

## **ENHANCING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE THINK-PAIR-SHARE (TPS) MODEL: CAN THE TEACHING OF AQIDAH AND AKHLAK BE MORE EFFECTIVE?**

**Disti Nupita Sari<sup>1</sup>, Farida<sup>2</sup>, Agus Susanti<sup>3</sup>**

Department of Islamic Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training , Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia<sup>1,2,3</sup>  
e-mail: [distinupitasari51@gmail.com](mailto:distinupitasari51@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [farida@radenintan.ac.id](mailto:farida@radenintan.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>,  
[agussusanti@radenintan.ac.id](mailto:agussusanti@radenintan.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

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### **ABSTRAK**

Pembelajaran Akidah Akhlak di MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim menghadapi tantangan berupa rendahnya partisipasi, minimnya keberanian siswa bertanya, serta dominasi metode ceramah yang memicu pasivitas. Masalah utama penelitian ini adalah menguji efektivitas model Think Pair Share dalam mentransformasi keaktifan belajar siswa. Langkah penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif kuasi-eksperimental dengan melibatkan 25 siswa kelas eksperimen dan 27 siswa kelas kontrol pada semester ganjil 2025/2026. Tahapan krusial meliputi penyebaran angket keaktifan yang mengukur dimensi fisik, mental, serta emosional, dilanjutkan analisis statistik uji t. Temuan penelitian secara kuantitatif melalui uji Independent Sample T-Test menunjukkan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,022, yang berada jauh di bawah ambang batas 0,05. Data tersebut mengonfirmasi adanya perbedaan keaktifan yang sangat nyata antara kedua kelompok, membuktikan bahwa interaksi sistematis dalam tahap berpikir, berpasangan, dan berbagi mampu memicu keterlibatan aktif peserta didik secara signifikan. Simpulan utama menegaskan bahwa model ini sangat potensial untuk meningkatkan kualitas instruksional pendidikan Islam, meskipun keberhasilannya tetap dipengaruhi faktor kepercayaan diri individu serta penataan dinamika kelas yang kondusif. Penyesuaian strategi pada kelompok heterogen sangat disarankan guna mengoptimalkan hasil belajar secara berkelanjutan demi tercapainya pemahaman moral yang mendalam bagi seluruh siswa di lingkungan madrasah tersebut melalui kolaborasi aktif yang bermakna dan terarah dalam pembentukan karakter mulia generasi muda Indonesia.

**Kata Kunci:** *Aqidah Akhlak, Keaktifan Belajar, Think Pair Share*

### **ABSTRACT**

The learning of Aqidah Akhlak at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim faces challenges in the form of low participation, lack of courage for students to ask questions, and the dominance of lecture methods that trigger passivity. The main problem of this research is to test the effectiveness of the Think Pair Share model in transforming student learning activity. The research steps used a quasi-experimental quantitative approach involving 25 students from the experimental class and 27 students from the control class in the odd semester of 2025/2026. Crucial stages include the distribution of an activity questionnaire that measures physical, mental, and emotional dimensions, followed by statistical analysis of the t-test. The quantitative research findings through the Independent Sample T-Test showed a significance value of 0.022, which is far below the threshold of 0.05. The data confirms the existence of a very real difference in activity between the two groups, proving that systematic interaction in the thinking, pairing, and sharing stages is able to trigger active student involvement significantly. The main conclusion confirms

that this model has great potential to improve the instructional quality of Islamic education, although its success is still influenced by individual self-confidence and conducive classroom dynamics. Adapting strategies to heterogeneous groups is highly recommended to optimize learning outcomes sustainably and achieve a deep moral understanding for all students in the madrasah environment through active, meaningful and targeted collaboration in shaping the noble character of Indonesia's young generation.

