
PAI teacher's strategy to increase students' worship awareness at SMKN 2 Kraksaan

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the strategies of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in increasing the awareness of student worship at SMKN 2 Kraksaan. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation, while data analysis uses an interactive model that includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that there are several strategies applied by PAI teachers in increasing students' awareness of worship. First, habituation strategies through routine activities such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an, and joint prayer have proven to be effective in shaping students' religious behavior. Second, the exemplary strategy (*uswah hasanah*) shown by teachers has a positive influence because students tend to imitate teachers' behavior. Third, the use of varied learning methods is able to increase students' activeness and understanding of the importance of worship. Fourth, religious extracurricular activities play a role in strengthening students' religious practices outside the classroom. Fifth, the use of technology-based media learning makes the learning process more interesting and increases students' motivation to learn. The conclusion of this study shows that the strategies carried out by PAI teachers in an integrated manner are able to increase the awareness of students' worship. However, the success of the strategy requires consistency in implementation and support from various parties so that the results are more optimal and sustainable.

Keywords: PAI teacher strategy, worship awareness, habituation, example, and varied learning

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Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is one of the important components in the national education system which aims to form students who have faith, piety, and noble character. One of the indicators of the success of religious education is the growth of awareness of worship in students, both in the form of *mahdhah* worship such as prayer and reading the Qur'an and *ghairu mahdhah* worship which is reflected in daily behavior. Worship awareness is not only related to cognitive aspects, but also includes affective and psychomotor aspects that require continuous coaching (Hidayat, Rahmat, Abdillah, 2021).

However, the reality in the field shows that students' awareness of worship is still relatively low. This can be seen from the lack of discipline of students in carrying out prayers, low interest in reading the Qur'an, and lack of appreciation for Islamic values in daily life. This phenomenon is inseparable from various factors, both internal factors such as low motivation and religious understanding, as well as external factors such as family environment, socializing, and the influence of technological developments and social media (Rahman, Anirah, & Elya, 2025).

The development of the current digital era presents its own challenges for religious education. Technological advances that are not balanced with the strengthening of spiritual values can lead to moral degradation and a decline in students' religious awareness. Therefore, systematic and strategic

efforts are needed in the PAI learning process in order to be able to answer the challenges of the times while instilling religious values effectively (Patimah et al., 2025). In this context, PAI teachers have a very important role as the spearhead in the process of forming students' religious character. Teachers not only function as material presenters, but also as guides, motivators, facilitators, and role models (*uswah hasanah*). The strategies used by PAI teachers greatly determine the success in increasing students' awareness of worship. These strategies can be in the form of habituating worship at school, providing examples, using interesting and interactive learning methods, and strengthening religious values in every learning activity (Safiqo & Ghofur, 2025).

Habituation strategies, for example, can be carried out through congregational prayer activities, reading the Qur'an before learning begins, and other religious activities that are carried out regularly. Meanwhile, the example of teachers in worship and behavior is an important factor that can directly affect students. In addition, the use of varied learning methods such as discussions, case studies, and contextual approaches can also increase students' understanding and awareness of the importance of worship (Pranilinsyiah & Ginting, 2025).

SMKN 2 Kraksaan as one of the vocational high schools has different characteristics compared to public schools, where the focus of learning is more directed towards mastering vocational skills. This often causes the spiritual aspect to not receive optimal attention. In addition, the diverse backgrounds of students are also a challenge in instilling an awareness of worship. Therefore, an appropriate and relevant strategy is needed from PAI teachers so that religious learning remains effective and able to shape students' religious character.

Based on the results of initial observations carried out at SMKN 2 Kraksaan, several problems were found related to the low awareness of student worship. One of the most prominent phenomena is that there are still many students who have not carried out mandatory prayers in a disciplined manner, especially congregational Dzuhur prayers that have been facilitated by the school. Although schools have provided facilities such as prayer rooms and special times for the implementation of worship, not all students make good use of them. In addition, in religious habituation activities such as reading the Qur'an before learning begins, there are still students who are less enthusiastic and do not follow the activities seriously. Some students look less focused, talk to friends, and some even do not bring the Qur'an. This shows that the awareness of worship has not fully grown from within the students, but is still a formality or because of the rules of the school.

Another phenomenon found is the lack of consistency of students in maintaining religious behavior in the school environment. For example, there are still students who say they are not polite, lack discipline in dressing according to sharia, and lack of respect for teachers. From the teacher's side, although PAI teachers have tried to provide learning materials well, the strategies used are sometimes still conventional and less varied. Learning that focuses more on cognitive aspects causes students to understand the concept of worship in theory, but have not been able to apply it consistently in real life. In addition, the limited time of PAI learning is also an obstacle in conducting in-depth coaching. Several previous studies have examined the strategies of PAI teachers in increasing students' awareness of worship. Research conducted by Aisyah and Fitriyah (2024) shows that teachers' habituation strategies and exemplary have a significant influence on shaping students' religious character. The results of the study confirm that routine religious activities carried out consistently are able to increase students' awareness of prayer.

