

STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' SOCIO-CULTURAL LITERACY IN MADRASAH WITH AKMI (CASE STUDY OF PRIVATE MI IN KUDUS REGENCY)

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how to strengthen the socio-cultural literacy of students in madrasas by implementing the Indonesian Madrasah Competency Assessment (AKMI). Socio-cultural literacy is the ability to understand and interact with the culture and society around us, socio-cultural literacy is one of the differentiators from literacy developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture through the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM). Through a qualitative method with a case study approach, this study analyzes how AKMI can be used to improve students' socio-cultural literacy in Private MI Kudus Regency. The study results show that AKMI cannot only measure academic competence but can also encourage better socio-cultural understanding among madrasah students by increasing teacher training, resource support, and community involvement. Thus, it is hoped that the students will become agents of socio-cultural literacy in their respective communities when they are at home.

Keywords: Socio-cultural literacy, Students, Madrasah, AKMI, Strengthening literacy

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia is making a very crucial effort to improve madrasah literacy, especially Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, namely by holding the Indonesian Madrasah Competency Assessment (AKMI) program starting in 2020. The Indonesian Madrasah Competency Assessment (AKMI) is a form of evaluation organized by the Ministry of Religion to measure the competence of madrasah students in Reading Literacy, Numeracy Literacy, Science Literacy, and Socio-Cultural Literacy (Kemenag, 2021). After going through a very strict selection

Process. The results of AKMI show its development, this is seen from data from 2020 to 2023 (Suryadi, 2024).

Madrasah as an Islamic educational institution has a responsibility not only to foster spiritual aspects but also to develop students' socio-cultural competencies. AKMI, as one of the assessment tools, is designed to measure various aspects of student competence, including socio-cultural literacy skills. Socio-cultural literacy includes an understanding of cultural norms, values, and practices that exist in society. Strengthening socio-cultural literacy in madrasahs is expected to equip students with the ability to interact effectively in a diverse environment.

In early 2020, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia collaborated with the World Bank through the Realizing Education's Promise - Madrasah Education Quality Reform (REP-MEQR) project. This project aims to improve the quality of madrasah education management and services under the guidance of the Ministry of Religion. This project will be implemented over a period of five years, 2020 – 2024, in 34 provinces and 514 districts/cities throughout Indonesia. The strategy of increasing literacy through AKMI begins with the recruitment of grid writers, assessment instrument writers, the creation of AKMI-based modules, AKMI results follow-up coaches, to visitation instructors, to photograph the condition of literacy in madrasahs and at the same time improve learning in this classroom has proven to be very effective and will continue to be evaluated and developed (Kemenag, 2021).

To find out the level of literacy ability of students, various assessments were carried out, including PISA organized by the OECD, TIMSS, and PIRLS organized by IEA, and AKM developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia in this case also conducts an assessment related to the literacy ability of madrasah students, namely in the form of a diagnostic assessment. This assessment is held as a manifestation of the mandate of the mission of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia as stated in the 2020-2024 Ministry of Religion Strategic Plan, namely improving the quality of piety of the people and strengthening religious moderation and religious harmony which is operationalized in the Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 184 of 2019 which

Contains rules for madrasas in innovating to develop distinctiveness, strengthen character, and develop religious moderation (Kemenag, 2019).

The Ministry of Religion conducts Technical Guidance for the Follow-up of the Indonesian Madrasah Competency Assessment (AKMI) for madrasah teachers starting in 2020 as a solution to the lack of teachers' ability to evaluate and follow up on the results of the assessment (Machmudah et al, 2022). It turns out that the target of the Technical Guidance is not as expected, especially for the Socio-Cultural Literacy (Litsosbud) development segment. Teachers don't even know how to follow up on the AKMI results. The general picture also occurred at MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus. Therefore, teachers need to know and improve their skills in developing strategies and learning media related to the development of socio-cultural literacy in each class with adjustments to the Implementation of the Independent Curriculum (IKM) through training and mentoring activities.

