

Strengthening Islamic Religious Education Research Based on Socio-Cultural Change among Teachers at State Elementary School of Toviora, Lalundu District, Donggala Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study examines efforts to strengthen Islamic religious education research based on social and cultural change among teachers at SDN Toviora, Donggala Regency, as well as the impact of such efforts on teachers. Data were collected through in depth interviews and analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach. The research participants were selected purposively based on predetermined criteria, consisting of the school principal and several teachers considered credible sources of information at SDN Toviora. The findings show that strengthening efforts are mainly carried out through training programs and research workshops for teachers. These activities positively affect teachers motivation to conduct research and contribute to social and cultural change within teachers. The findings also highlight the emergence of a new principle in which becoming a teacher researcher is viewed as a way to develop teacher competence and to affirm the role of teachers as agents of change. This study implies that improving the quality and quantity of professional teachers requires greater seriousness in learning and increased innovation, so that teachers are better prepared to face ongoing changes in society..

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Keywords:

Islamic religious education research, social change, culture

1. Introduction

The elements of culture are in fact each complete, and their strength is obtained from the balance and completeness of their elements. When these elements are interconnected and balanced, the culture becomes strong. Conversely, if one element is weak, the other elements will also become

weak and this will affect the culture as a whole.

Indonesia had experienced many cultural developments before the arrival of the first Dutch sailors. Social life had been greatly influenced by several of the highest world currents of thought such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam. What is important is that in these cultural contacts,

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Indonesian people always took an active role. Nevertheless, Indonesian culture in the early period was far from being a unified whole. Several patterns can be observed within it, and to a certain extent these patterns were related to the material foundations of society. In areas where shifting agriculture prevailed, it provided the basis for a subsistence economy, and as a result ethnic groups in Indonesia lived in social groupings along genealogical lines of civilization, as expressed in the arts that constituted the culture of that time. This was a very limited civilization closely related to belief systems (Wertheim, 1999).

Culture is static, but culture can be dynamic, as described above. Nevertheless, at times change in some of its aspects appears slow, because inevitably culture is accepted by members of society as something that ought to be so. At certain times, some aspects of culture are not bound and change very rapidly, as occurs in the field of creativity. Change in culture sometimes takes the form and manner of correcting, removing, and adding, and at times change is prospective. Change does not always require great effort, for it can occur through anything that requires serious effort, full understanding, and dissemination in facing challenges that will arise. Only then does one begin to take steps in order to succeed in such change and to overcome its challenges (Ahmad, 1989).

Human culture is not something that arises only once or is simple in nature. Every society has a culture that differs from the culture of other societies. Something is regarded as culture when values and norms are able to influence the patterns of behavior of a group within society. Therefore, culture is always associated with values, norms, attitudes, and patterned behavior shared by the majority of members of a particular social group. Culture is collectively owned,

and culture constitutes an integrated collection of shared ways of behavior in relation to a particular environment (Sujarwa, 1999).

Although it is not always felt, globalization in fact affects almost every field of human life. The globalization that spreads across the world brings impacts on human life in the physical, social, economic, and religious fields. These impacts may be positive and at the same time may also produce negative effects. There are nations that are ready to accept the reality of globalization of knowledge and culture and are prepared to play an active role within it (Abdullah, 1997).

All changes caused by the flow of globalization, as creativity produced by human reasoning, have a direct impact on the historical course of humanity. Culture as "the result of human intellect" (Barnadib, 1997), in its various forms and manifestations, has been known throughout history as belonging to humanity and not being static, but continuously developing and changing. Therefore, education as a human endeavor is a reflection of culture.

Throughout their lives, human beings exist within social contact. Life is lived within bonds to both cultural and social environments. Life within this cultural and social space is constructed by human beings together with others, and all of this serves to produce norms and values as individuals (Barnadib, 1996).

Education is necessary to build a society. This reality is demonstrated by education, especially Islamic education. Culture, as we have stated above, is an inseparable element of a society, because education is a fundamental need in formulating the shape or pattern of a culture that characterizes a society, and education is also what plans the transmission of culture from one generation to the next.

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Furthermore, education seeks to develop and direct it in accordance with the needs of society, which continuously increase and change.

At present, it can be determined that education is established upon the general elements of culture within any society. These general elements of culture often determine the education provided at the primary level, because the objectives of education at this level are adjusted to those general cultural elements. The reason is that primary education aims to prepare individuals with an equal capacity regarding the culture that must be accepted by all members of society, so that they ultimately obtain similar abilities, in terms of experience, tendencies, and skills. Therefore, most societies give serious attention to education at the primary level in relation to the general elements of culture.