Another research conducted by Arif (2025) revealed that learning strategies that are contextual and relevant to students' lives can improve the understanding and practice of religious teachings. This approach is considered effective because students can relate learning materials to everyday experiences. In addition, Khairunnisa et al. (2025) in their research stated that the use of innovative learning methods and the use of technology-based learning media can increase students' motivation to

learn in PAI subjects. This indirectly has an impact on increasing students' awareness of prayer. Mazidah (2025) also emphasized that the PAI teacher's strategy in shaping students' moral character is not only carried out through classroom learning, but also through religious extracurricular activities and habituation of religious values in the school environment.

With this phenomenon, research on the strategies of PAI teachers in increasing the awareness of student worship is very important and relevant to be carried out. Although these various studies have discussed the strategies of PAI teachers in increasing the awareness of worship, the research that specifically examines the context of vocational schools, especially at SMKN 2 Kraksaan, is still limited. Each school has different characteristics and problems, so the strategies applied also need to be adjusted to environmental conditions and student needs. Therefore, research on the strategies of PAI teachers in increasing the awareness of student worship at SMKN 2 Kraksaan is very important to be carried out.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method that aims to analyze the strategies of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in increasing students' awareness of worship at SMKN 2 Kraksaan. The qualitative case study design was chosen to gain a deep understanding of social phenomena in their natural context, especially regarding the challenges faced by teachers and student behavior patterns in carrying out worship.

The research was conducted at SMKN 2 Kraksaan, Probolinggo, East Java. This site was chosen deliberately because of its religious diversity and strong local cultural values such as religiosity, deliberation, and mutual respect in the community. In addition, preliminary observations showed a relatively low level of students' awareness of performing worship, making it a relevant and meaningful place for this research. The subjects of this study consisted of PAI teachers as key informants and students as supporting informants. The selection of informants was carried out using purposive sampling, based on their involvement and relevance to the focus of the research. Data sources include primary data obtained directly from informants and secondary data derived from school documents, such as lesson plans, school regulations, and records of religious activities.

Data collection techniques were carried out through (1) participant observation to understand students' worship practices in the school environment, (2) in-depth interviews with PAI teachers and selected students to explore strategies, perceptions, and challenges, and (3) documentation studies to support and validate field findings. These techniques were used in a complementary manner to ensure data richness. The data analysis process follows Miles and Huberman's (2014) interactive model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion-visualization/verification. Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw data obtained from the field. Data visualization is done by organizing the information into narrative descriptions and thematic categorization. Finally, conclusions are drawn and continuously verified to ensure their consistency and validity.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, this study applied several strategies, including source triangulation (comparing data from teachers, students, and documents), triangulation techniques observation, interviews, and documentation), and member checking to ensure the accuracy of findings with informants. In addition, prolonged involvement and continuous observation were carried out to increase the credibility of the data.

Results and Discussion

Habituation Strategy

First, the habituation strategy is one of the main efforts made by PAI teachers in increasing the awareness of students' worship. This habituation is manifested through various routine activities such as the implementation of congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an before learning begins, and praying together. Based on the results of observation, these activities are carried out on a scheduled and consistent basis, so as to create a religious environment that supports the formation of students' religious behavior. This routine indirectly forms a repetitive behavior pattern, which ultimately becomes an inherent habit in students.

From the results of interviews with PAI teachers, it is known that this habituation strategy is quite effective in instilling discipline and increasing students' awareness of worship. This can be seen from the change in the behavior of students who are starting to get used to carrying out worship without always having to be reminded. Although there are still students who are less consistent in their implementation.

The habituation strategy according to Ngalim Purwanto (2024) is one of the most effective educational methods in shaping the character, attitudes, and morals of students. He emphasized that behavior that is carried out repeatedly and continuously will become a habit, and ultimately form an individual's personality. In more detail, the habituation strategy can be described as follows:

1. **Habituation Through Repetition**

According to Ngalim Purwanto, the main key to habituation is repetition. A behavior that is carried out continuously will be embedded in students without the need to be forced. For example, getting used to praying before studying or performing prayers on time.

2. **Consistency In Implementation**

Habituation will be successful if it is done consistently and on a schedule. Teachers must ensure that the activities they are habituated are not carried out sporadically, but continuously so that they become a routine that is inherent in the students.