The methods used for active and participatory learning include lectures, discussions, demonstrations, presentations, and consultations. Lectures and discussions were held to provide explanations about the module for improving socio-cultural literacy. The demonstration was carried out when the teacher developed strategies and learning media for socio-cultural literacy in several appropriate sub-themes. Consultation was carried out when the teacher discussed with the instructor compiling media and LKPD. This activity was carried out effectively as shown by Average post-test results, teachers were able to develop strategies and learning media following LKPD for the development of socio-cultural literacy.

In the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture, socio-culture is not part of the assessed literacy (Numeracy Literacy, Reading Literacy, and Character Survey), this difference makes it difficult for madrasah teachers to find references to develop and follow up on the assessment results. This is the second strong reason why this training and mentoring activity is carried out. Socio-cultural literacy is the ability to know, respond, reflect, evaluate, and create knowledge, attitude plans, and action plans related to national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, accommodation, and inclusion, which are designed based on the disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology, and relevance.

Strategic issues are associated with personal, social, and religious contexts so that they can be used to increase knowledge and participate in people's lives.

The results of the AKMI on socio-cultural literacy were classified into five groups that described different proficiency levels. The order of proficiency levels referred to from the least level of competence to the highest level of competence is: special intervention is needed, basic, capable, skilled, and needs space for creation. Meanwhile, the Socio-Cultural Literacy Indicators consist of National Commitment, Tolerance, Anti-Violence, and Accommodating and Inclusive. Culture is an eternal symbol of human communal civilization, the models of behavior in culture show the quality of human resources adherents of that culture (Fedi et al, 2023).

On the official AKMI portal, it is explained that until 2022 AKMI participants have reached 654,122, madrasahs participating in AKMI have reached 24,406, and there are 191 question writers, 60 instrument reviewers, and 44 module writers. In 2024, the data has increased very significantly even though it has not been officially updated on the Ministry of Religion's AKMI website, this can be seen from the increase in AKMI participants who initially were only MI students, in 2023 it will begin to increase in MTs and MA students even though the number of MTs and MA participants is not as many as participants from MI (Kemenag, 2022).

Socio-cultural literacy is one of the important competencies in this era of globalization. With the development of technology and intercultural interaction, the ability to understand and interact with different cultures has become an essential skill. In Indonesia, madrasahs have an important role in shaping students' character and socio-cultural competence. One of the efforts made is through the implementation of AKMI which is designed to measure and develop various student competencies, including socio-cultural literacy.

Kudus is one of the districts that have a very large number of Madrasah supported by the existence of Islamic boarding schools and the two can synergize and collaborate and in fact can minimize conflicts even though they have different social and cultural characteristics, in this study, it will be explained how MI's strategy in Kudus Regency in increasing socio-cultural literacy using AKMI.

METHOD

This research was carried out in a Private Madrasah of Kudus Regency with the participation of 6 Private MIs. The technique of taking participants was purposive sampling. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research participants consisted of students, teachers, and madrasah managers who had implemented AKMI. Data analysis was carried out by triangulation technique to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

DISCUSSION

This research was carried out in a Private Madrasah of Kudus Regency with the participation of 6 Private MIs. The technique of taking participants was purposive sampling. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research participants consisted of students, teachers, and madrasah managers who had implemented AKMI. Data analysis was carried out by triangulation technique to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Head of the Madrasah Education Section at the Ministry of Religion of Kudus Regency explained that MI in Kudus Regency is an MI with a high literacy category, the majority of this is because most of it is supported by a madrasah environment that is connected to Islamic boarding schools at the same time, where students and at the same time students whose domiciles are mostly different from their regions can be used as an opportunity to develop one of the literacy contained in AKMI, namely literacy Social Culture (Munawaroh, 2023).

