

## **Efforts of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Shaping the Religious Character of Students at MSI 02 Keputran Pekalongan City**

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### **Abstract**

*In the learning material for Islamic religious education and ethics (often called PAI and BP) at MSI 02 Keputran Pekalongan City, there is material that discusses faith in Allah through Asma' al-Husna. In this material, the PAI teacher introduces Asma' al-Husna in full by getting into the habit of reading Asma' al-Husna. Even though this material only discusses the 4 Asma' al-Husna. The habit of reading Asma' al-Husna is one form of effort made by PAI teachers to shape the religious character of students at MSI 02 Keputran, Pekalongan city, so that religious values are embedded in the students' souls. This research is qualitative research with the type of field research. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, interviews and documentation. The results of this research show that the habit of reading Asmaul Husna is not done every day, but only every religious lesson. PAI teachers' efforts to shape religious character through the habit of reading Asma' al-Husna at MSI 02 Keputran Pekalongan City are carried out in several ways, including through example, habituation, mentoring, appreciation and discipline.*

**Keywords:** PAI teacher, habituation, Asma' al-Husna

### **A. Introduction**

Religious education is one of the means in shaping the character of students. In religious education, there is interaction between educators and students that takes place in a variety of learning activities. This interaction process aims to transmit knowledge, skills, and character to students. In the process, the success of religious education in schools cannot be separated from the role of the family as an informal educational institution, as well as the community as a laboratory for students in developing their skills and personality character (Lito Subianto, 2013). So that religious education can be a means for students to develop character, personality, mental, and spiritual characteristics that can be used as provisions in climbing the social life of society (Gert Biesta, 2019).

Referring to Government Regulation No. 55 of 2007, religious education is education that provides knowledge by forming the personality, attitudes, and skills of students in practicing the teachings of the religion they adhere to. In its implementation, it is carried out at least through subjects at all levels and paths of education. This definition is in line with the mandate of the National Education System Law (Sisdiknas) No. 20 of 2003 which states that national education

functions to develop the potential and character of students to become individuals who believe in God Almighty and have noble character, are physically and mentally healthy, have scientific skills, are creative and independent, and are able to become democratic citizens.

The objectives of education as set out in a set of laws and regulations above are carried out at all levels of education, including primary education. This goal ultimately leads to the formation of character education for students. In the perspective of the independent learning curriculum, this character is at least realized in the strengthening of the Pancasila learner profile which includes: noble character, global diversity, independence, mutual cooperation, critical reasoning, and creativity (Dini Irawati, 2022). In this case, the Islamic religion teacher becomes a figure who plays a role in producing students with Pancasila character and a religious person in carrying out religious orders.

Strategies that can be carried out by Islamic religion teachers in increasing the religiosity of students can be done through a series of learning activities, as well as student activities. These various activities can be chosen by Islamic religion teachers according to the abilities and educational facilities owned by schools. This effort is not an easy thing, considering that students are social entities that are influenced by existing norms of life (Suwaibatul Aslamiyah, 2018). Therefore, the selection of strategies to strengthen religiosity can be done through strategies that can be carried out properly.

One strategy that can be chosen is the habituation of reading *Asma' al-Husna* by students. This activity is an activity of reading *Asma' al-Husna* together which is carried out in the classroom before starting the learning process. This strategy was chosen by the Islamic religion teacher of MSI 02 Keputran Pekalongan City as an effort of the Islamic religion teacher in improving the religiosity of students. This strategy was chosen based on several factors, such as the age of 6-12 years is the right age for children to recognize God through His attributes (Fahrul Ismi, 2021). In addition, based on preliminary studies conducted by the author, it was found that some students of MSI 02 Keputran Pekalongan City admitted that they could not read the Qur'an. So that during Islamic religion lessons they tend to lack enthusiasm and confidence. Increasing the religiosity of students by increasing their interest in reading *Asma' al-Husna* is quite important considering these two factors. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting further studies on this matter.

Many previous studies have explored the efforts of teachers in improving religiosity through reading *Asma' al-Husna*, short letters, and habituation to pray in congregation. First, Muyasaroh's research examines the teacher's efforts to improve religiosity through reading the Qur'an and habituation to pray in congregation often encounter obstacles, such as difficulty conditioning students (Lyna Dwi Muya, 2020). The results of other studies mention that increasing the religiosity of students through the habituation of reading *Asma' al-Husna* must be done continuously (Rofiqotul Hasanah, 2020). In line with these two studies,

Prasetya's research findings state that to improve the religiosity of students requires habituation, exemplary, supervision, applying discipline, and appreciating students (Ani Yulianti, 2019). It aims to embed religious values in the soul of students.

