
The Role of Islamic Religion Education in the Transformation of the Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Ponorogo Towards a Child- Friendly Schoolroom: Case Study Implementation of a Child Friendly School Program

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Abstract

Keywords: Islamic Religious Education, Child-Friendly Learning Environment, Child-Friendly School Program

This study examines the role of Islamic Religious Education in the transformation of Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Ponorogo towards child-friendly learning environments, focusing on the implementation of the Child-Friendly School Program. This program is designed to create a safe, comfortable, and supportive learning environment that fosters the holistic development of students. The research focuses on how Islamic Religious Education contributes to the development of students' moral and spiritual values and how this approach is applied in daily school practices. The research methodology includes observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of related documents. The results show that integrating Islamic Religious Education into the curriculum and school activities positively impacts the formation of students' character and behavior. Additionally, the program successfully increases students' active participation in the learning process and creates an inclusive and responsive school climate that meets children's needs. In conclusion,

Islamic Religious Education plays a crucial role in supporting the transformation of Madrasah Tsanawiyah into child-friendly learning environments, in line with holistic and inclusive educational goals.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Agama Islam, Lingkungan Belajar Ramah Anak, Program Sekolah Ramah Anak*

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam transformasi Madrasah Tsanawiyah di Ponorogo menuju lingkungan belajar ramah anak, dengan fokus pada pelaksanaan Program Sekolah Ramah Anak. Program ini dirancang untuk menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang aman, nyaman, dan mendukung yang menumbuhkan perkembangan holistik siswa. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana Pendidikan Agama Islam berkontribusi terhadap pengembangan nilai-nilai moral dan spiritual siswa dan bagaimana pendekatan ini diterapkan dalam praktik sekolah sehari-hari. Metodologi penelitian meliputi observasi, wawancara mendalam dengan guru dan siswa, dan analisis dokumen terkait. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mengintegrasikan Pendidikan Agama Islam ke dalam kurikulum dan kegiatan sekolah berdampak positif pada pembentukan karakter dan perilaku siswa. Selain itu, program ini berhasil meningkatkan partisipasi aktif siswa dalam proses pembelajaran dan menciptakan iklim sekolah yang inklusif dan responsif yang memenuhi kebutuhan anak. Kesimpulannya, Pendidikan Agama Islam memainkan peran penting dalam mendukung transformasi Madrasah Tsanawiyah menjadi lingkungan belajar yang ramah anak, sejalan dengan tujuan pendidikan holistik dan inklusif.

Received: 19-06-2024, Revised: 25-08-2024, Accepted: 24-08-2024

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Introduction

Education in Indonesia is constantly undergoing changes and developments to improve the quality and relevance of education. These efforts are realized through policies and programmes that focus not only on academic achievement, but also on the well-being and rights of children. One of the important initiatives developed is Child-Friendly Schools. The program aims to create a safe, comfortable school environment and support child development in a holistic way. Child-friendly schools emphasize the protection of children's rights, the active participation of students, and the creation of a learning environment free from violence and discrimination. With this program, it is

expected that every child can grow and develop optimally in an educational environment that is both academically and non-academically supportive, thus creating a healthy, intelligent, and characteristic generation.

Islamic education is an integral part of the education system in many Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia. PAI not only emphasizes the understanding of the doctrine and teachings of Islam, but also plays an important role in shaping the character, morality, and spiritual values of students. (Hanafiah et al., 2024).

In fact, the PAI curriculum encompasses understanding of the basic teachings of Islam such as tauhid, rukun (belief in Islam), and rukun Islam (obligatory worship) (MPd, 2020). In addition, PAI aims to develop attitudes and behaviors that are consistent with Islamic values, such as tolerance, justice, and compassion. This is done through learning that is not only theoretical but also practical, with the application of Islamic values in various contexts of life.

The implementation of PAI in schools often involves a holistic approach, where educators are not only teachers but also examples for students in everyday life practice. In the context of a madrasah or Islamic school, PAI can also include the learning of the Quran and Hadith as well as worship practices such as prayer and fasting. In Indonesia, where PAI is integrated into the national curriculum, the PAI learning approach also includes the development of social skills and leadership based on Islamic values. It aims to prepare students to be responsible citizens and contribute positively to society. (Miller et al., 2012).

The Child-Friendly Schools Programme is an educational initiative that aims to create a safe, inclusive learning environment and support the holistic development of children. The child-friendly school program focuses on the physical and psychological safety of children by providing a friendly and supportive environment, including safe and conducive facilities for learning. Inclusion is a core value in the Child-Friendly School Program, where every child is given the opportunity to learn without discrimination and supported to their full potential. (Inniyah, 2023).