Some of the private MIs that are the object of case studies in this study are MI NU Banat Kudus, MI TBS Kudus, MI Qudsiyah Kudus, MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus and MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus. The results of the analysis of each madrasah are:

1. MI NU Banat Kudus

One of the Private MIs whose literacy level is very high, especially its socio-cultural literacy, is MI NU Banat Kudus, this MI is led by a very visionary madrasah head, especially the spirit of improving literacy. This is evidenced by the completeness of infrastructure facilities that support literacy improvement such as libraries, posters installed in various corners of the madrasah, there are wall magazines in almost every classroom, namely in the classroom and in front of the classroom, a very green and cool madrasah environment, and full support for the teacher council who want to enrich their skills by participating in various trainings and education that will help educators in educating students. At MI NU Banat, there is also a teacher who is one of the writing team about AKMI.



Figure 1. Wall magazine at MI NU Banat Kudus

2. MI TBS Kudus

The second Private MI which is also a Private MI with a high level of socio-cultural literacy is MI TBS Kudus, this MI is also one of the MIs with a very large number of students, one of the factors for the high socio-cultural literacy in MI is the existence of supporting infrastructure facilities such as books in the library, many posters contain social and cultural literacy, and no less important is the direct practice by students in understanding and respecting the social culture between their friends because the majority of students at MI are students.



Figure 2. Group photo of the head of the madrasah and the teachers' council after the interview

3. MI Qudsiyah Kudus

The next private madrasah which is a high category of socio-cultural literacy is MI Qudsiyah Kudus, in addition to its high socio-cultural literacy MI Qudsiyah Kudus is one of the private madrasas with high digital literacy, this is evidenced by the existence of a library application that can be accessed by its students online, this was very helpful during the pandemic in 2020. The efforts made by the madrasah to develop sociocultural literacy are not so different from previous madrasas, namely because the majority of students are students, but there is a very interesting and unique thing about this madrasah is that every Friday all students and educators wear sarongs which is a typical culture of students.



Figure 3. Students of MI Qudsiyah Kudus who are engrossed in reading

4. MI Tahfidhul Qur'an Kudus

The next private MI is MI Tahfidhul Qur'an Kudus, this madrasah is also included in the madrasah category with a high literacy category because one of them also has a teacher who is a team of writers about AKMI, but not only that the madrasah also has facilities to support the improvement of socio-cultural literacy such as wall magazines, posters in various places, and libraries, the uniqueness of this madrasah is that it is one of the madrasas that from an early age focus on memorizing the Qur'an, therefore the students, who are all students, are an important asset for high socio-cultural literacy at MI Tahfidhul Qur'an Kudus.



Figure 4. Cultural wall magazine at MI Tahfidhul Qur'an Kudus

5. MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus

The next private madrasah with high literacy is MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus, one of the MIs that is loved by the community and continues to grow and is still trying to develop its facilities, especially to improve the literacy of its students, one of the unique of MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus is that it is developing a swimming pool in the madrasah environment.

6. MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus

In contrast to the five madrasahs that have been described earlier, one example of a Madrasah with a low literacy level is MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus, this happens because this madrasah is classified as a new madrasah and for the first time in 2023 it was selected as one of the institutions participating in AKMI in 2023. However, the madrasah continues to try its best to improve its quality and quality, the head of the madrasah feels that this AKMI is very helpful because the results of the diagnosis from AKMI can be used by the madrasah and teachers so that the learning is more meaningful and fun.



Figure 5. The atmosphere of one of the classes at MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus

Based on the data and discussions that have been studied, this study concludes that the evaluation of madrasah students is part of student management which has an important role in improving the quality of madrasah education in Indonesia. Therefore, AKMI is one of the programs owned by the Ministry of Religion which is designed in such a way that it is one of the effective evaluation tools for students because AKMI can provide a clear diagnosis of students' abilities, especially in the literacy of reading, numeracy, science, and cultural society. The analysis of the implementation of AKMI in private madrasahs of Kudus Regency in 2021 in Kudus Regency, especially at MI NU Banat Kudus, MI TBS Kudus, MI Qudsiyah Kudus, MI Tahfidhul Qur'an Kudus, MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus, and MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus have gone well and by the Standard Operating Procedures (POS) for the implementation of AKMI in 2023. This can be seen from the duties and

Obligations of the implementing parties who have carried out each of the existing stages. The results of the AKMI test of students at MI NU Banat Kudus, MI TBS Kudus, MI Qudsiyah Kudus, MI Tahfidhul Qur'an Kudus, MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus, and MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus are currently quite high. A good madrasah accreditation status can provide a guarantee that the literacy skills of students are also good.

