

INCREASING RELIGIOUS AWARENESS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH RELIGIOUS LITERACY PROGRAMS AT LUKMAN HAKIM PURWOKERTO KINDERGARTEN

Cesilia Prawening¹, Mukhamad Hamid Samiaji², Hikmatul Husnifah³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Purwokerto, Indonesia

Corresponding e-mail : mukhamadhamid@gmail.com

Abstract

Religious awareness in early childhood is an important foundation in the formation of children's character and morals. At this stage, children are at a critical phase in their cognitive and emotional development, where basic values and moral principles begin to take shape. This research aims to find out how to improve the religious basics of early childhood through religious literacy programs. The research uses qualitative methods with observational data collection techniques, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis used is the Miles and Huberman model, namely data reduction, display, and verification. The results of this study show that Bntuk and the main components of the religious literacy program at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten, include: daily activities, religious stories or stories, worship practice activities, creative and artistic activities, celebration of religious holidays, strengthening spiritual and social values, and collaboration with parents. Efforts made to increase religious awareness through religious literacy programs at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten are by 1) Introducing and getting used to religious practices, 2) Introducing and getting used to honest, helpful, polite, respectful, and sportsmanlike behavior, 3) Introducing and getting used to personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness, 4) Introducing religious holidays, 5) Daily activities to teach religious values, and 6) Introduce and foster respect and tolerance for other religions.

Keywords: religious awareness, early childhood, religious literacy programs.

Abstrak

Kesadaran beragama pada anak usia dini adalah fondasi penting dalam pembentukan karakter dan moral anak. Pada tahap ini, anak-anak berada pada fase kritis dalam perkembangan kognitif dan emosional mereka, di mana nilai-nilai dasar dan prinsip-prinsip moral mulai terbentuk. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana meningkatkan kesadaran beragama anak usia dini melalui program literasi agama. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data yang digunakan adalah model Miles dan Huberman yakni reduksi data, display, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan Bntuk dan komponen utama program literasi agama di TK Lukman Hakim Purwokerto, meliputi: kegiatan harian, cerita atau kisah agama, kegiatan praktik ibadah, kegiatan kreatif dan seni, perayaan hari besar agama, penguatan nilai-nilai spiritual dan sosial, dan kolaborasi dengan orang tua. Upaya yang dilakukan dalam meningkatkan kesadaran beragama melalui program literasi agama di TK Lukman Hakim Purwokerto adalah dengan 1) Memperkenalkan dan membiasakan praktik keagamaan, 2) Mengenalkan dan membiasakan perilaku jujur, suka menolong, sopan santun, menghargai, dan sportif, 3, Memperkenalkan dan membiasakan kebersihan diri dan kebersihan lingkungan, 4) Memperkenalkan hari raya keagamaan, 5) Kegiatan harian untuk mengajarkan nilai agama, dan 6) Memperkenalkan dan menumbuhkan rasa hormat dan toleransi terhadap agama lain.

Kata kunci: kesadaran beragama, anak usia dini, program literasi agama.

Introduction

Religious awareness in early childhood is an important foundation in the formation of children's character and morals. At this stage, children are in a critical phase in their cognitive and emotional development, where basic values and moral principles begin to form (Subur,

2014). Proper religious education can help children understand the concepts of kindness, justice, and empathy from an early age (Rosyida, 2021). Although important, religious education in Kindergarten (TK) often faces various challenges such as lack of resources (many kindergartens have limitations in terms of teaching materials and supporting resources for religious education), inappropriate teaching methods (religious teaching that is not in accordance with children's cognitive development can make children less interested and difficult to understand the material), and the role of parents and the environment (lack of support from parents and the surrounding environment can hinder the process of internalizing religious values in children).

Religious literacy programs in kindergartens can be an effective solution to overcome these challenges. Literacy activities are a major commodity in providing educational value for children today. Literacy skills have an important influence on children's success. Good literacy skills will help the younger generation in understanding information, both oral and written, from an early age. In life, literacy mastery in the younger generation is very important in supporting their competencies (Faiqotul, 2024).