3. **Modeling**

Habituation will not be effective without real examples. Teachers as educators must be role models in the behavior they want to shape. This example strengthens the habituation process because students tend to imitate what they see.

4. **Supportive Environment**

The school and family environment must support the habituation process. A religious, disciplined, and positive atmosphere will accelerate the formation of good habits in students.

5. **Reinforcement**

Strengthening giving in the form of praise, appreciation, or motivation will strengthen the habits that are being formed. This makes students feel appreciated and encouraged to repeat these positive behaviors.

6. **Internalization Of Value**

The ultimate goal of habituation is for students not only to perform an action out of habit, but also to understand and appreciate the values contained in it. Thus, these behaviors become part of personality.

Furthermore, in the perspective of Islamic education, the concept of habituation is also known as the term *ta'wid* (practice or habituation), which emphasizes the importance of repetition in shaping religious morals and behavior. Through consistent habituation, students not only understand the importance of worship cognitively, but are also able to practice it in daily life (Abuddin, 2023).

Thus, the habituation strategy implemented by PAI teachers at SMKN 2 Kraksaan has a strong theoretical foundation and has proven to be effective in increasing students' awareness of worship.

However, the success of this strategy still requires support from various parties and consistency in its implementation so that the results achieved can be more optimal.

Role Models

Second, the exemplary strategy (*uswah hasanah*) is one of the most important approaches in increasing the awareness of student worship. This example is shown by PAI teachers through daily behavior, such as performing prayers on time, behaving politely, speaking honestly, and showing discipline and responsibility. Based on the results of observations, PAI teachers at SMKN 2 Kraksaan not only convey material theoretically, but also provide real examples in the practice of daily life in the school environment.

The results of interviews with students showed that they tended to be more likely to imitate and follow what the teacher did than just listening to explanations. The example of teachers is a very influential factor because students see firsthand how religious values are implemented. This shows that teachers not only play the role of transmitters of knowledge, but also as role models who shape students' character and behavior. In the perspective of Islamic education, example also has a strong foundation, namely the concept of *Uswah Hasanah* exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH as the best example for mankind. This is as explained in the Qur'an that the Prophet is a good role model (*Usw*), so in Islamic education, teachers are required to emulate these values in guiding students.

The concept of *Uswah Hasanah* is sourced from the Qur'an, especially in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21 which affirms that the Prophet is the best example for mankind. This example is not only moral, but also covers all aspects of life, including education. In this context, the Prophet Muhammad became an ideal figure who showed how Islamic values are manifested in real life, so that education is not only in the form of knowledge transfer, but also value transfer through concrete examples (Rahmawati, 2026). Thus, the exemplary strategy applied by PAI teachers at SMKN 2 Kraksaan has a very significant role in increasing students' awareness of worship. Exemplary not only strengthens students' understanding cognitively, but also shapes religious attitudes and behaviors in real terms.

Use of Varied Learning Methods

The use of varied learning methods in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is a pedagogical strategy that is very important in increasing students' awareness of worship. The lecture method that has been dominant is considered to be less able to accommodate the active involvement of students, so a combination of methods such as discussion, question and answer, case study, and contextual approaches is needed. This variety of methods is in line with the principle of active learning (active learning), which places students as the main subject in the learning process. With this active involvement, students not only passively receive information, but also process, understand, and internalize the values of worship more deeply (Majid, 2021).

The results of the observations carried out showed that the increase in *siwa's* enthusiasm and enthusiasm in learning reinforced that the use of varied learning methods had a real impact on the quality of the learning process. The students' activeness can be seen from their increased participation in discussion activities, courage in asking and answering questions, and involvement in completing case studies given by teachers. Meanwhile, students' enthusiasm is reflected in their more focused attitude, enthusiasm for participating in learning, and positive responses to the material presented.

Theoretically, the use of varied methods is supported by the theory of constructivism which states that knowledge is built by students through experience and interaction with the environment. In this context, the contextual approach (Contextual Teaching and Learning) becomes very relevant because it relates the learning material to the real situation of students' daily lives. In addition, the discussion and question and answer methods provide space for students to think critically and reflectively on the material presented. Meanwhile, the case study method allows students to analyze

real problems related to worship practices (Fitriani, 2024). So that it can show that when teachers not only use the lecture method, but combine it with interactive and contextual methods, the learning atmosphere becomes more lively and not monotonous. This condition encourages students to feel more comfortable and motivated in learning, they can more easily understand material related to worship.

