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## **INCREASING YOUNG LEARNERS' ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND ACQUIRING LANGUAGE COMPETENCE THROUGH "MADIN PLUS PROGRAM" AT ARJOWINANGUN VILLAGE, PACITAN REGENCY WITH A PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH**

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**Abstract:** The lack of a place to accommodate activity to increase Islamic knowledge as well as enhance language competence as the same time especially since covid 19 pandemics evokes the need to make a change by engaging positive activities through "Madin Plus Program." Madin Plus program is the first established Madin in Pacitan which combines learning Islamic education and learning English language. The curriculum in Madin Plus program is based on Ministry of Religion and the English curriculum is self-designed curriculum based on the condition of young learners. PAR method is utilized to realize this plan. The results showed that Madin Plus Program brought positive impacts to young learners and parents because this program provides learning environment that enhance students' learning motivation. It also helps parents in educating their children not only on the religious aspect but also language aspect.

**Keywords:** *young learners, madin plus program, community service, PAR*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Arjowinangun is one of the villages which is located in Pacitan Regency, East Java. Its area covers around 0,87 km<sup>2</sup> with total sum population about 4.300 residents. Approximately there are 300 families who reside in Arjowinangun village. Arjowinangun village can be considered a village that is close to main town, that is Pacitan.

Most of the villagers spend their time on farming, some become a civil servant, a few as a merchant and some others choose to find a job out of town. Because the location is near to a busy district, it is feasible to access transportation, electricity network well installed, and accessible internet network. However, the place for religious education is few and most of their children learn Islamic knowledge from formal school, for example Madrassah Diniyah.



Madrassah Diniyyah is a nonformal institution which is organized by community which the objective is for society<sup>1</sup>. It can be located in Muslim communities and Islamic boarding school<sup>2</sup>. It mainly focuses on Islamic teaching and education to students in understanding the source of Islamic teachings, which are Qur'an and Hadith<sup>3</sup>. Madrassah Diniyyah can also function as a means to socialize because students are educated with moral values, religiosity, piousness and cultural nation values<sup>4</sup>. Madrasah Diniyyah is usually conducted in the afternoon or at in the evening.

There is one Madrasah Diniyyah institutions in Arjowiningangun Village which is managed by Nahdlatussubban Islamic Boarding School. There are three levels of Madrasah Diniyyah which are managed by Nahdlatussubban Islamic Boarding School. They are Madrasah Diniyyah Awwaliyah, Madrasah Diniyyah Wustho and Madrasah Diniyyah Ulya. Since then, this Madin bring influences to local society especially teaching Islamic education.

However, during Covic I9 pandemics, the activity abruptly stopped which greatly impact to Islamic education. When it begins its activity later, the students, especially young learners are few who come to learn Islamic education. Based on the interview from the local society residents, their children mostly spend their time playing with their mobile phones. Even in the evening, they cannot be separated from their gadgets. Meanwhile, when parents reprimand them, the children still ignore the advice. This kind of circumstance changes the children's habits. During the inactivity of Nahdlatussubban Madin, parents felt that the children's intake of religious knowledge is truly lacking because as their parents they do not have such competence to teach them themselves.

In addition to deepening religious knowledge outside formal education, it brings into concern that English learning from young is also significant because learning English at an earlier age is advantageous<sup>5</sup>. Due to the fact that English subject is taught at junior high school<sup>6</sup> and also becomes a compulsory subject to be examined in National examination, it is ironically taught as a local content in some schools, but in some other schools it is even not taught at all. When parents were interviewed about this matter, it is very regrettable that English is only as a local content which is taught by teacher who is not a real English teacher and the teachers are not seriously given a proper training in teaching English for young learners<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, the assignment of English subject for example translating sentences is not easy for young learners. The parents helplessly cannot aid them since they do not comprehend the language.

<sup>1</sup> Mohamad Rojii et al., "Management of Integrated Madrasah Diniyah Curriculum Development At Sd Khazanah Ilmu Sidoarjo," *Ta dib : Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2020): 96–115.

<sup>2</sup> Achmad Fawaid and Eka Yanti, "Curriculum Centralization Policy Towards the Quality of Learning Madrasah Diniyah Islamic Boarding School Nurul Jadid," *Tarbiyah : Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan* 9, no. 1 (2020): 19.