Based on the results of the AKMI test, the ability of students in the realm of literacy is mostly still at the level that needs special intervention. Students need special assistance to increase their mastery of minimal concepts and must involve parents, madrasah teachers, and the surrounding environment so that they can motivate students to learn better. The AKMI program so far is a very good program that must be implemented in the future because it can provide clear information about the ability of students it will make it easier for policymakers to determine education policies in the future (Mamlu'ah, 2024). Based on the conclusion of the above research, the researcher tries to provide the following suggestions: By evaluating students, a teacher can find out the extent of students' abilities.

After the results of the AKMI are obtained, the madrasah should immediately follow up on it with the recommendations given about the situation of each student and the solution. In carrying out a program, socialization, training, mentoring, and coaching are important and all parties must be able to carry out these duties and responsibilities. Every program launched by the government will have standard operating procedures for the implementation of the program. Learning SOP well, and carrying out each of the specified stages is one of the factors supporting the success of the program if implemented. The AKMI program should continue to be implemented by madrasahs under the auspices of the Ministry of Religion on an ongoing basis, because AKMI can make a great contribution to diagnosing students' actual abilities, especially related to socio-cultural literacy.

The implementation of AKMI in madrasahs shows positive results in strengthening socio-cultural literacy. However, several challenges need to be overcome, such as a lack of resources and training for teachers. The study also found that support from various parties, including the government and the community, is critical to the success of the program.

Some of the recommendations that can be made to improve socio-cultural literacy are: improving teacher training, teachers need to be given more in-depth training on socio-cultural literacy and how to integrate it in learning through AKMI, one of the organizations that can be used to share experiences and knowledge between teachers is MGMP (Zarkasi et al, 2024), The training can be in the form of making modules (Mustafid et al, 2023), Creation of a pop-up book containing socio-cultural literacy (Mahmudah et al, 2024), or learning outside the classroom that contains socio-cultural literacy materials (Nikmah et al, 2024). Madrasah needs to get adequate resource support to carry out the socio-cultural literacy strengthening program effectively. Community involvement in socio-cultural literacy strengthening programs is very important to create an environment that supports student learning.

CONCLUSION

MI in Kudus Regency is MI with a high literacy category, the majority is because most of it is supported by a madrasah environment that is connected to Islamic boarding schools at the same time, where students and at the same time students whose domiciles are mostly different from their regions can be used as an opportunity to develop one of the literacy contained in AKMI, namely socio-cultural literacy. AKMI is not only able to measure academic competence but can also encourage better socio-cultural understanding among madrasah students by increasing teacher training, resource support, and community involvement. Thus, it is hoped that the students will become agents of socio-cultural literacy in their respective communities when they are in their home environment.

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<https://portal-akmi.kemenag.go.id/#about> diakses pada 10 Januari 2024.

Interview

Wawancara dengan Ibu Kasi Mapenda Kemenag Kudus Dr. Hj. Salma Munawaroh pada 13 Nopember 2023.

Wawancara dengan Kepala MI NU Banat Kudus, pada 14 Nopember 2023.

Wawancara dengan Kepala MI Muhammadiyah 1 Kudus, pada 15 Nopember 2023.

Wawancara dengan Kepala MI TBS Kudus, pada 16 Nopember 2023.

Wawancara dengan Kepala MI Qudisyah Kudus, pada 17 Nopember 2023.

Wawancara dengan Kepala MI Yanbu'a Kudus, pada 18 Nopember 2023.

Wawancara dengan Kepala MI Unggulan Sunan Kudus, pada 20 Nopember 2023