control groups.

**Table 2.** Pretest Score of Fasting Concept Understanding of Students in the Control and Experimental Groups

Control		Experiment	
Category	Mark	Category	Mark
Mean	5.5	Mean	5.3
Median	5.5	Median	5.3
Mode	5.3	Mode	4.5
Variants	0.625	Variants	0.921
Highest	7.0	Highest	7.3
Lowest	4.3	Lowest	3.5
Span	3.7	Span	4.8
Total Value	160.9	Total Value	162.6

Based on the data in Table 2 above, it is known that the average pretest scores of the control and experimental groups are not much different, namely 5.5 for the control group and 5.3 for the experimental group. Thus, it can be concluded that the pretest results of the two groups do not differ significantly. Below, the researcher presents the posttest data, understanding the concept of fasting students from the experimental and control groups.

**Table 3.** Posttest Score of Fasting Concept Understanding of Students in the Control and Experimental Groups

Control		Experiment	
Category	Mark	Category	Mark
Mean	6.7	Mean	7.5
Median	7.0	Median	7.5
Mode	7.3	Mode	7.5
Variants	0.842	Variants	0.951
Highest	8.3	Highest	9.3
Lowest	5.3	Lowest	5.3
Span	5.0	Span	4.5
Total Value	203	Total Value	233

Based on the data in Table 3 above, it is known that the average posttest scores of the control and experimental groups differ significantly. The control group's average is 6.7, and the average of the experimental group is 7.5. The average increase in the control group is 1.2, and the average increase in the experimental group is 2.2. Below, the researcher presents data on the pious character of students from the control group.

**Table 4.** Character Score of Students in the Control Group

Category	Mark
Sample	29
Highest	113
Lowest	85
Average	92.15
Median	91
Mode	91
Standard Deviation	5,451

Based on the data in Table 4 above, it is known that the number of samples is 29 students. The highest and lowest scores obtained are 113 and 85, respectively. The average score is 92.15 with a median and mode value of 91, while the standard deviation is 5.451. Below, the researcher presents data on the pious character of students from the experimental group.

**Table 5.** Character Score of Students in the Experimental Group

Category	Mark
Sample	29
Highest	122

Category	Mark
Lowest	92
Average	97.71
Median	96
Mode	92
Standard Deviation	6,283

Based on the data in Table 5 above, it is known that the number of samples is 29 students. The highest and lowest scores obtained are 122 and 92, respectively. The average score is 97.71 with a median of 96 and a mode 92, while the standard deviation is 6.283.

After the researcher obtained data on students' understanding of fasting and pious character, the next step was to conduct a normality test and a homogeneity test as a prerequisite test. The following are the results.

**Table 6.** Data Normality Test Results

Data	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Conclusion
	Absolute	df	Sig.	
Pretest control	0.073	29	0.971	Normal
Posttest control	0.604	29	0.642	Normal
Experiment Pretest	0.082	29	0.926	Normal
Posttest Experiment	0.091	29	0.918	Normal
Character of pious control	0.153	29	0.402	Normal
Experimental pious character	0.083	29	0.926	Normal

Based on the data in Table 6 above, it is known that all pretest, posttest, and pious character data from both groups obtained sig. (p-value) > 0.05. Thus, the data can be accepted, which means the data is normally distributed.

**Table 7.** Results of Data Homogeneity Test for Both Groups

	Data			Conclusion
		F	Sig.	
Equal variances assumed	Pretest	3,427	0.053	Homogeneous
	Posttest	0.216	0.531	Homogeneous
	pious character	0.824	0.393	Homogeneous

Based on the data in Table 7 above, the sig is known. (p-value) of the pretest, posttest, and pious character data is  $> 0.05$ . Thus, the data of both groups have the same variance, which means that both data sets are homogeneous. After fulfilling the prerequisite tests, the researcher conducted a t-test to test the two hypotheses in this study.

**Table 8.** Independent Sample T-Test Results

Variables	$t_{hitung}$	$t_{tabel}$	df	Sig.	Conclusion
Understanding the concept of fasting	3,213	2.00	58	0.05	Significant
pious character	3,152	2.00	58	0.05	Significant

Based on the data in Table 8 above, it is known that the variable of understanding the concept of fasting is greater than, which means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted, or there is a significant influence of the discovery learning model on students' understanding of the concept of fasting. This also applies to the variable of pious character, which is greater than, which means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted, or the discovery learning model significantly influences students' pious character.