<sup>3</sup> Rosniati Hakim, Mahyudin Ritonga, and Wetti Susanti, "Implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning in Islamic Education at Madrasah Diniyah," *Jour of Adv Research in Dynamical & Conrol Systems* 12, no. 02 (2020): 3326–3332.

<sup>4</sup> Zulfia Hanum Alfi Syahr, "Membentuk Madrasah Diniyah Sebagai Alternatif Lembaga Pendidikan Elite Muslim Bagi Masyarakat," *Intizar* 22, no. 2 (2016): 393.

<sup>5</sup> Yani Awaliyah Erik Yuda Pratama, "Teacher's Strategies in Teaching Speaking to Young Learners," *English Journal* (2015): 19–31.

<sup>6</sup> Yoga Prihatin, "The Removal of English Language for Elementary School in Curriculum 2013," *Dialektika* 3, no. 1 (2015): 53–68, <https://journal.peradaban.ac.id/index.php/jdpbi/article/download/63/59>.

<sup>7</sup> "A Study of English Language Teaching in India," *Journal of Advances and Scholarly Researches in Allied Education* 15, no. 6 (2018): 75–79.

It is also not possible to ask their children to take English course since it is expensive for them to afford.

English has closely related to tourism spots. Pacitan Regency can be regarded as the most favorite destination because it has many exquisite places worthy visited, such as beaches, caves, and panoramic views. Some of the beaches have become surfing spot international tourists. Therefore, it has to bring realization to people the importance of the ability to speak English. Besides, in this era of global competition, it demands the young generation to have the language competence especially English because in every aspect of life English has become one significant language that needs to be mastered. It can be surmised that English is not only significant for education but also politics, economics and other sectors<sup>8</sup>.

## METHODOLOGY

This research on community service utilizes Participatory Action Research (PAR). This objective of the research is social transformation in which the research is conducted systematically, collaboratively and sustainably to achieve social transformation<sup>9</sup>. There were some stages in implementing community service activities with PAR method. They are described as following;

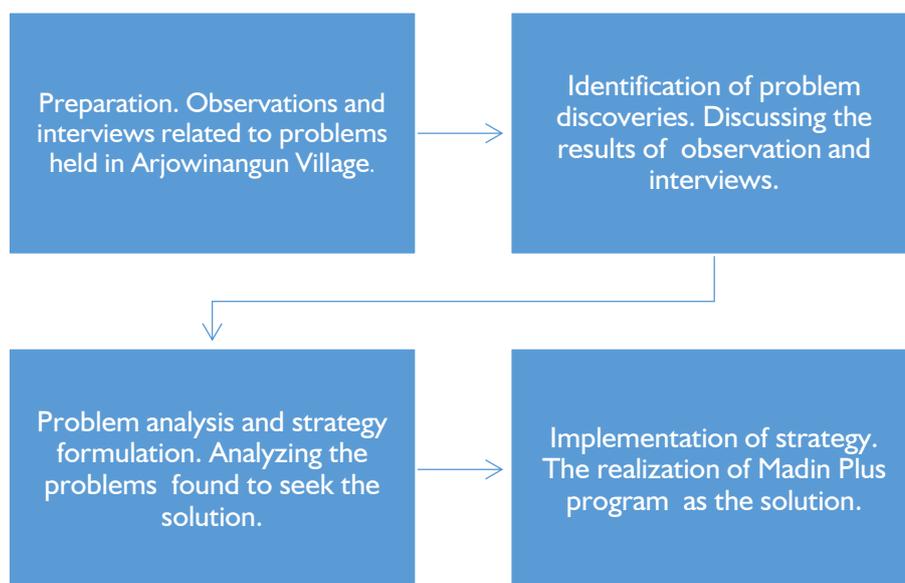


Figure 1. Stages in Implementing Madin Plus Program in Arjowinangun Village

The phenomenon found in the field has prompted the team to conduct community service research specifically in education sector by empowering the community to give a better solution in Islamic education and English learning. The community includes madin institution and the young learners. The main reasons in carrying out this research are described below;

<sup>8</sup> Elda Elda Nurlatifah and Arham Mauriyat, "An English Teacher'S Perception on the Removal of the English Subject At Elementary School," *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)* 3, no. 4 (2020): 465.

