

The Role of Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard in Facilitating Islamic Education for Early Childhood in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive qualitative research aims to determine the role of Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard in facilitating Islamic education for early childhood in Malaysia. Data collection techniques were carried out by means of observation, interviews and documentation. Then the data was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, then tested using triangulation to determine the validity of the data that had been analyzed. The research results found several roles for Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard in facilitating Islamic education for early childhood, namely: 1) preparing an educational curriculum containing Islamic education materials for early childhood; 2) complete the facilities and infrastructure for Islamic educational learning media for early childhood; 3) develop a program of religious practice activities to strengthen children's understanding of the obligations of Muslims, and 4) provide training to teachers to further improve their competence in providing Islamic education for early childhood. The conclusion of this research shows that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard plays a big role in providing Islamic education for early childhood in Malaysia, this of course has a big influence on children's religious moral development which is an important foundation in living life.

Keywords: Children; Islamic Education; Role; Tadika

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is the "Golden Age" which is very appropriate for instilling Islamic values. Islamic education is important to be instilled from an early age because it will become capital for living life and children become accustomed to (Mavianti et al., 2022). Early age is the golden age in child development. At this time there is a very large increase in child development, which does not happen again in the following period. To increase the potential for this development, every child needs balanced nutrition, health care, affection and educational support that is appropriate to the developmental stage and abilities of each child. Educational stimulation can be given from birth, even when the child is still in the womb. This educational stimulus must

be implemented gradually, repeatedly, consistently and comprehensively so that its benefits are visible to the child (Harfiani & Setiawan, 2022).

Early childhood starts from newborns to 6 years old. Early age is an age that greatly determines the formation of character and personality as well as their intellectual abilities. (Dartono, 2016). Early childhood is a character that is innocent and full of potential, with unique qualities. Some characteristics of early childhood are a great desire to want to know about everything around them, have a sharp memory, high mobility and play without knowing the time (Inawati, 2019).

Some developmental psychologists strongly believe that experiences made in early childhood greatly influence a child's development. Those who are successful early in life will certainly have good experiences in the future. This view is supported by many experts, including Erik Erikson, who found that social-emotional experiences in early childhood determine social-emotional development later in life. (Siti, 2022).

Islamic Religious Education is an effort that is conscious, purposeful, systematic and directed at changing knowledge, behavior or attitudes that are in line with the teachings contained in the Islamic religion. (Jasuri, 2015). In line with this, Zakiah Daradjat said that Islamic Religious Education is a conscious effort in the form of guidance and care for children so that after completing their education they can understand and practice the teachings of Islam and make it a way of life. (Sulaiman, 2022). Early childhood education is a fundamental and strategic stage of education in developing human resources, and its existence is greatly needed in society. To optimize the role of PAUD teachers, synergy is needed between teachers, assistants, and students. Teachers must also continuously improve their competence in an effort to achieve professionalism. (Basri, 2019).

2. METHODS

The location of this research is at Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard which is located in Port Klang Selangor Malaysia. The reason for choosing this research location is because Al-Fikh Orchard is an educational foundation that has more than 40 tadika branches spread throughout Malaysia, such as Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Johor, Malacca, and Kelantan.

This research is a qualitative research with a descriptive type. The basic data in this study were collected using the following techniques: 1) observation, namely the researcher directly visited the research location to see the learning process and assessment process carried out by teachers at the tadika; 2) interviews, the main informant of this study was the principal. The researcher also interviewed several teachers to obtain information related to the assessment system carried out at the tadika, and 3) documentation, namely in the form of an Assessment Record Book,

which was specifically designed by Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard, as a guide for teachers in conducting assessments.

The data analysis technique used in the qualitative approach, with a descriptive type in this study, is a qualitative analysis using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, namely qualitative data analysis is carried out interactively and continues continuously until complete so that the data reaches saturation point. (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The latest Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, changes data reduction to data condensation, but still consists of four main things, namely: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusions. These four activities are intertwined activities before, during, and after data collection in a parallel form to build general insights called analysis. Components of data analysis, which include data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusions.

Qualitative validity is an effort to examine the accuracy of research results by applying certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the approach used by researchers is consistent when applied by other researchers (and) for different projects (Creswell, 2010). In this study, to test the validity of the data, a triangulation method was used, either technical triangulation or informant triangulation. The technical triangulation carried out in this study was by presenting the research results which were strengthened by at least three types of data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Meanwhile, informant triangulation is a test of the validity of data supported by the results of interviews with several informants, either with different informants or with the same informant but at different times.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the observation results, it is known that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard, an Islamic Preschool in Malaysia, strives to facilitate Islamic education for early childhood, which includes; 1) preparing an educational curriculum with Islamic educational materials; 2) completing the facilities and infrastructure for Islamic educational learning media; 3) preparing a program of worship practice activities to strengthen children's understanding of the obligations of Muslims, and 4) providing training to teachers to further improve their competence in providing Islamic education for early childhood. The following is a description of the research results and their discussion.