### *3.1 There is a Significant Influence of the Discovery Learning Model on Students' Understanding of the Concept of Fasting*

The results of the study showed that the t-count of the fasting concept understanding variable was greater than the t-table, which means that there is a significant influence of the discovery learning model on junior high school students' understanding of the concept of fasting. This finding shows that learning that involves active exploration, problem solving, and direct involvement of students, such as the discovery learning model, can improve conceptual understanding in depth. These results also emphasize and confirm previous studies that highlight the effectiveness of the discovery learning model in improving student learning outcomes, especially in religious and moral education.

The discovery learning model allows students to construct their understanding through meaningful and exploratory learning experiences, ultimately strengthening their understanding of abstract concepts, such as religious values. In Islamic education, this model allows students to understand better the spiritual meaning of fasting, which is not only related to the physical activity of holding back hunger and thirst, but also involves self-control, patience, and piety (Sahid & Riva'i, 2023). In addition, research asserts that discovery-based learning can increase students' spiritual and religious awareness, especially through learning activities that encourage personal reflection on the religious values taught. This model invites students to be actively involved in discovering the meaning and relevance of fasting in their own lives, which in turn helps them internalize the concept better (Dermawan, 2013). From another perspective, Sari et al. (2023) research revealed that the discovery learning model significantly improved students' critical thinking skills and conceptual understanding in moral and religious education. The results of this study support the findings that indicate that this

model can help students understand and apply religious values, including fasting, in a more relevant and contextual way. Thus, these findings emphasize the importance of implementing the discovery learning model in teaching religious concepts, especially in helping students understand concepts cognitively and develop a pious character, which is one of the main goals of Islamic religious education in schools.

### *3.2 There is a Significant Influence of the Discovery Learning Model on Students' Pious Character*

The results of the study showed that the t-count of the pious character variable was greater than the t-table, which means that there is a significant influence of the application of the discovery learning model on the development of pious character in junior high school students. This finding shows that the use of the discovery learning model in religious learning can positively impact students' spirituality, especially in terms of pious character. This learning model facilitates an active learning process that encourages students to discover, absorb, and internalize religious values, including piety, through direct interaction and personal reflection.

Previous research also supports these results study by Sari et al. (2023) found that the discovery learning model significantly influences students' religious character, especially because this model encourages active participation of students in the learning process. By using this method, students not only learn about the concept of piety cognitively, but they are also involved in exploring these values through direct experience, strengthening character's internalization. Specifically, in Islamic teachings, character development, such as piety, requires a theoretical teaching approach and contextual and applicable learning. Research conducted by Kartika & Fauji (2024) also revealed that discovery-based learning can increase students' spiritual awareness, because they are invited to find the meaning of religious teachings and apply them in everyday life. This makes religious learning more relevant and meaningful for students, ultimately improving character formation. In addition, in other studies, Basariah & Sulaimi (2021) found that discovery learning effectively develops students' critical thinking skills and moral awareness.

In the context of Islamic religious education, this model helps students to internalize spiritual values, including piety, in a more personal and profound way, because they are actively involved in understanding the religious concepts taught. The discoveries made by students during the learning process also enable them better to understand the relevance of these values in everyday life, strengthening their pious character. Overall, this study's results align with previous findings and confirm that applying the discovery learning model can accelerate the formation of students' pious character. Active, exploratory, and reflective learning enables students to understand religious values conceptually and integrate them into everyday behavior, ultimately creating more religious and pious students.

## **4. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, the researcher concluded that the discovery learning model has proven to have a significant influence on improving students' understanding of the concept of fasting and developing pious character. This learning model has

encouraged exploration and active involvement of students, helping to understand spiritual and moral values more deeply and contextually. The results of this study indicate that the discovery learning model not only improves students' cognitive aspects but also helps form more religious characters, such as patience, honesty, and piety.

This finding is also supported by various studies that show the effectiveness of this learning model in developing an understanding of religious concepts and moral character among students. Thus, the discovery learning model is an effective learning concept in teaching Islamic Religious Education and Character Education in Junior High Schools to achieve comprehensive learning objectives in both cognitive and affective domains.

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