**Keywords:** *Akidah Akhlak, Student Engagement, Think Pair Share.*

## INTRODUCTION

Learning engagement serves as a vital barometer for evaluating the efficacy of instructional processes, signifying the holistic involvement and proactive participation of learners throughout their educational journey (Laili et al., 2025; Nopianur et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2025; Rafidah et al., 2024; Ruslandi et al., 2025). Ideally, this engagement transcends mere physical presence, necessitating that students remain mentally and emotionally tethered to the classroom discourse. Such a state is characterized by vigorous participation in academic dialogues, the courage to pose inquisitive questions, and a palpable enthusiasm for the subject matter (Anggraini et al., 2025; Astuti et al., 2024; Evitasari & Aulia, 2022; Kusumawardani et al., 2024; Rahmawati et al., 2023; Rizani & Nurlizawati, 2024). Active students demonstrate significant self-assurance when articulating perspectives and collaborating with peers to construct deeper meanings. Furthermore, robust engagement is fostered through instructional frameworks that prioritize interpersonal communication and conceptual mastery over the archaic reliance on rote memorization (Abrori & Sumadi, 2023; Candena et al., 2025; Handita et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2025; Rahmawati & Asmawan, 2024). Ultimately, when students are genuinely engaged, their motivation stems from an intrinsic yearning for knowledge rather than a perfunctory sense of academic obligation or external pressure.

In stark contrast to these idealistic benchmarks, the empirical reality at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim reveals a significant pedagogical disconnect. Preliminary investigations, including systematic observations and an interview conducted on September 10, 2025, with an *Akidah Akhlak* educator, Mr. Isnan Hajri, highlighted pervasive obstacles within the instructional landscape. The current environment is characterized by a conspicuous absence of student agency, as many learners remain largely passive during lessons. This passivity manifests as a reluctance to engage in collaborative discussions or provide responses to teacher inquiries, primarily due to a paralyzing fear of committing errors or facing peer ridicule. The prevailing instructional paradigm remains predominantly teacher-centered, failing to provide the necessary scaffolding to stimulate student curiosity or active involvement. Consequently, students often feel intellectually isolated and emotionally detached from the curriculum. This lack of engagement correlates with minimal conceptual understanding and diminished learning motivation, creating a cycle of academic stagnation. Without a shift in the instructional approach, students continue to view their education as a passive reception of information rather than an active, transformative experience.

To remediate these identified systemic issues, this research advocates for the strategic implementation of the *Think Pair Share cooperative learning* model to catalyze student engagement. Originally conceptualized by Frank Lyman in 1981, this framework encourages active participation through three sequential phases: individual reflection, dyadic discussion, and collective sharing (Ilyas et al., 2022; Samosir et al., 2024; Sari & Sutriyani, 2023; Sofyan et al., 2024; Sukadana, 2022). By allowing students to organize their thoughts independently before articulating them to a peer, this model effectively lowers the affective filter and builds

cognitive confidence (Masana, 2022; Munthe et al., 2023; Ramadhani & Umam, 2025). This method shifts the classroom dynamic from a unidirectional lecture to a multi-directional exchange of ideas, fostering both social skills and a deeper mastery of the material. Because it necessitates consistent interaction, the model is expected to transform the classroom into a vibrant learning community where students feel valued as contributors. Ultimately, this approach provides the necessary structural support to transition from a passive environment to one where students are motivated to listen, speak, and think critically about their lessons.

The efficacy of the *Think Pair Share* model has been documented across various educational settings, with numerous scholars affirming its potential to invigorate student involvement. Previous research by experts has highlighted how this *cooperative learning* strategy can significantly stimulate participation (Hasanah, 2024; Maharani, 2023; Muti'ah, 2023; Purba, 2024). However, a critical review of existing literature indicates a notable research gap; most studies emphasize generalized outcomes such as basic communication or broad problem-solving abilities, rather than focusing specifically on the intricacies of multidimensional learning engagement. Furthermore, the specific application of this model within specialized subjects that focus on character and moral development remains under-explored. Variations in school infrastructure and diverse student demographics introduce complexities that have not yet been comprehensively synthesized in the context of Islamic education. This underscores the necessity for more granular research that examines how the structural components of the model can be specifically adapted to address the unique challenges of moral education. Understanding these nuances is essential for moving beyond superficial implementation toward a more sophisticated and effective application in the classroom.

This study represents an innovative effort to optimize the *Think Pair Share* model specifically for the enhancement of engagement within the *Akidah Akhlak* curriculum. The primary novelty of this research lies in its focus on bridging the gap between theoretical principles and the practical realities of character-based education at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim. By tailoring the process to the specific needs of moral and ethical instruction, the study aims to create an interactive sanctuary where students can explore complex values with confidence. The research will utilize a wide range of academic references to establish a robust theoretical foundation and provide empirical validation for the model's effectiveness in Islamic educational contexts. Ultimately, this investigation seeks to provide educators with actionable insights on adapting instructional models to diverse classroom climates, ensuring that learning becomes a more applicable and transformative experience for the students. By fostering an environment of active sharing and deep reflection, the study aspires to elevate the quality of education, turning passive observers into committed participants ready to master the profound lessons of their curriculum.

## METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, aiming to measure the effect of the Think Pair Share (TPS) learning model on student learning engagement in *Akidah Akhlak* at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim. The quasi-experimental design was chosen because the study seeks to determine the cause-and-effect relationship between the implementation of the TPS model and student learning engagement. In this study, two classes were selected as samples: the experimental class, which was treated with the TPS model, and the control class, which used conventional teaching methods. The experimental class was Class VIII.1, consisting of 25 students, while the control class was Class VIII.2, consisting of 27 students. The study was conducted during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

The sample was selected using cluster random sampling, where all eighth-grade students at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim had an equal chance of being chosen as research subjects. The instrument used for data collection was a learning engagement questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. This questionnaire measures the level of student engagement in various aspects of learning, such as participating in group discussions, asking questions, solving problems, and practicing problem-solving. Additionally, the questionnaire assesses students' physical, mental, and emotional engagement in the learning process. The instrument used in this study is non-test-based, as it provides an assessment of student involvement during the learning process, both directly and through observation.

The data collected from the learning engagement questionnaire were then analyzed using t-test statistical analysis to examine the differences between the experimental and control classes. After the implementation of the TPS model over several meetings, a post-test was conducted to measure changes in student learning engagement in both classes. The results of this statistical test are expected to show whether there is a significant difference between the class treated with the TPS model and the class using conventional teaching methods in terms of student learning engagement. Thus, this study aims to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of the TPS model in enhancing student learning engagement in Akidah Akhlak.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### Result

#### 1. Normality Test

The purpose of the normality test is to determine whether the obtained data follows a normal distribution or not. Data is considered normally distributed if the significance value is  $> 0.05$ . The results of the normality test in this study are presented as follows:

**Table 1. Tests of Normality**

	kelompok	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
data	1.00	.114	19	.200*	.975	19	.865
	2.00	.100	20	.200*	.977	20	.889
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.							
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Based on table 1 referring to the results of the normality test, it can be explained that both the experimental group and the control group have Shapiro-Wilk significance values of 0.865 and 0.889, respectively. Since these values are  $> 0.05$ , it can be concluded that the data in both groups are normally distributed.

#### 2. Homogeneity Test

The purpose of the homogeneity test is to determine whether the variances of multiple populations in the study are equal (homogeneous) or different (heterogeneous). Data can be considered homogeneous if the significance value is  $> 0.05$ . The results of the homogeneity test in this study are presented as follows:

**Table 2. Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
data	Based on Mean	3.336	1	37	.076
	Based on Median	3.248	1	37	.080

Based on Median and with adjusted df	3.248	1	35.885	.080
Based on trimmed mean	3.316	1	37	.077

Based on the results of the homogeneity test in Table 2, all significance values are  $0.076 > 0.05$ . Therefore, it can be concluded that the data have homogeneous variances. This indicates that the homogeneity assumption for this study has been met.

### 3. Independent Sample T-Test

The independent sample t-test in this study was used to evaluate the final performance of the sample. The testing procedure was carried out through several stages as follows. In testing the hypothesis, this study used calculations based on the pooled variance t-test formula. This approach combines the variance from both groups, assuming that the variances of the two groups are equal, to determine whether there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups.

#### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
data	Equal variances assumed	3.336	.076	2.399	37	.022	2.27368	.94792	.35302	4.19434
	Equal variances not assumed			2.421	33.849	.021	2.27368	.93911	.36488	4.18249

The t-test results table 3 indicate that the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) is rejected, meaning there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups. Whether assuming equal or unequal variances, the test resulted in a very small p-value (0.022), which is far below the significance level of 0.05, thus confirming that there is a significant difference.