3.1. Islamic Education Curriculum

Based on observations, it is known that every day the teachers at Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard routinely provide Islamic education for their students which is called 'Spiritual Food'. This Spiritual Food activity refers to the Spiritual Food Guidebook, which

consists of 1) Reading Surah Al-Fatihah; 2) Pledge and Shahadah; 3) Heart Softening Prayer; 4) Health Prayer; 5) Verse One Thousand Dinars; 6) Reading selected Surahs (such as Surah Ar-Rahman, Surah Al-Mulk, and so on); and 7) Perform Dhuha Prayers and Dhuha Prayers. After that, students will be taught to recite the Koran using the 'Iqro' method. Apart from that, students are also taught Islamic educational material, such as learning 1) Aqidah (knowing the oneness of God, Asmaul Husnah, Names of Angels; Stories of the Prophet, and so on); 2) Worship (mentioning the names of fardhu prayers and fardhu prayer times); and 3) Morals (adab towards parents, etiquette towards teachers, friends, and so on).

Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard has prepared a curriculum for early childhood education, which contains the substance of Islamic education for children. There are two knowledge developments that are assessed, namely Islamic Education and Moral Education. In Islamic Education there are 18 constructs, namely 1) Recognizing hijaiyah letters; 2) Memorize the surah from Amma's juzuk; 3) Knowing the language of the Koran is easy; 4) Know the shahada sentence; 5) Know the principles of faith in Allah; 6) Know the Pillars of Faith; 7) Know the Pillars of Islam; 8) Perform ablution; 9) Carry out a prayer simulation; 10) Know the sirah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW; 11) Practicing prayer in daily life; 13) Write Jawi letters; 14) Hafazan*; 15) Ablution*; 16) Prayer*; 17) Arabic*, and 18) Iqro'/Qiraati*. (The * mark indicates that this construct is not in the Preschool Education Curriculum and Assessment Standards Document.

Moral Education has 10 constructs, namely: 1) Kindness-helping others; 2) Responsible - carrying out personal responsibilities; 3) Thanking-showing an attitude of gratitude; 4) Hemah high-Be polite in speech and behavior; 5) Respect for other people; 6) Courage - Dare to try something new; 7) Honesty- Being honest in life; 8) Diligence- Diligently carrying out tasks; 9) Cooperation- being able to work together when carrying out tasks, and 10) Tolerance- different attitudes in relationships.

The description above is supported by the results of an interview with the owner of Tadika who stated that:

... Al-Fikh Orchard designs an educational curriculum that contains Islamic educational content, so that students will receive strengthening of their faith from an early age, through routine activities carried out at Tadika...

This statement is also supported by documentation in the form of a Lesson Plan, where prayer activities, reading time/hafazah and Iqro' are routinely carried out every day at 08.30-09.00 (30 minutes), while Islamic Education is carried out every day at 09.30-10.00 (30 minutes).

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation above, it can be analyzed that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard has a role in facilitating Islamic education for its students who are early childhood, this can be seen from the curriculum that is deliberately designed with Islamic education material content, so that it can be

implemented in the learning process in the classroom. This is in line with the theory of Zakiah Darajat, in Sulaiman (2022) which states that Islamic Religious Education is a conscious effort in the form of guidance and care for children so that later after completing their education they can understand and practice the teachings of Islam and make it a way of life. In addition, it is also supported by the results of research by Mavianti, et al. (2022) which states that Islamic Education is important to be instilled from an early age which is the Golden Age because it will be the capital to live life and children become accustomed to practicing it.

3.2. Facilities and Infrastructure for Islamic Education Learning Media

Based on the results of observations, it appears that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard pays close attention to the appropriate learning process for early childhood and realizes that learning media is an integral and inseparable part of learning for early childhood that is concrete. For this reason, this school has prepared several learning media that support the learning process of Islamic education, such as; 1) Hijaiyah letter posters; 2) Prayer demonstration posters; 3) ablution procedure demonstration posters; 4) Hijaiyah letter puzzles; 5) Hijaiyah letter cards; 6) Jawi cards; 7) Iqro books; 8) books of stories of the Prophets; 9) books of guidance on manners; 10) equipment for performing prayer, and so on.

This is in accordance with the statement of one of the teachers, Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard, who stated that:

... the students here carry out various activities using learning media in accordance with learning standards ...

Activities carried out according to the picture above, based on the results of observations are: 1) the teacher sings the song Alif Ba Ta and then asks the students to sing the song together; 2) the teacher shows a poster of hijaiyah letters and randomly introduces the letters while singing; 3) the teacher shows the prefix letters studied previously: the letters Alif to Ta; and 4) show the letters and ask students to name them together while playing Jawi cards. The teacher provides ABM Jawi materials for letter tracing activities.