The general elements of culture are a necessity that cannot be omitted in education. Therefore, this capacity is part of a culture accepted by members of society who possess different levels of social and cultural backgrounds. This capacity determines attitudes of mutual understanding and closeness in various thoughts or ideas. Such capacity will also prevent the existence of social classes, because within this capacity everyone will feel the importance of their role in society, including responsibilities as well as rights and obligations. Therefore, we can find similar cultural elements only in advanced and independent countries.

According to Muslih Usa and Aden Widjan, education is essentially an effort to transmit values that will serve as assistance and guidance for humanity in living life, and at the same time to improve the destiny and civilization of humankind. Without education, it is believed that humans today would not be different from past

generations, who, when compared to present generations, would be far behind in terms of quality of life and the processes of planning their future. In an extreme sense, it can even be stated that the progress or decline, as well as the quality of civilization of a society or a nation, is determined by the education experienced by that society or nation.

Cultural phenomena that occur in society are the result of reflections of every activity carried out, whether intentional or unintentional. In observing every development, society does not merely accept it blindly, but through education that has been widely provided or understood, society is able to compare its positive and negative aspects. The changes that occur indicate that society is capable of accepting various developments in knowledge and culture, since Islamic education has provided many representations that are pedagogical and transparent in responding to problems of cultural development, which are viewed as inseparable from society. Therefore, Islamic education, in viewing the role of culture in society, does not focus solely on its negative aspects, but more importantly on the wisdom derived from its positive aspects.

Change should not always be misinterpreted, because humans or society strongly desire change, and the author believes that every step taken is accompanied by careful consideration of what must be done and confidence that what is done will bring change, based on foundations obtained through education and religious teachings.

Based on the discussion above, the phenomena of social life that continuously experience change have encouraged the researcher to examine the strengthening of Islamic religious education research based

on socio cultural change among teachers at SDN Toviora, Donggala Regency.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Strengthening Research Methods in Islamic Religious Education

Discussing methods in Islamic education involves individual or social issues of learners and educators themselves. Therefore, in using methods, an educator must pay attention to the general foundations of Islamic educational methods. Educational methods serve as the means or paths toward educational objectives, so every path taken by an educator must refer to these foundational principles. The foundations of Islamic educational methods include religious, biological, psychological, and sociological foundations.

- a. Religious foundation, meaning that the methods used in Islamic education must be based on religion. Islamic religion refers to the Quran and Hadith. Therefore, in its implementation, the various methods used by educators should be adjusted to emerging needs in an effective and efficient manner and be grounded in the values of the Quran and Hadith.
- b. Biological foundation. Human biological development has an influence on intellectual development. The more dynamic a person's biological development, the greater their intellectual capacity will increase. Therefore, in applying methods of Islamic education, a teacher must pay attention to the biological development of learners.
- c. Psychological foundation. The psychological development and

condition of learners will have a very significant influence on the acceptance of educational values and knowledge delivered. In unstable conditions, the transmission of knowledge and the internalization of values will not proceed as expected. Therefore, Islamic educational methods can only be applied effectively if they are based on the psychological development and condition of learners. For this reason, an educator is required to develop the psychological potential that grows within learners, because in the Islamic concept, intellect is included within the spiritual realm.

- d. Sociological foundation. During the learning process, there is interaction among learners as well as interaction between educators and learners. Based on this condition, the use of methods in Islamic education must pay attention to this foundation. Methods should not be applied that are inconsistent with the sociological conditions of learners, because if this occurs, it is not impossible that educational objectives will be difficult to achieve (Abifasya, 2015).

Suyono and colleagues explain that a learning approach constitutes a set of interrelated assumptions concerning the nature of learning. Examples of learning approaches include environmental approach, expository approach, heuristic approach, contextual approach, concept approach, process skills approach, deductive approach, inductive approach, as well as science environment technology society approach, and others (Suyono & Hariyanto, 2012).

Meanwhile, a learning strategy refers to a sequence of activities within the learning process related to the management of learners, teachers, learning activities, learning environments, learning resources, and assessment, with the aim of making learning more effective and efficient in accordance with predetermined learning objectives.

Methodology originates from the Greek language and consists of two words. *Methodos* means way or path, and *logos* means knowledge. Methodology means the study of ways or methods (Arief, 2002).

Meanwhile, Islamic Religious Education learning is a process aimed at assisting learners in studying Islam. Based on this understanding, it can be explained that in essence the methodology of Islamic Religious Education learning refers to a field of knowledge that discusses the ways, strategies, steps, or tactics used by educators in the learning process for delivering materials or content derived from Islamic Religious Education subjects, with the objective that learners are able to master the material in accordance with the specified competencies.

2.2 Concepts and Definitions of Social Change

Every human society throughout its life inevitably experiences changes. Social change may affect social values, the structure of social institutions, social stratification, power and authority, social interaction, and so forth.