The command of *iqra'* in surah *al-alaq* is a marker of the importance of knowledge which is synonymous with the growth of Islamic civilization through the revelation to the Prophet Muhammad SAW., the practice of reading is an important factor in the development of civilization of adherents of major religions in the world. Embaca is considered as an activity to internalize religious values through the reading of God's revelation, while writing is an activity to reconstruct thoughts (Sofie, 2017).

Religious literacy not only involves teaching religious aspects such as prayer and religious stories, but also involves various activities that support children's understanding of religious values. The goal is to help children understand religious concepts in a fun way such as using stories, songs, and games related to religion to attract children's interest. Integrating religious values in daily activities such as familiarizing children with values such as honesty, compassion, and cooperation through daily activities in the classroom. Involving parents and the community such as encouraging the active involvement of parents and the community in the process of children's religious education, so that the values taught in schools can be applied in the home and surrounding environment.

Based on initial observations made at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten, it was found that in building early childhood religious awareness, a religious literacy program was implemented with a holistic and collaborative approach. The existing curriculum is developed inclusively, increasing the capacity and capabilities of teachers in religious aspects, providing interesting religious teaching materials, as well as the important role of parents in the involvement of religious awareness formation through religious literacy programs that are also carried out by children after school.

Increasing religious awareness in early childhood through religious literacy programs in kindergarten is an important step in shaping children's character. With the right methods and support from various parties, this program is able to make a significant contribution in instilling religious values that will form the moral foundation of children throughout their lives.

From the above problems and statements, researchers are interested in conducting studies, analysis, and exploring more deeply to find new findings related to increasing early childhood religious awareness through religious literacy programs at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten. In addition, from the literature review conducted by the researcher, it was found that there have not been many studies related to increasing early childhood religious awareness through religious literacy programs, so through this study, it is hoped that new studies related to the implementation of religious literacy programs can be found as a solution to existing challenges, especially in increasing early childhood religious awareness.

Metode Penelitian

This research was conducted at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten for one month, namely September 2024. The population is early childhood numbering 30. The formal object of the research is to increase religious awareness in early childhood through a religious literacy program (Zuriah 2016) conducted at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten. From here, this study uses a qualitative paradigm that focuses on data and information, mainly from statements, notes, texts obtained in the field and document studies (Moleong 2018) so that this research is referred to as field research. Data and information are collected through interviews, observations, and documentation.

Interviews were conducted directly with school principals, curriculum officials, parents, and students who are directly involved in increasing early childhood religious awareness through the religious literacy program (Moleong 2018). Observations are made on religious literacy program activities identified through religious practices, introducing and habituating honest, helpful, polite, respectful, and sportsmanlike behavior, introducing and habituating personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness, introducing religious holidays, daily activities to teach religious values, and introducing and fostering respect and tolerance for other religions contained in the learning program documents, learning curriculum, and activity documentation.

The data that has been collected is then studied and analyzed using three important steps, namely data reduction, data classification, and data verification (Miles and Huberman 1994). Data reduction is carried out through the analysis of the suitability of data that has been obtained through interviews, observations and documentation related to religious literacy programs, data that is not suitable will be reduced. Data classification is carried out by grouping data based on patterns that emerge. Data verification was carried out by reviewing and analyzing data based on the theoretical viewpoint of the religious literacy program and early childhood religious awareness as well as discussions based on relevant theoretical studies and the findings of previous research so that novelty can be identified in this study (Moleong 2018).

Result and Discussion

Religious Awareness

Linguistically, awareness originates from the root word "conscious" which has a meaning; convert, believe, feel, know and understand. Awareness means; state of knowing, understanding, and feeling or conversion. The meaning of consciousness that is understood here is the state of knowing, remembering and measa or conversion of oneself to the true state. While the word religion comes from the root word "religion". Religion means belief in God (gods and so on) with the teachings of worship and obligations related to that belief, for example, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and others, while the word religion means to embrace (practice) religion; worship; Obey religion throughout his life.

Based on some of the definitions above, it can be concluded that religion is a set of life guidelines that are believed to be sacred and come from the Most High Substance through the medium of a human being chosen by Him. Where the life guidelines contain rules about the deeds that should be done and the deeds that should be abandoned by the believers, and whoever obeys the rules of the life guidelines will get the reward of enjoyment and happiness of life both in this world and in the hereafter. In addition, it can also be concluded that religion contains the meaning of eternal bonds or guidelines for life and must be held and obeyed by humans. The bond in question comes from a higher power than human beings as a supernatural force that cannot be grasped by the five senses, but has a great influence on human daily life.