Furthermore, similar research was conducted by Dwi Elsa Anjas Asmara who described the teacher's efforts in instilling religious character in SMPN 3 Kartasura students through classroom activities, such as reading prayers before learning; and religious activities in the school environment, such as familiarizing the 5S culture (smile, greeting, greeting, polite, and polite). Anam's research on the implementation of reciting Asma' al-Husna in high schools concluded that it can hone students' emotional and spiritual intelligence. Then another literature review found that the habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna and praying in congregation is an effort to improve the religiosity of students (Abdul Halim, 2023).

A number of literature reviews have become the foothold of researchers in conducting further research. In this case, researchers focus on exploring the strategy of Islamic religion teachers in improving the religiosity of students through the habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna at the basic education level where so far it is still minimal. Even if there are similar studies, this research is considered reasonable enough to do considering the locus of research, MSI 02 Keputran Pekalongan City has a problem of the lack of ability to read the Qur'an for its students. This problem must be solved, such as by increasing the intensity of guidance in reading and writing the Qur'an or by familiarizing students with Asma' al-Husna before starting the lesson.

## **B. Methods**

This research is a field research (field reasearch) with qualitative research methods. This approach is used to find the specifics of the reality that occurs in the midst of social entities. Data were collected using observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews with the research sources, namely Islamic religion teachers, all school leaders, and a number of MSI 02 Keputran students. Secondary sources are also used to check the truth of the data obtained (Sugiono, 2015, p. 55). The three data search techniques were used to explore information about the strategy of Islamic religious education teachers in shaping the religiosity character of students at MSI 02 Keputran. Data analysis techniques are carried out through a series of actions: data reduction by selecting and sorting out important data, data presentation by arranging systematically, and drawing conclusions. The conclusions obtained from this analysis process are then compared with a series of supporting theories. In the end, the narrative obtained has a strong methodological and theoretical footing.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

The strategy of Islamic religious education teachers in improving the religiosity of students is carried out by habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna. This activity is

not carried out every day, but only in every Islamic religion subject. This is because on other days students have a routine of reading the short letters of the Qur'an before starting the lesson. In planning the Islamic religion teacher prepares by distributing photocopied sheets containing the reading of Asma' al-Husna which have been prepared previously. This planning process also prepared supporting equipment, such as wireless speakers provided by the school. After all the preparations were completed, the process of reciting Asma' al-Husna which is guided by the Islamic religion teacher. In the process, not all students were able to follow the teacher's reading well. Some students were found to be silent and unable to follow the teacher's instructions. This obstacle was overcome by writing the Latin version of the Asma' al-Husna reading to make it easier for those who had difficulty reading Arabic writing. After that, those who initially had difficulty reading the Arabic writing of Asma' al-Husna could gradually follow by reading the Latin version of Asma' al-Husna.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, the habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna before this lesson has a good impact. Students are slowly able to memorize the names of Asma' al-Husna and are expected to apply the values contained in it to their daily lives. Through this routine, the Islamic religion teacher can find out the extent of the students' ability to read and memorize Asma' al-Husna. In addition, teachers can directly see the development of their students from the way they read, their compactness, and can know the names of God. Based on the results of previous research, the strategy of habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna before lessons is able to introduce students to the majestic attributes of Allah SWT. Through this action, students can indirectly internalize these values in their daily lives (Nur Arofah, 2019, p. 169). This theory is in line with the research findings of researchers, namely MSI 02 Keputran students become more aware of the attributes of Allah swt and little by little can apply these good qualities in everyday life.

Furthermore, another impact of the habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna at MSI 02 Keputran can educate students about the importance of discipline, dressing politely, caring for the environment by not littering, speaking well, and being more active and enthusiastic in learning. This finding is identical to the results of Hakim's research study that by requiring students to memorize Asma' al-Husna is able to spark student discipline in attending lessons (Muhammad Nur Hakim, 2018, p. 74). This activity also affects their response to good values. For example, some students of MSI 02 Keputran class often ask the Islamic religion teacher about the application of Asma' al-Husna values in daily life. Thus, the teacher is able to spark students' critical reasoning through discussion methods in learning.

In the practice of habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna, of course there are obstacles or obstacles as the author has described in the previous sub-discussion. However, these obstacles as far as the researcher's observations can be overcome properly by the Islamic religion teacher. For example, the solution carried out by the teacher by writing Asma' al-Husna into Latin letters is one of the solutions to overcome students who are not familiar with Arabic letters. However, teachers

need to follow up on these students so that they can quickly read Arabic letters well, for example by conducting intensive reading and writing al-Qur'an (BTQ) guidance in learning activities at school.

In supporting the habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna, Islamic religion teachers make a series of efforts, such as providing role models, carrying out habituation, giving appreciation, and applying discipline.