<sup>9</sup> Abdul Rahmat and Mira Mirnawati, "Model Participation Action Research Dalam Pemberdayaan Masyarakat," *Aksara: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Nonformal* 6, no. 1 (2020): 62.



First, during pandemic, the majority of madrasah diniyyah has been closed temporarily and it affects the children's activity in learning Islamic Education. Their evening activities were mostly spent by playing with their mobile phones. Meanwhile, parents are not able to prevent this from happening since other activities are not available. Besides, parents cannot always monitor them due to their time spent in working and they feel their knowledge in Islamic Education is not sufficient enough.

Second, madrasah diniyyah has their own curriculum, which mostly only focuses on teaching reading Koran. The teachers sometimes do not understand the curriculum they teach. Often times, in Madrasah Diniyyah the teaching and learning processes seem to be monotone and is not compatible what education and communities need. The reason is, it is also necessary to teach other aspects, for example teaching hadiths, Tajwid, Fiqh and many others. If the children are taught Islamic knowledge holistically, it is hoped that when they are growing up, they can be religiously intelligent generation.

Third, English subject is taught as a local content in elementary school. However, it is found that some of elementary schools do not teach English. In addition, it is found that English is not taught by English teacher. Meanwhile, in Junior high school, English is one of the compulsory subjects that is tested during National examination. Additionally, parents are reluctant to have them take English course because they cannot afford it. Therefore, it is essential to prepare young learners with English language competence, so that they can fully be ready with English subject taught in Junior high school. From this reason, it is hoped that by offering Madin Plus Program, it can assist young learners to learn English.

Fourth, Pacitan is one of the tourism destinations which offers many interesting places, such as beaches, caves and many others. They are visited by local and international tourists. When the local community, especially those who have business in tourism spot can speak English, it can be of help when communicating with them. The lack of communication affects the process of trade. Hence, it is necessary to learn English from an early age since during this period, children can learn a language faster than teenagers or adults.

## RESULTS

There were several stages in implementing this community service activity based on PAR method. They are explained below;

First, in preparation stage, the team visited Arjowinangun Village and Nahdlatussubban Islamic Boarding School to conduct observation and interview the residents and Madin Awwaliyyah' teachers. This activity was held in second week of January 2022.

Second, after observing and interviewing the participants, the team then discussing the result of interview to analyze the problems and offering aid for problem solutions or plans. After that team decided the time to hold a seminar about madin plus program to villagers This stage was carried out in February 2022.

Third, the realization of Madin Plus Program in Nahdlatussubban Madrasah Diniyyah Awwaliyyah that was held from February to March 2022.

Madin Plus Program was offered to Nahdlatussubban Madrasah Diniyyah Awwaliyyah in Arjowinangun village to solve the problems stated previously.

## The Implementation of Madin Plus Program

The implementation of Madin Plus Program for young learners at Nahdlatussubban Madrasah Diniyyah Awwaliyah focuses on enhancing Islamic education and acquiring English language competence especially for young learners. Madin Plus Program is a program designed to combine learning Islamic knowledge and English language. This program was first in Pacitan because Madrasah diniyyah awwaliyah usually only focuses on teaching Islamic knowledge. This program offers young learners learn religious knowledge more thoroughly as well as English language. There are two programs in Madin Plus, they are English Day and Madin Day. The learning schedule starts from 3 P.M. until 5. P.M. English day program is on Monday to Tuesday, and Madin Day is on Wednesday to Friday.

## Socialization of Madin Plus Program

The socialization was done by inviting the parents to join the socialization to discuss the problems on hand. In this chance, parents expressed that their children's motivation to read Qur'an and learn Islamic knowledge decreased a lot during pandemics. Children love spending their time with their mobile phones rather than reading Qur'an. Regarding the additional English lesson in Madrasah Diniyah, they felt it is necessary because as parents they could not assist their children to learn due to their incompetence in English. Moreover, the children are not taught English optimally since English is not a mandatory lesson.

Seeing these problems, team then offered Madin Plus Program to solve the solution. This program offered the Islamic knowledge learning more comprehensively because it applies the Ministry of religion curriculum. It also tried to provide various types of strategies during teaching learning process, so that the activity can be more convenient during learning. meanwhile, the offer of additional English lesson is also well received by parents, since it can help their children learn English better.