Religious Extracurricular Activities

Religious extracurricular activities also play a role in increasing students' awareness of worship. Activities such as Islamic studies, commemoration of Islamic holidays, and Qur'an reading exercises are additional means for students to deepen their understanding and practice of worship. The results of the study show that through extracurricular activities, students are more actively participating in religious activities than during classroom learning. This is because extracurricular activities provide a wider space for students to express, interact, and develop interests and talents in the religious field. In addition, a more flexible atmosphere makes students feel more comfortable and motivated to be actively involved.

Theoretically, extracurricular activities are in line with the concept of holistic education which emphasizes that the educational process does not only take place in the classroom, but also through hands-on experiences outside the classroom. In addition, according to Aulia (2024), extracurricular activities are an important part of students' self-development which aims to expand their horizons, improve skills, and shape students' character. Through this activity, religious values can be instilled more deeply because students not only understand in theory, but also practice them directly.

From the perspective of Islamic education, religious extracurricular activities are also in line with efforts to foster faith and piety which are not only carried out through formal learning, but also through habituation and socio-religious activities. Activities such as the commemoration of Islamic holidays and Islamic studies are a means of internalizing Islamic values in the daily lives of students (Imran, 2025). Religious extracurricular activities have a significant contribution in increasing the awareness of student worship at SMKN 2 Kraksaan. This activity not only strengthens students' understanding of religious teachings, but also encourages them to practice these values in real terms. Therefore, sustainability and good management of extracurricular activities are needed so that the results achieved can be more optimal.

Utilization of Technology-Based Learning Media

The presence of technology in PAI learning is not just a complement, but has become a strategic need to improve the quality of learning. Technology media supports the achievement of basic competencies, encourages creativity, and helps students understand abstract material. Learning transformation is also influenced by the need to present a learning process that is easily accessible, not limited by space and time, and able to adapt to individual needs. Digital media such as learning videos, interactive applications, digital Qur'an platforms, and worship simulations provide opportunities for teachers to present contextual and engaging learning. E-learning and blended learning are becoming increasingly popular learning models because they provide flexibility in access to learning and encourage the active role of students. As a result of recent interviews and research, students tend to be more interested and motivated when learning uses varied and interactive media compared to conventional methods. This is because digital media is able to create a non-monotonous learning atmosphere, provide a more enjoyable learning experience, and encourage students to learn independently.

The use of digital media in PAI learning has a positive impact on student understanding. Digital media such as learning videos allow teachers to convey abstract material more concretely. For example, the stories of the prophets that were previously only narrated can be visualized in the form of animation. This not only clarifies the storyline, but also increases the appeal of learning. According

to Siregar (2023), the use of visual media is able to strengthen students' memory, increase attention, and help students integrate concepts into their daily experiences.

In addition, interactive media such as online quizzes, educational games, and Islamic trivia platforms increase student participation and engagement. Putra (2024) explained that educational games can foster emotional and cognitive attachment thereby increasing learning retention. Interactive media provides a fun learning experience, while encouraging students to think critically and quickly in making decisions. However, the effectiveness of digital media cannot be separated from the teacher's ability to design learning. Teachers must be able to adapt the use of media to learning goals, student characteristics, and the context of the material.

Fauzan (2023) emphasized that teachers' digital literacy determines the success of technology integration in learning. Other challenges include device limitations, unstable internet networks, and lack of technical support. These factors often lead to inconsistent use of digital media. To overcome these obstacles, it is necessary to train teachers on an ongoing basis, strengthen digital infrastructure, and select media that suit students' characteristics. Optimal technological media not only enhances academic understanding, but also strengthens religious values through a more in-depth and modern learning experience.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research at SMKN 2 Kraksaan, it can be concluded that the strategy of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in increasing the awareness of student worship has been implemented comprehensively and complementarily. The habituation strategy is the main approach that has proven to be effective in shaping students' religious behavior through routine activities that are carried out consistently, so as to be able to foster discipline and worship habits in daily life. The success of this strategy is supported by the principles of repetition, consistency, example, and a consistent environment.

In addition, the exemplary strategy (*uswah hasanah*) shown by PAI teachers has a significant influence, because students tend to imitate the teacher's behavior as exemplary figures. The use of varied learning methods is also able to increase students' activeness and understanding of the importance of worship. Religious extracurricular activities also strengthen learning in the classroom by providing a wider practice space, while the use of technology-based learning media makes the learning process more interesting and increases students' motivation to learn.

Thus, it can be emphasized that the combination of habituation strategies, examples, varied learning methods, extracurricular activities, and the use of technology together contribute positively to increasing students' awareness of worship. However, this success still requires consistency in implementation and support from all parties, both schools, teachers, and families, so that the results achieved can be more optimal and sustainable.

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