### 1. Providing Exemplary (al-uswah al-hasanah)

Among the examples exemplified by the MSI 02 Keputran Islamic religion teacher is telling exemplary stories of prophets and previous righteous people. Exemplary in the form of worship is also exemplified, for example, how to recite Asma' al-Husna properly and correctly according to the correct makharijul letters. For teachers, this effort is one part of educating the mental spirituality and character of students. Spiritual mentality must basically be trained through a religious culture in educational institutions (Mahmun Zahrudin, 2021, p. 98). Furthermore, spiritual mentality can be developed through exemplary as Emilia Ulfah's research findings.

Being a role model is the most important factor in the educational process. Ideally, teachers with good personalities will give birth to students who also have good character. Therefore, teachers should continue to be role models for their students by showing commendable behavior not only in the classroom, but also being an example outside the classroom.<sup>16</sup> This is in line with the findings of Rifki et al's research that exemplary is the initial capital in developing religious values to students.

### 2. Modeling the Habituation of Doing Good

The habituation method is a continuous repetition of something where at a certain point it will get results from the continuous repetition. The efforts of MSI 02 Keputran Islamic religion teachers in supporting the formation of students' religious character are also carried out by habituating other activities, such as praying in congregation, reading the Qur'an, and other activities. This habituation is a repetitive process that eventually becomes a habit. Habituation is a relatively settled and automatic process in which attitudes and behaviors are formed through a repeated learning process (Cindy Anggreini, 2021, p. 100).

With more and more practice, the effort will be closer to the result. Even so, the habituation of reading Asma' al-Husna, in the author's opinion, is ultimately able to shape the religious characteristics of students if done continuously.

### 3. Giving Appreciation to Students

In supporting the formation of religiosity of MSI 02 Keputran students, it is also carried out through giving appreciation by teachers for student achievement, although in a relatively small scope. This appreciation can be in the form of praise in class if there are students who can do the questions given by the teacher.

Another example, for example, Islamic religion teachers often provide a stimulus so that students have a strong mentality to dare to appear in front. This is often done by appreciating those who dare to come forward to do the exercise questions given. Regarding the habituation of reciting Asma' al-Husna, the religious teacher gives a prize in the form of candy to students who are able to demonstrate the recitation of Asma' al-Husna in front of the class. Although sometimes there are still mistakes in the reading, the Islamic religion teacher still appreciates students who dare to appear in front of their friends.

The teacher still gives direction and praise to students so that they are not discouraged by their mistakes. Appreciation is a statement that shows appreciation. Therefore, giving appreciation to children in the slightest form has a very important role in the process of child development, especially in the aspect of character building (Zuyina Candra Kirana, 20220, p. 174).

#### 4. Implementing Discipline

Enforcing discipline is a step that must be taken by educators. Without discipline, learning objectives will not be achieved optimally. Even the smallest form of discipline will greatly affect the success of learning. The findings of this study show that the discipline applied at school starts with the teachers, which is reflected in the discipline of dress and time discipline. The discipline of dress aims to provide an example to students to always wear uniforms as specified.

Meanwhile, time discipline has implications for the presence of students who must be at school before the lesson starts. Related to teacher discipline in familiarizing reading Asma' al-Husna is to maintain consistency in carrying out activities at a predetermined time. Students must also show their commitment in participating in these activities. Discipline is a condition formed through a series of processes and behaviors that show values of obedience, order, loyalty, and order. The discipline carried out by MSI 02 Keputran religion teachers as an effort to shape the religious characteristics of students is in line with the opinion expressed by Rantauwati, namely the technique in shaping the character of students can be done through: habituation to obey school rules and take full responsibility for what is assigned (Heny Sri Rantauwati, 2020, p. 116).

The formation of the religiosity of students carried out by schools must receive full support from the parents of students by providing role models in informal education in the family and closely supervising the activities of their children. The form of responsibility in educating children cannot be fully released to schools as formal educational institutions. The role and full responsibility of parents is needed for the success of students' education. Thus, the cooperation between parents and schools must be maintained to support the success of students.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The findings of this study can be underlined that the strategy of Islamic religion teachers in shaping the religiosity of students can be done by routinely reading

Asma' al-Husna before starting the lesson. In the process, the obstacles encountered must be found a solution so that these activities can continue to be carried out. This religious character building effort must also be supported by other efforts, such as providing role models by giving examples of how to recite Asma' al-Husna; habituating other activities, such as praying in congregation, reading the Qur'an; giving appreciation to the slightest student achievement; and applying discipline which is reflected in the discipline of dressing and time discipline. In the end, this research illustrates that no matter how small the school's efforts in shaping the characteristics of students, it must be done continuously.

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