Education in the Child-Friendly School Programmes is not only limited to the academic aspects, but also covers the development of the child's character, social skills, and independence. The curricula structured in the Children's Friendly School programmes are designed to facilitate learning that is child-centred, interesting, and relevant to their daily lives. Learning is done interactively and collaboratively, enabling each child to be actively involved in their learning process. (Supeni et al., 2021).

Madrasah Tsanawiyah, as an educational institution that blends general and religious education, has a strategic role in developing student character. The application of religious education in MTs is expected to produce students who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have good personality, noble morality, and have a high social awareness.

The transformation of the Madrasah Tsanawiyah into a child-friendly learning space involves various aspects. First, adapting the curriculum and teaching methods to ensure that the teaching learning process takes place in an inclusive and responsive manner to the needs of each student. Second, strengthening the role of the teacher as a facilitator and companion capable of creating a positive and supportive learning atmosphere. Teachers are expected to be able to integrate child-friendly values in every aspect of learning, including in Islamic education.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at MTs has a key role in supporting this education transformation. More than just teaching religious knowledge, PAI also implies moral and ethical values that are essential to creating a school environment that is friendly to children. (Maharani & Rahmaniar, 2023).

Through PAI, students not only learn about religious teachings, but are also taught about the importance of tolerance, compassion, honesty, and respect for others. These values are not only important in shaping the individual character of students, but also in creating a school culture that is inclusive and respects the rights of every child. Thus, PAI at MTs not only plays a role as a subject, but also as a key driver in shaping positive attitudes and behaviors as

well as building educational communities based on human values and social justice.

Furthermore, special programmes such as Tahfidz Al-Quran both in the MTs Negeri 1 Ponorogo and MTs Negeri 3 Ponorogo are examples of how religious education can support student character development comprehensively. With a holistic approach, the program contributes to creating a child-friendly learning environment and supports the moral and spiritual development of students.

Overall, the effort to transform the Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Ponorogo toward a child-friendly learning space through Islamic religious education is an important step in creating a young generation with character. The implementation of the Child-Friendly School Programme integrated with PAI is expected to have a positive long-term impact, both in academic and non-academic aspects. Thus, students are not only prepared to face academic challenges, but also have a strong moral and ethical supply to face life in the future. The study aims to analyze the concrete role of Islamic Religious Education in the process of transformation of MTs in Ponorogo towards a child-friendly learning space. It is hoped that the results of the research can provide recommendations for the development of educational policies as well as best practices for MTs and similar educational institutions.

Method

The research method in this study uses a qualitative approach to understanding the role of Islamic Religious Education in the transformation of the Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Ponorogo towards a child-friendly learning environment, The site of his research is MTsN 1 Ponorogo and MTsM 3 Ponorogo. With the kind of case study approach where case study research methods are empirical investigations that investigate contemporary phenomena in the context of real life, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly visible and where many sources of evidence are available (Gerring,

2016). This research combines several different data collection techniques to ensure the depth and richness of the information obtained (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

We conducted a literature review by reviewing various relevant documents such as curricula, school policies, special programmes, and evaluation reports (Umrati & Wijaya, 2020). This article provides additional context on the design, implementation, and evaluation of Islamic religious education and childcare programmes in Madrasah Tsanawiyah. This analysis allows researchers to understand the structures and policies that support the integration of Islamic values into education and the use of child-friendly policies.

Data collected from observations, interviews and documents are analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis allows researchers to identify patterns, themes, and relationships that emerge from data (Patton, 2023). This process involves data encoding, grouping outcomes based on related topics, and in-depth interpretation to produce meaningful conclusions. Thus, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the role of Islamic religious education in creating a safe and positive learning environment and supporting the overall development of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Ponorogo students.

Result and Discussion

This study reveals various important findings regarding Islamic Religious Education in supporting the transformation of Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Ponorogo towards a child-friendly learning environment. By focusing on the implementation of the Child Friendly School Program, this research highlights several key aspects that contribute to the success of the program.

Development of Moral and Spiritual Values One of the main

Findings of this study is that Islamic Religious Education plays a crucial role in the development of students' moral and spiritual values. The integration of Islamic values into the curriculum and day-to-day activities at school helps students understand and apply moral principles such as honesty, responsibility,

and care for others. At MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo, Islamic Religious Education is seen not only as a theoretical subject but as the primary foundation that shapes the character and ethics of students. These values are absorbed by students through a variety of activities that are structured and integrated into all aspects of school life.

The teachers of Islamic Religious Education at MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo apply teaching methods that emphasize an in-depth understanding of religious teachings. They use a holistic approach, combining wisdom, understanding, and practice in their teaching. This method not only ensures that students are able to memorize religious texts but also understand their meaning and application in everyday life. For example, students are taught to apply the concept of honesty in each of their interactions, both inside and outside the classroom.