Based on the results of the observations, interviews and documentation above, it can be analyzed that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard really pays attention to the learning process in accordance with the child's age development. Where at an early age children learn concretely, so they need learning media facilities that support them in understanding the meaning of learning. This is in accordance with Inawati's statement (2019) which states that early childhood has a great curiosity about everything around them, for that, learning media are needed that support the development of potential in children. This is also in line with Harfiani's statement & Setiawan (2022) stated that

to increase their potential, children need educational support that is appropriate to the developmental stage and abilities of each child.

3.3. Worship Practice Program

Based on observations, it is known that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard students are trained from an early age to practice worship according to Islamic rules, such as; 1) practice of ablution; 2) prayer practice; 3) practice of praying; 4) practice of hafazah; 5) practice of giving alms; 6) practice of practicing hadith; 7) practice being polite; 8) practice of the Ramdhan Program, up to 8) practice of demonstrating Hajj rituals.

This activity is carried out at times that have been planned and programmed carefully, so that implementation can achieve the expected learning objectives. As the results of an interview with one of the teachers who was currently carrying out Ramadhan Program activities, stated: ... Thank God Al-Fikh Orchard can sow seeds. a sense of empathy and concern for those in need. All students were given tubes to take home. He aims to educate them to give alms, especially in this noble month of Ramadan. This savings account will also be circulated among siblings, relatives and parents' friends to provide an opportunity to share their fortune with those who lack the means in the future. Hopefully in the future they will become people who are concerned and full of empathy to help people who are poor and needy... The teacher's statement was expressed during the implementation of the Ramadhan program which includes donation activities that will be given to the Home for Orphans, the Da'if and the Poor, as well as selected Mosque Gerobok. Students are trained directly to give alms with the motivation "Give charity, your sustenance will surely come from unexpected sustenance".

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, it can be analyzed that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard in providing Islamic education learning for its students is carried out through direct practice, so that its meaning can be directly felt as an impressive and meaningful learning experience. This is in line with Siti's statement (2022) which states that experiences made in early childhood greatly influence their development. This view is also supported by many experts, including Erik Erikson, who found that social-emotional experiences at an early age determine social-emotional development later in life. Harfiani & Setiawan (2022) also stated that educational stimulus must be implemented gradually, repeatedly, consistently and comprehensively so that its benefits for children can be seen.

3.4. Training Program for Tadika Teachers

Based on the observation results, it is known that the teachers of Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard routinely carry out scheduled training activities every month, with various

materials according to the learning themes. Training in Malaysia is called 'Bengkel'. There are many workshops that are carried out such as Bengkel making teaching aids, teaching method workshops, teacher adaptation workshops, monthly teaching supplies workshops, and so on.

The owner of Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard stated:

... workshop activities are important so that teachers have skills in teaching, good manners, and are ready to educate their students ...

In implementing the workshop, the owner of Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard collaborates with professional organizations that are also involved in early childhood education, they call resource persons to become trainers, they even have a study tour program for comparative studies to schools in other countries as a comparison and to take positive things that can be developed in the Tadika that they manage.

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, it can be analyzed that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard pays great attention to improving the competence of its teachers, this is proven by their routine monthly training with a well-programmed and scheduled schedule, providing materials that are very much needed by teachers in improving their professionalism. This is in line with the opinion of Zakiah Darajat, in Jasuri (2015) which states that Islamic Religious Education is an effort that is conscious, purposeful, systematic and directed at changing knowledge, behavior or attitudes that are in line with the teachings contained in Islam. For this reason, according to Basri (2019), teachers' understanding in providing learning needs to be improved so that they are able to transfer knowledge to their students.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard has a role in facilitating Islamic education for early childhood in Malaysia. This is proven by the findings of the research, namely various activities that have been carried out such as compiling a curriculum with Islamic education materials that support students in understanding Islam from an early age, providing learning media facilities and infrastructure that support Islamic education learning programs, so that students are more enthusiastic in learning, carrying out direct worship practice activities that provide meaningful and memorable learning experiences for children, and always upgrading their teachers by providing various training/workshops routinely every month, as well as visiting other Tadika to increase the insight of teachers and principals in school management and improving the learning process. The role that has been carried out by Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard is expected to provide input and an overview and other Tadika who are also involved

in Early Childhood Islamic Education, so that the goal of realizing an Islamic Generation can be achieved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the Institute for Research and Community Service of the University of Muhammadiyah North Sumatra (LP2M-UMSU) Medan for providing support in the implementation of this international research activity. Thanks are also expressed to Tadika Al-Fikh Orchard who provided both moral and material support sincerely, so that this international research can be carried out well and smoothly. I dedicate this article to my friend the late Hasanuddin, with whom we carried out this research at Tadika Al Fikh Orchard Malaysia. May he rest in peace there.

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