### Discussions

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the Think Pair Share (TPS) learning model successfully enhanced student engagement in Akidah Akhlak at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim. The application of the TPS model, which involves students in the process of thinking individually, discussing with a partner, and sharing the results of their discussion with the group, proved effective in increasing student participation in discussions, asking questions, and sharing opinions (Nainggolan et al., 2025; Pasaribu et al., 2025; Pratama & Suryaman, 2025; Simanjutak et al., 2023). These findings align with the research by Slavin, which showed that cooperative learning models such as TPS can enrich understanding and enhance students' critical thinking skills through collaboration. Student engagement increased not only in physical aspects but also in mental and emotional aspects, which are key factors in improving their understanding of the learning material (Saiful Anwar & Jasiah, 2025).

However, despite the effectiveness of the TPS model in promoting learning engagement, psychological challenges among students remain a significant barrier. Some students still feel hesitant or embarrassed to participate in discussions, indicating that their self-

confidence needs to be further empowered. Research by Nurgiyantoro and Efendi (2017) also highlights that self-confidence plays a crucial role in encouraging students to actively engage in learning. Therefore, although the TPS model can enhance interaction, a more in-depth approach is needed to address the psychological barriers faced by students, such as providing encouragement to help students feel more comfortable and safe in expressing their opinions.

Another challenge identified in this study is related to the physical condition of the classroom, which is not ideal for the optimal implementation of the TPS model. Classes with a large number of students, varying in their learning abilities, tend to create classroom dynamics that are less conducive for quieter students. Alkahfy et al. (2026) also emphasize the importance of a supportive classroom arrangement to ensure that cooperative learning models function effectively. Therefore, a more structured classroom setup, such as organizing small groups with a balanced number of students, should be considered to make it easier for each student to participate and feel more comfortable in group discussions (Anwar et al., 2025; Auliya & Yanda, 2025; Sitorus et al., 2024).

Despite these challenges, the TPS model demonstrates great potential in enhancing students' understanding of Akidah Akhlak material. By providing students the opportunity to engage in discussions, think critically, and share their thoughts, this model not only increases student participation but also deepens their understanding of the concepts being taught (Alkahfy et al., 2026; Astika & Ritonga, 2024; Azmi et al., 2024). This aligns with Slavin's assertion that learning involving student collaboration enriches their learning experience and encourages better understanding, particularly in subjects that require an understanding of values and character, such as Akidah Akhlak. Furthermore, the cooperative nature of TPS, where students actively engage in knowledge construction, has been shown to foster greater student involvement in discussions and improve learning outcomes across various subjects (Aprilia et al., 2026; Araminta & Hendratmoko, 2026; Lavenda et al., 2025; Nafisah et al., 2024; Saragih et al., 2025).

Therefore, while the TPS model has proven effective, this study highlights the need for further adjustments to accommodate classroom conditions and the diverse characteristics of students. This research identifies that student self-confidence and a supportive classroom environment play crucial roles in the successful implementation of this model. Hence, future research should explore how variations in the application of the TPS model in more heterogeneous classrooms can have a greater impact. Adjustments to student characteristics and the strengthening of psychological factors, such as self-confidence, will further optimize the outcomes achieved, making the TPS model a more effective method for enhancing student engagement and understanding across various classroom conditions.

## CONCLUSION

This study successfully demonstrates that the implementation of the Think Pair Share (TPS) learning model significantly enhances student engagement in Akidah Akhlak at MTs Negeri 03 Muara Enim. As expected in the introduction, the TPS model, which prioritizes student interaction, effectively encourages their participation in discussions, asking questions, and sharing their understanding of the material. This not only improves physical engagement but also mental and emotional involvement, deepening their understanding of the taught material. These findings align with existing theory, which emphasizes that cooperative learning models can enrich student understanding through more active collaboration.

However, although TPS has proven effective, this study also identifies challenges related to psychological factors and classroom dynamics. Some students still hesitate to

participate in discussions due to low self-confidence. This indicates that, while the TPS model provides opportunities for student interaction, internal factors such as self-confidence and a supportive classroom environment also influence their engagement. Therefore, more effort is needed to address these psychological barriers and adjust the TPS model to fit the heterogeneous classroom conditions, so that the positive impacts of the model can be maximized.

This study opens the door for further development in applying the TPS model in classrooms with diverse student characteristics. Adjusting the model to better suit various classroom conditions and focusing on strengthening psychological factors such as self-confidence will improve its effectiveness. Overall, the TPS model holds great potential for enhancing the quality of learning, particularly in subjects focused on character development and moral values, such as Akidah Akhlak. Future research can deepen the application of this model to gain a broader and more applicable understanding in more varied educational contexts.

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