Sociologists and anthropologists have widely discussed the boundaries of the definition of social change as follows:

- a. Gillin states that social changes are variations in accepted ways of life, whether caused by changes in geographic conditions, material culture, population composition, ideology, or by diffusion or new discoveries within society.
- b. Koenig states that social change refers to modifications that occur in patterns of human life. These modifications occur due to both internal and external causes.
- c. Davis defines social change as changes that occur in the structure and functions of society.
- d. Cohen explains that social change is change in social structure and change in social organization. For example, change in one aspect of social life indicates change because alterations occur in social structure and social organization. The main requirement in such change is the social system within social interaction that involves the social and cultural values of society.
- e. Soemarjan Soelaman argues that social change is any change in social institutions within a society that affects values, attitudes, and patterns of behavior among groups in society (Syani, 2007).

Factors that influence socio cultural change using a historical approach such as classical evolutionism. Taylor and Morgan as cited in Lauer state that the central point causing the occurrence of social change is (Lauer, 1989):

- a. Discovery dan Invention

Discovery is a finding that occurs unintentionally, whereas invention is a finding that is the result of conscious effort.

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Linton argues in Harsojo: “that discovery is any addition to knowledge and invention is something new within knowledge” (Harsojo, 1988).

b. Cultural Dysfunction

According to Boas in Koentjaraningrat, the growth of culture gives rise to new elements that will push older elements toward the margins surrounding the former center. Therefore, if one wishes to find ancient elements, the places to find them are in peripheral areas. Ancient elements also tend to have the widest distribution. This concept proposed by Boas is the concept of marginal survival or “elements that can continue to exist in peripheral areas”. Boas’s thinking concerning this concept also provided the seeds that were later developed by other scholars into the concept of culture area (Alfian, 1986).

c. Acculturation

Acculturation refers to the process that occurs when individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds come into continuous and direct contact, resulting in changes in the original cultural patterns of one or both groups. According to Berry, acculturation involves two independent dimensions, namely the extent to which individuals maintain their original cultural identity and the extent to which they seek interaction with the host culture. The combination of these dimensions shapes how individuals adapt culturally within a new social environment (Savitri & Utami, 2015).

d. Assimilation

Assimilation is an advanced social process characterized by a decreasing degree of differences among individuals and among groups, and by the increasing

unity of actions, attitudes, and mental processes related to shared interests and common goals.

Assimilation is discussed in the context of cultural change, because assimilation is a phase of acculturation, and acculturation is an aspect of cultural change (Khaeruddin, 2008).

2.3 The Role of Elementary School Teachers in Strengthening Research on the Integration of Islamic Education in Responding to Social Change

Teachers are known as learning managers, therefore teachers play a role in creating a learning climate that enables learners to study comfortably. Through effective classroom management, teachers can maintain a conducive classroom environment for the learning process of all learners. Thus, teachers’ ability to respond to existing social change can make learners feel comfortable in the learning process.

Strengthening research in Islamic Religious Education based on social change for elementary school teachers can enhance the abilities to communicate, cooperate, and manage emotions, which become important aspects in forming strong character among learners. Accordingly, education has a central role in shaping individual character, and one of the key actors in this process is the teacher. Beyond merely conveying information, teachers have the responsibility to shape students’ values, ethics, and attitudes. This is why the role of teachers in shaping students’ character becomes crucial in creating a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also possesses moral integrity and social responsibility (Kemendikbudristek, 2021).

The role of teachers in providing cross cultural understanding is essential. Cultural diversity in Indonesia is very important for students to understand, in addition to the introduction of cultural diversity across countries. Students must have an attitude of tolerance and acknowledge the existence and uniqueness of every ethnic group and region in Indonesia. Students often interact and communicate through social media with people from various cultural backgrounds and different customs. Understanding habits, customs, languages, and cross cultural uniqueness is very important knowledge in carrying out communication and interaction so as not to cause misunderstandings and to maintain a sense of national unity and cohesion, in order to avoid errors in communication (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, n.d.).

3. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research approach, with the research focus aiming to reveal and produce data that are descriptive in nature. The data obtained in this study are not processed through statistical procedures or other forms of calculation, but are obtained through case studies, interviews, field notes, photographs, videos, personal documents, notes or memos, and other official documents. In this study, the research focus or research problems move from facts, information, or events toward a higher level of abstraction in the form of concepts or theories, rather than the other way around, from theory or concept to data or information (Sugiarto, 2019) (Hardani, 2020).

This study emphasizes activities through description and understanding of the observed social phenomena. The

understanding of the observed phenomena and facts is not derived from the researcher's perspective, but from the perspective of the subjects being studied (Hardani, 2020).