## Madin Day

Curriculum from ministry of religion was applied in Nahdlatussubban Madrasah Diniyyah Awwaliyah applied madin, which consists of Qur'an Hadith, Aqidah Ahlaq, Fiqh, Islam culture history, Arabic language and Shalat learning practice. The researchers also prepared the lesson timetable in order to arrange the lesson and its teacher orderly and regularly. The learning activity centered to learning practice because the young learners are hoped to be able to apply what they have learned. There is also the habituation program in Madin which includes;

1. The memorization of Juz Amma
2. Shalat learning practice
3. Hadith memorization
4. Daily prayers memorization
5. Tajwid introduction and its application on Koran
6. Tahsinul kitabah and learning hijaiyah letter

There were some methods implemented to enable the learners in understanding the material. They were, habituation method, reward and punishment method, discussion method, telling story method and lecture method. Those methods were used interchangeably according to the theme the pupils learned.

Young learners were taught to understanding the meaning of Koran and Hadith in learning Koran and Hadith. Aqidah and Ahlaq were learned to follow Prophet Muhammad's SAW personality and behavior as Allah's SWT prophet and worshipper, believe in pillars of



faith. It is hoped that learners used this knowledge as a guidance when communicating with their Creator, other human beings and surroundings.

Students learned Fiqh to support, assist, develop and cultivate them to know and comprehend syariah. In history of Islam lesson, it contains the moral value lessons coming from Prophet Muhammad SAW, Prophet Muhammad's companions and influential Islamic Figures. Arabic lesson was also essential to teach because this lesson can assist pupils in learning and improving the understanding about Islamic knowledge, communicating with other nations. The last lesson was pray practices which aimed to perform prayers and implement Islamic sharia.

The lesson started from 3 P.M. to 5 P.M which was commenced by prayers in congregation. This is one of lesson to internalize the understanding the importance of congregation prayers. After that, students came to designed class to follow the lessons. Koran and hadith, and Islamic history were taught on Wednesday, meanwhile Arabic and Fiqh were on Thursday. Pray practice and Aqidah Ahlaq were taught on Friday.

### **English Day**

English Day is an activity to teach young learners about basic English that focuses on vocabulary enhancement and simple daily conversation. English Day activity was conducted for 14 meetings. The age of young learners are about 6 to 12 years old. Researchers designed learning materials in the form of learning Module and simplified lesson plans for two months. During English teaching and learning, it is unavoidable that sometimes the class atmosphere turns to be boring. Hence, to incite students' interest, English was taught by utilizing some strategies, they are;

1. Using children songs;
2. Playing games ;
3. Role playing;
4. Video watching;
5. Recalling memory and;
6. Ice breaking.

The lessons that were taught in this program were parts of body, self-introduction, greetings, daily activities, animals, things at school and family. Each meeting there were two mainly activities. The first was vocabulary introduction related to the theme, and the second was either an exercise in the form of worksheet or quiz. Mostly, to measure students' comprehension about the learning material, quiz was more well liked and students loved to compete with each other.

The activity on English Day is described as follows;

1. First, teacher introduced the vocabulary related to the theme. The teaching strategy of how to introduce the new vocabulary can utilize those strategies mentioned previously.
2. After young learners were introduced to new vocabulary, the next they would do was the level of comprehension by completing exercise in the form of either worksheet or quiz. Students would be given a quiz to measure their understanding about the theme learned. Giving a quiz to students could completely evoke their sense of competition among them. And they were so excited knowing that they could beat their friends.

The English learning in this program was created to make students' interest in learning English increases. Thus, the researcher tried to apply teaching strategies and methods that are compatible with the themes. Researcher used the mixture of languages, namely English, Indonesian and Javanese.

## DISCUSSION

The objective of community service implementation is to solve the problems that takes a place in the community but also provides a long-term implication for the society. In this case, the research-based community service focuses on education, particularly Madrassah Diniyyah Awaliyyah in Arjowinangun Village. Based on the result of observation and interview, parents with young age children are in the need of institution which accommodate to their children development either in term of Islamic education or English language competence.