Furthermore, these teachers encourage students to apply religious teachings in real action through various practical activities. These include social activities like social worship, religious activities like communal prayer, and special programs that teach the importance of sharing and caring for one another. This approach helps students to see the relevance of religious teachings in their real-life context and internalize those values as part of their character.

In MTsN 1, for example, a structured tahfidz program ensures that students not only memorize the Quran but also understand the content and moral message in it. Activities such as religious lectures, group discussions, and moral training are regularly conducted to strengthen the understanding and practice of Islamic values. Students are taught to reflect on the meaning of the verses they memorize and apply them in daily behavior, such as showing respect to teachers and friends, as well as keeping the school environment clean and clean.

In MTsN 3, a similar approach is applied with an additional focus on religious values-based extracurricular activities. Clubs such as Islamic study clubs, religious discussion groups, and other religious activities provide room for students to deepen their knowledge of Islam while developing social and

leadership skills. The teachers provide continuous guidance and create a supportive environment for students to question, discuss, and explore their understanding of religion.

The results of this approach are visible in student behavior and attitudes. They show increased responsibility, honesty, and concern for others. The school environment has become more harmonious and inclusive, with students actively participating in social and religious activities. It not only improves the learning atmosphere but also creates a school community that supports each other and strengthens the relationship between students and students and teachers.

Overall, these findings show that Islamic Religious Education applied in a holistic and practical manner can have a significant positive impact on the moral and spiritual development of students. At MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo, the integration of Islamic values into the curriculum and daily life of the school has successfully formed students who are not only academically intelligent but also have a strong and high moral character. This approach can be a model for other schools that want to develop a child-friendly learning environment and support student holistic development.

Daily Practice and Implementation of the Research Program

This research programme also found that the Islamic Religion Education approach applied in daily practice at MTsN 1 and MtsN 3 Ponorogo created an enabling environment for learning. Routine activities such as joint prayer before class starts, routine study, and religious lectures not only enrich the spiritual experience of students but also strengthen the social bond between them. Joint praying before class begins, for example, gives students the opportunity to start their day with a calm and grateful attitude. It helps them feel better prepared and focused to receive lessons.

The routine study carried out in both the madrasas became one of the important activities that supported the formation of character and spiritual students. This periodic study is not only a means of deepening religious knowledge but also an opportunity for students to share their understanding and

experience. Through the study, students are invited to reflect on the teachings of religion and how to apply them in everyday life. This study also creates an atmosphere of fellowship and mutual support among students, which strengthens their social bonds.

Regular religious lectures also play an important role in enriching the spiritual experience of students (Manan et al., 2018). These lectures are usually delivered by teachers or religious figures invited to the school, discussing a variety of topics relevant to the student's daily life. In addition to providing religious knowledge, the lectures also inspire students to apply Islamic values in their daily actions. Through religious lectures, students are taught about the importance of doing good, respecting others, and maintaining integrity in every aspect of life.

The Child-Friendly Schools Programme at MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo is implemented through an inclusive approach, where all students feel appreciated and supported in their learning process. This inclusive approach ensures that no student feels neglected or underestimated. Each student is treated with respect and is given an equal opportunity to participate in the various activities of the school. Teachers are trained to recognize and appreciate the diversity of students' needs and potential, as well as providing appropriate support to help each student reach their maximum potential.

In this conducive and inclusive environment, students feel more comfortable and motivated to study. They not only learn about academic material but also develop important social and emotional skills. Students are taught to work together, appreciate differences, and support each other. It creates a positive and harmonious learning atmosphere, where students feel safe to express themselves and take risks in their learning process.

In addition, the program has also been successful in increasing the active participation of students in the learning process. Students are encouraged to participate in class discussion, group activities, and projects that challenge them to think critically and creatively. This active participation not only improves their

understanding of the subject matter but also develops a sense of responsibility and leadership. Students learn to take initiative, work with their friends, and solve problems in a constructive way.

Overall, these findings show that the inclusive and practical approach to Islamic Religious Education applied in MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo has succeeded in creating a learning environment that is conducive and supports the holistic development of students. This environment rich in spiritual and social values not only enhances student academic achievement but also shapes their character as individuals who are integrated, responsible, and caring for each other. The Children Friendly School program in both madrasas can be an effective model for other schools that want to create an inclusive learning environment and support the comprehensive development of students.

Active Student Participation

Another significant finding is the increased active participation of students in the learning process at MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo. Islamic education in both madrasas provides a wide space for students to engage in various activities that stimulate active participation. Class discussion becomes one of the most effective methods in this regard. Through discussion, students are invited to express their opinions, listen to friends' perspectives, and criticize the material constructively. It helps students to not only understand the material in depth but also learn how to argue well and appreciate the opinions of others.

In addition to class discussions, group activities are also an important part of the learning process. Students are often grouped to work on projects related to religious values, such as research on Islamic history, preparation of presentations about important figures in Islam, or even charity projects involving the surrounding community. These activities teach students to collaborate, share tasks, and appreciate the contributions of each member of the group. The collaborative skills they learn are valuable and will benefit them in the future, both academically and professionally.