In this study, the definition of religious awareness in question is all behaviors that are

carried out by a person in the form of pursuing, remembering, feeling, and carrying out religious teachings (including affective, conative, cognitive, and motor aspects) to devote themselves to God (Allah) accompanied by sincere and sincere soul feelings, so that what he does is a religious behavior and one of the fulfillment of his spiritual needs.

The aspects that affect children's religious awareness are affective and conative aspects (that human desires and needs are not only biological needs but also human needs), cognitive aspects (including qalbiyah intelligence, emotional, moral, spiritual, and religious), and motor aspects (including prayer discipline, fasting, good morals, honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, and not being arrogant) (Hasyim, 2019).

The strategy for developing early childhood religious awareness can be carried out by religious coaching by emphasizing more on direct experience, carrying out religious activities that are tailored to the child's pleasure, children's religious experiences in addition to being obtained from their parents, teachers, or friends but also the surrounding environment, religious development is carried out repeatedly and continuously, considering the nature of children's religion that is still imitative, giving examples is important, and make direct visits to religious activity centers.

Early Childhood

The essence of early childhood has been explained in the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003, which is a group of people aged zero to six years. This age limit is carried out according to the level of the PAUD institution, namely at the age of zero to six years. In the aspect of early childhood growth, children have a phase in the age range of 0 to 6 years. From another opinion, children are an early childhood range ranging from zero to eight years old. Knowing this age range, children are experiencing rapid physical growth. Physical growth always experiences maturity that must be prepared to support the needs of children in the adult phase later (Susanto, 2010).

The psychological characteristics of a child are egocentric individuals, such as a child who does everything that is self-centered without needing his friends. Everything children do is trying to meet their own desires and needs. Through optimal exploration and expression, children have a naturally high sense of curiosity. The child's curiosity and egocentric nature makes the child always try to do and conquer the things around him. Everything that children feel is always wanted to try, and everything that makes them challenged must want to use holding, and play it as creatively as possible, and children always conquer various ways in their daily activities.

In terms of social instinct, children are social individuals, who have the right awareness and whether or not they can live without others. Children always relate well in social life, both with relationships with parents and peers. Children always interact and communicate well to maintain the social environment relationships that they love. Children are members of a social group that must be taken care of because children are important actors to continue the struggle in their own society (Suyadi, 2013).

The development of the child will be related to all personalities, because the child's personality will form an integrated unit. The unity of the individual is actually difficult to separate, but it just helps by making it easier to learn and understand it, namely with various aspects that must be met for educators or parents that need to be done. In simple terms, educators can distinguish from aspects of child development seen through moral and religious aspects, social aspects, emotional aspects, intellectual aspects, language aspects, and physical and motor aspects of children (Masganti, 2021).

Religious Literacy Program

The Religious Literacy Program is an educational approach designed to develop religious

understanding, skills, and values in children from an early age. The program not only focuses on teaching religious doctrine, but also includes the introduction and internalization of moral, ethical, and spiritual values that are in accordance with the teachings of the religion adhered to. The main goal is to form a child's character based on religious values and be able to apply them in daily life.

The objectives of the Religious Literacy Program are to: *First*, Increase Religious Understanding. Help children understand the basic concepts of religion adhered to, such as God, worship, and morality. *Second*, developing moral character. Instilling moral and ethical values taught by religion, such as honesty, kindness, tolerance, and responsibility. *Third*, forming spiritual habits. Familiarize children with spiritual practices that they can carry with them into adulthood, such as praying, worshipping, and meditating. *Fourth*, Supporting Emotional and Social Growth. Improve children's ability to empathize, cooperate, and socialize with the surrounding environment based on religious principles. *Fifth*, Fostering Respect for Diversity. Teaching children to respect and appreciate the diversity of religions and cultures in their environment.

Introduction to religion is an important part in helping children understand religious values, build positive relationships with God and fellow humans, and form positive characters so that they should be developed in early childhood because at this time, children are still responsive to stimuli given by parents and teachers. The development of early childhood religion is influenced by maturity and interaction with the environment such as the family environment, educational environment, gender roles and peers.