This research is descriptive in nature, consisting of written or spoken words from individuals and observed behaviors. In this study, the analysis tends to use an inductive approach (Rukin, 2019). which emphasizes observation first and then drawing conclusions based on those observations. Data collection in this study was carried out at the research site, namely SDN Toviora, while the research subjects were teachers, with emphasis placed on quality rather than quantity. In this study, the researcher describes conditions as they are without providing treatment or manipulation to the objects being studied.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Efforts to Strengthen Research on the Integration of Islamic Religious Education Based on Sociocultural Change among Teachers

The factors that cause socio cultural change through research conducted by teachers on the thinking patterns of teachers in Toviora are mostly related to the mixing of external cultures into a society. This usually emerges from the subjects and objects of processes originating from the environment, culture, or the clash of foreign cultures themselves. Apart from these factors originating from outside the surrounding environment and from within the individual child, the factors influencing teacher quality from the perspective of social culture can be described as follows: factors originating from outside the individual, namely non social factors and social factors, and factors originating from within the individual child. Thus, environmental factors include the physical or natural environment, the social economic

environment, instrumental factors, and individual factors, meaning self motivation as a result of environmental influence, including the influence of regional conditions that have experienced many social changes, both in behavior, ways of dressing, and lifestyle, so that it appears to have deviated from authentic religious education.

To understand these factors, they must be supported by teacher activities through various research efforts in understanding the social conditions of the local community.

The efforts undertaken by teachers in order to develop themselves, particularly in conducting continuous research through scientific writing, include participating in workshops or training on scientific writing. Workshops or training are activities frequently attended by teachers from public and private elementary schools as an effort to minimize difficulties in writing scientific papers among elementary school teachers as part of continuing professional development. The training attended by teachers at SDN Toviora may be based on personal initiative or independence, or may also be a result of assignments from institutions or schools. Teacher participation in training was identified by the researchers during participant observation, particularly when there was guidance and direction from the Head of the Donggala Regency Education Office.

In fact, teachers were very enthusiastic in asking about the requirements for good classroom action research and how to submit it in accordance with the provisions of the assessment team. The willingness and activeness of teachers in developing themselves is in line with the opinion of the school principal:

“That professional teachers have personal, social, intellectual, moral, and

spiritual responsibilities. Independent personal responsibility enables teachers to understand themselves, manage themselves, control themselves, and appreciate as well as develop themselves.”

The results of this study indicate that most teachers at the research site have made efforts to engage in professional development as mandated by the Regulation of the Minister for Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 6 of 2009 concerning the Functional Position of Teachers and Their Credit Points. The competencies that teachers must possess to develop professionalism through reflective action consist of six indicators: (1) continuously conducting reflection on their own performance; (2) utilizing the results of reflection to improve professionalism; (3) conducting classroom action research to enhance professionalism; (4) keeping up with developments of the times by learning from various sources; (5) utilizing information and communication technology in communication; (6) utilizing information and communication technology for self development.

4.2 The Impact of Strengthening Research on Islamic Religious Education Based on Sociocultural Change among Teachers

The impact of research in writing scientific papers for teachers includes training in developing effective reading skills, training in integrating reading results from various sources, introducing library based activities, improving the organization of facts or data in a clear and systematic manner, and gaining personal satisfaction.

Through scientific writing, teachers can develop their competencies and thereby contribute to improving the quality of education in Indonesia. Scientific papers

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produced through research are required to be written by teachers for self development and must be published to the public as a form of teacher contribution to improving the quality of the learning process in schools and to the development of education in general, as well as to obtain credit points in accordance with Ministerial Regulations.

In line with the explanation above, according to the principal of SDN Toviora, there are several benefits of conducting research within the community for teachers, particularly Islamic Religious Education teachers, including developing career advancement, serving as a branding medium for teachers, providing a means to develop teachers' intellectual capacity, fostering initiative and creativity, cultivating courage, encouraging teachers' willingness and ability to collect information, obtaining economic benefits, and building social sensitivity.

5. Conclusion

The efforts to strengthen Islamic religious education research based on social and cultural change among teachers at SDN Toviora indicate that teacher professionalism development still faces several obstacles, particularly low motivation, limited time, insufficient technical writing skills, restricted access to references, and low technological literacy. Nevertheless, some teachers seek to improve their competence through workshops, independent learning, and participation in examinations that require scientific writing. These efforts have produced positive impacts, including career advancement, increased creativity, confidence, intellectual growth, and the ability to collect information, as well as economic benefits and enhanced social awareness. Furthermore, ongoing social and cultural

changes influence community perceptions of educational quality and encourage broader social participation in supporting student learning, making teacher research essential for understanding and strengthening the relationship between education and social and cultural dynamics at SDN Toviora.

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