Religious values-based projects also play an important role in improving students' understanding of the subject matter. For example, students may be asked to create a project that explains ethical principles in Islam and how to apply them in everyday life. This kind of project challenges students not only to memorize information but also to think critically about how such information is relevant and can be applied. They learn to link theory with practice, which in turn strengthens their understanding and makes learning more meaningful.

This active participation not only improves students' understanding of the subject matter but also develops social skills and critical thinking skills (Zohriah et al., 2024). Students learn to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, and to listen and understand the perspective of others. They also learn to solve problems creatively and critically, as well as to take initiative and be responsible for their own learning. These skills are crucial in forming individuals who are self-reliant, confident, and able to think deeply and analytically.

Students become more motivated to learn because they feel appreciated and recognized for their contributions. When students feel that their opinions and contributions are valued, they are more likely to be actively involved in the learning process. They feel interested in what they learn and are more enthusiastic about achieving their academic goals. This sense of appreciation also boosts students' confidence, which is vital for their academic and personal success.

Overall, these findings show that the Islamic Religious Education approach involving active student participation succeeds in creating a dynamic and interactive learning environment at MTsN 1 and MTs N 3 in Ponorogo. By providing space for students to participate actively in learning, these two madrasas not only enhance student academic understanding but also form essential social and critical thinking skills. This approach can be a model for other schools that want to create an inclusive, interactive learning environment that supports student holistic development.

The Inclusive and Responsive School Climate

Child-Friendly School Program has succeeded in creating an inclusive and responsive school climate at MTsN 1 and MTs N 3 Ponorogo. This study found that with this program, students feel safer and more comfortable at school. A safe and comfortable school environment is one of the main prerequisites for creating a conducive learning environment. Students who feel safe will be more able to concentrate and more motivated to study. The program emphasizes the importance of feeling safe for each student, both physically and emotionally, so that they can study calmly without fear or anxiety.

Teachers and school staff are trained to recognize and respond to students' emotional and social needs, which have a positive impact on their psychological well-being. The training covers a wide range of aspects, ranging from understanding child development psychology, basic counselling techniques, to strategies to create inclusive classrooms. Teachers are taught to be more sensitive to signs of stress or difficulties experienced by students, and how to provide appropriate support. For example, if a student shows signs of anxiety, teachers can give special attention and provide time to listen to their complaints. This approach helps students feel appreciated and supported, which is vital for their psychological well-being.

In addition, strong anti-bullying policies and appreciation of diversity play an important role in creating an inclusive school climate (Zohriah et al., 2023). Anti-bullying policies in MTsN 1 and MTs N 3 Ponorogo are implemented strictly, with clear preventive and handling measures. Students are educated about the negative impact of bullying and encouraged to report any incidents to teachers or school staff. It creates an environment in which students feel safe from threats or unfair treatment from their friends. In addition, appreciation of diversity is taught through various activities and programmes that promote tolerance and respect for differences. Students learn to appreciate cultural, religious, and social differences, which reinforce an inclusive climate in schools.

In this inclusive and responsive environment, students feel accepted and respected.

Every student, regardless of their background or abilities, is given an equal opportunity to participate in school activities. Existing programs are designed to meet the individual needs of students, taking into account their differences in abilities and interests. For example, students who need additional assistance in a particular subject are given special guidance, while those who have special talents or interests are encouraged to develop their potential. This approach ensures that each student feels appreciated and supported in their learning journey.

The Children Friendly School program also has a positive impact on social interaction among students. With an inclusive and appreciative atmosphere, students learn to interact with their friends in a positive and constructive way (Unesco, 2017). They are encouraged to work together, support each other, and resolve conflicts in a peaceful way. It not only helps in forming strong relationships among students but also develops social skills that are essential for their future lives.

Overall, these findings show that the Child-Friendly School Program at MTsN 1 and 3 Ponorogo has succeeded in creating a school environment that supports student holistic development. With an inclusive and responsive school climate, students experience not only an improvement in academic achievement but also in their emotional and social well-being. This program can be an effective model for other schools that want to create a safe, comfortable learning environment, and support children's development in a comprehensive way.

Conclusion

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that Islamic Religious Education has an important role in supporting the transformation of Madrasah Tsanawiyah into a child-friendly learning environment. The integration of religious values into the curriculum and school activities not only has a positive impact on student character formation and behavior but also increases their active participation in the learning process. The Child-Friendly Schools program has succeeded in creating an inclusive and responsive school climate, which is in line with the goals of holistic and inclusive education. These findings suggest that a comprehensive and structured approach to Islamic Religious Education can bring about a positive change in creating a learning environment that supports the holistic development of students.

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