Religious Literacy Program at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten

The religious literacy program at the Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten level is designed to introduce basic religious values and character formation with an approach that is appropriate to the age of children. The following are the main forms and components of the religious literacy program at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten:

1. Daily Routine Activities

Prayer Together

Children are taught to read daily prayers, such as prayers before and after meals, prayers before studying, or morning prayers.

Short Letter Memorization

Children are introduced to short letters that are easy to memorize, such as Al-Fatihah or other short letters.

2. Religious Stories or Stories

Telling the Story of Religious Figures

Teachers tell stories about prophets, apostles, or other religious figures in an interesting way, using puppets, pictures, or props.

Stories About Moral Values

For example, stories about honesty, compassion, or sharing, which are told through a religious approach.

3. Practical Activities

Worship Simulation

Congregational prayer for Islamic-based kindergartens, focusing on simple movements and prayers.

Making a sign of the cross or praying in a place of worship for Christian/Catholic-based kindergartens.

Teaching simple rituals based on other religions such as singing bhajan in Hinduism or singing Buddhist songs.

Learning to Share

Sharing snacks or toys as part of learning about kindness.

4. Creative and Art Activities

Coloring Pictures with Religious Themes

For example, images of mosques, churches, or religious symbols.

Singing Religious Songs

Teaching children's religious songs that are simple and easy to remember.

Religious-themed handicrafts

Making decorations or crafts related to a particular religious festival.

5. Religious Holiday Celebrations

Holding special activities to commemorate religious holidays, such as:

Islam: Commemoration of the Prophet's Birthday, Eid al-Adha, or Eid al-Fitr.

6. Strengthening Spiritual and Social Values

Role Play

Role-play in everyday life scenarios to practice religious values, such as helping a friend or respecting a teacher.

Character Education

Focus on teaching universal values such as compassion, tolerance, and discipline with a religious approach.

7. Collaborate with Parents

Parents are invited to continue religious learning at home, for example by reading prayers together before going to bed or teaching religious songs.

Holding activities with parents, such as family recitations, family worship, or religious holiday celebrations.

The religious literacy program at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten is adapted to the cultural context, the majority religion in the school environment, and a child-friendly educational approach. The main goal is to build a strong spiritual and moral foundation, while fostering love and respect for religion and others.

The Implementation of the Religious Literacy Program in Increasing Religious Awareness in Early Childhood at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten

The stimulation carried out by Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten is to foster religious awareness in early childhood which is in harmony with daily life as follows:

Introducing and familiarizing religious practices

1. Early childhood children need to be introduced to religious practices/activities that are in accordance with their family's beliefs.

This can include activities such as praying, reading scripture, attending worship, and more. By experiencing this religious practice firsthand, children can understand the values and traditions that are instilled in their religion.

2. Introduce and habituate honest, helpful, polite, respectful, and sportsmanlike behavior

Fundamental moral values such as honesty, kindness, politeness, respect for others, and sportsmanship are also important to be taught in early childhood. It helps them understand how religious values are reflected in their daily actions and form a good character.

Introduce and familiarize yourself with personal hygiene and environmental hygiene

3. Cleanliness is an important part of many religious teachings and is also a good moral value for children to learn.

Through teaching about the importance of maintaining personal hygiene and the environment, children can develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and the community around them.

4. Introducing religious holidays

Inviting children to celebrate religious holidays helps them understand the values and meanings behind the celebrations. It also helps them feel a sense of togetherness and identity with their religious community.

5. Daily activities to teach religious values

There is no need to do large-scale activities to implement big ideas. Can show religion as a part of daily life by practicing it in speech and behavior. For example, when you open a window in the morning, you can say, "Alhamdulillah, it's so sunny today." Or when sleeping at night it can be said, "All praise be to the Lord who has blessed us today."

6. Introducing and fostering respect and tolerance for other religions

It is important to teach children about religious diversity and universal values such as respect and tolerance. This helps them develop a broader understanding of the world and foster an open attitude towards differences.

Conclusion

The religious literacy program at the Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten level is designed to introduce basic religious values and character formation with an approach that is appropriate to the age of children. The main components of the religious literacy program at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten, include: daily activities, religious stories or stories, worship practice activities, creative and artistic activities, celebration of religious holidays, strengthening spiritual and social values, and collaboration with parents.