Nahdaltussubban Islamic Boarding School provides Madrassah Diniyyah for the community. Nahdaltussubban Madrassah Diniyyah Awwaliyah did not hold class temporarily during Covid-19 pandemic. Since the government issued the activity in all sectors to operate, Nahdaltussubban Madrasah Diniyyah Awwaliyah begun to open class, using the same curriculum and the same teachers. The curriculum in Madin mainly concentrates on learning how to read Koran.

However, parents found that children are reluctant to attend Madrasah Diniyyah because they preferred staying at home to attending learning Islamic Education. Parents are helpless with this situation. Through Participatory Action Research (PAR) method, the problems arisen is then formulated into a plan which can be implicative and sustainable. Thus, the Madin Plus Program in increasing young learners' Islamic education and acquiring language competence is offered to solve the problems.

### Madin Day

Madin Day was activities that engaged learners to comprehend the Islamic knowledge and education. In Madin Day, the curriculum applied was from Ministry of religion so that the expected aim by conducting the education can be achieved optimally. During the first week of meeting, the organized timetable and teachers' teaching schedule brings a slight difference. The learners seem to be enthusiastic and engaged themselves during teaching and learning process. Furthermore, the lessons given were various so that young learners can acquire more diversified knowledge.

The impact of the Madin Plus Program has a positive response from both community and Madin teachers. They are given knowledge and strategy in teaching and learning process. The interaction between researchers and madin's teachers by sharing knowledge have them realize the importance of teaching methods and strategies.

The problems hindering during the implementation of Madin Day are the inconsistent teachers. Sometimes, the teacher of the same lesson often time changes to another person. Thus, the material taught is sometimes unrelated to the previous material which prevents the material to complete timely. Additionally, the lack of teachers who can spend their time to teach in Madrassah Diniyyah also hinders the development of Madrassah Diniyyah and learning objectives can be fully realized.

Teachers also needs to prepare material they are going to teach in order to achieve the learning goals. Even though teachers are given lesson timetable, there are some teachers who do not make a simple lesson plan. It is undeniable facts that teaching without preparation leads to an unsatisfactory learning result.

### English Day

Before the English day established to provide English learning alternative, young learners did not concern about English subject since English functions as a local content which is not



much put pressure in learning it. After they are introduced with English Day, young learners little by little familiarize with English by learning basic vocabulary and simple conversation. The various methods and strategies utilized are proven to incite their learning motivation and it changes their point of views. It is needed to create a circumstance that makes learning English be fun and more enjoyable. Students are easier to understand materials and acquire the new knowledge when the method of teaching is correctly applied.

Young learners are no longer reluctant to attend Madrassah Diniyyah because learning situation does not put the in great pressure. At first, parents forcefully take them to attend the Madrassah Diniyyah class but after knowing that the English teacher teaches them with fun learning, the reluctance gradually diminishes. It can be concluded that the utilization of many kinds of methods and teaching strategies bring great impact to students' motivation in learning English.

Nevertheless, English teachers' competence to be creative and innovative in using diverse types of teaching methods and strategies to create enjoyable situation in learning is needed. Besides, Nahdlatussubban Madrasah Diniyah Awwaliyah needs to add more English teachers to accommodate teaching and learning process.

The other factor that hinders the implementation of Madin Plus Program in Nahdlatussubban Madrasah Diniyah is lack of fund. Due to this reason, this salary of the Madrassah Diniyyah's teachers is far from the standard. However, it does not PREVENT them from teaching wholeheartedly.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of research-based community service with Madin Plus Program greatly impacts to young learners who attends Nahdaltussubban Madrassah Diniyyah Awwaliyyah. Learning religious knowledge is not a monotonous activity and the lessons are also varied. When teaching material is well prepared, the learning direction and goal can be achieved.

It can be concluded that this kind of English teaching activity which is provided together with Madrassah Diniyyah activity help young learners learn English as well as Islamic education knowledge. Since English becomes one of lessons examined in national examination, and the elementary schools do not fully accommodate English learning, Madin Program Plus helps Parents in teaching English to their children. Additionally English has become an interesting subject for them because the teaching methods and strategies are quite fun. It is hoped this kind of community service activity can be held sustainably since it can be an improvement and motivation in learning English.

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