Efforts made to increase religious awareness through religious literacy programs at Lukman Hakim Purwokerto Kindergarten are by 1) Introducing and getting used to religious practices, 2) Introducing and getting used to honest, helpful, polite, respectful, and sportsmanlike behavior, 3) Introducing and getting used to personal hygiene and environmental cleanliness, 4) Introducing religious holidays, 5) Daily activities to teach religious values, and 6) Introduce and foster respect and tolerance for other religions.

It is important to teach children about religious diversity and universal values such as respect and tolerance. This helps them develop a broader understanding of the world and foster an open attitude towards differences.

Bibliography

- Agus Salim. *Teori Dan Paradigma Penelitian Sosial*. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2006.
- Anwar, Rosyida Nurul, and Siti Muhyati. "Upaya Membangun Sikap Moderasi Beragama Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam Pada Mahasiswa Perguruan Tinggi Umum." *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 1 (2021): 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.24042/atjpi.v12i1.7717>.
- Arikunto, S. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2013.
- Arikunto, Suharsimi. *Manajemen Penelitian*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2013.
- Azizah, Nurul. *Metodologi Penelitian Sosial Dan Pendidikan Teori Aplikasi*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2006.
- Dewayanu, Sofie, and Pratiwi Retnaningdyah. *Literasi Sebagai Praktik Sosial*. Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya, 2017.
- Hasanah, Hasyim. "FAKTOR-FAKTOR PEMBENTUK KESADARAN BERAGAMA ANAK JALANAN." *Sawwa: Jurnal Studi Gender* 10, no. 2 (May 30, 2015): 209.
<https://doi.org/10.21580/sa.v10i2.1432>.
- Matthew B. Milles & A. Michael Hubberman. *Analisis Data Kualitatif Terj. TjetTjep Rohendi Rohidi*. Jakarta: UI Press, 1992.

- Moleong, Lexy J. *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya Offsite, 2017.
- . *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2014.
- Mursidin, H., and Rizkul Hamkani. “Kontribusi Mahasiswa KKN Melalui Pendampingan Literasi Keagamaan Di Desa Karang Sidemen.” *AL-Madani: Jurnal Pengabdian Pada Masyarakat* 3, no. 1 (June 13, 2024): 69–76.
<https://doi.org/10.37216/almadani.v3i1.1500>.
- Nazir. *Metode Penelitian*. Bogor: Ghalia Indonesia, 2005.
- Nurhalisa, Eka, Saudah Saudah, and Muzakki Muzakki. “Bimbingan Menanamkan Nilai Agama Melalui Kegiatan Praktek Ibadah Di RA Al-Hijrah Desa Hampalit.” *MESTAKA: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 3, no. 1 (February 18, 2024): 133–38.
<https://doi.org/10.58184/mestaka.v3i1.305>.
- Nurul Zuriah. *Metode Penelitian Sosial Dan Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2007.
- Pusat Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan Nasional. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008.
- Subur, Subur. *Model Pembelajaran Nilai Moral Berbasis Kisah*. Purwokerto: STAIN Press, 2014.
- Sugiyono. *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2016.
- . *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010.
- Sulistyo (dkk). *Metode Penelitian*. Jakarta: Penaku, 2010.
- Susanto, Susanto. *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2010.
- Utami, Faiqotul Isma Dwi, Nining Khurrotul Aini, Rohmatin Nur Khumairoh, Siti Muslikhah, Putri Dwi Nur Jannah, and Muhammad Nur Nabighoh. “PENGUATAN LITERASI KEAGAMAAN BAGI SISWA MI AL AZIZIYAH BANGSAL MOJOKERTO.” *Jurnal Dinamika Pengabdian* 9, no. 2 (May 26, 2024): 273–82.
<https://doi.org/10.20956/jdp.v9i2.26050>.
- Zuliana, Muhammad Qorib, Oktrigana Wirian, and Qoree Butlam. “Edukasi Moderasi Beragama Sejak Dini Pada Anak Di Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard-Malaysia.” *Al-Ilmu* 1, no. 1 (April 27, 2024). <https://nawalaeducation.com/index.php/AI/article/view/307>.