Jurnal Profesionalisme Guru

Implementation of Role-Playing Method in Introducing Islamic Figures to RA Nurhidayah Students

Wahyu Pujiawati, RA. Nurhidayah Ampah *(airaayu271@gmail.com)*
Uswatun Hasanah, RA Masyithoh Wonokasihan *(uswatuncs123@gmail.com)*
Wahyu Ratnaningsih, RA Muslimat NU Danurejo 2 Mertoyudan Magelang *(retnaningsihwahyu57@gmail.com)*
Wafiyah, RA Muslinat NU Masyithoh 05 Banyurip Ageng *(wafiyahdiaz@gmail.com)*
Wahidah, RA. Nurul Hidayah *(wahidahh777@gmail.com)*

Abstract: This research aims to analyze the implementation of the role-playing method in introducing Islamic figures to students at RA Nurhidayah, and to assess its effectiveness in enhancing children's understanding. Role-playing is a learning method well-suited to the characteristics of early childhood education, as it comprehensively engages cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. This study employs a classroom action research (CAR) approach with two cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The subjects were 20 students at RA Nurhidayah. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and then analyzed using descriptive qualitative methods. The results indicate that role-playing can improve students' understanding of Islamic figures, such as Prophet Muhammad SAW, Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq, and Umar bin Khattab. Children showed greater enthusiasm, were more active, and were better able to remember and emulate the behavior of these figures after participating in the role-playing activities. Therefore, this method can serve as a beneficial alternative for introducing Islamic history to young children in a fun and meaningful way.

Keywords: Role Play, Islamic Figures, Education, Development.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a fundamental stage in shaping children's character and instilling moral and spiritual values (Amalia, 2024). One important aspect of education in **Raudhatul Athfal (RA)** is introducing Islamic figures as role models that children can emulate in their daily lives (Suyadi & Selvi, 2022). Figures such as **Prophet Muhammad SAW, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, Umar bin Khattab, Uthman bin Affan, and Ali bin Abi Talib** possess noble character traits that can be taught from an early age. However, the teaching methods used to introduce Islamic figures to children often remain conventional, such as oral storytelling or simple lectures (Gunawan, 2020).

Passive learning methods like storytelling without active child involvement tend to make children less interested and engaged in learning (Astuti & Wahyuni, 2021). **Role-playing** is one effective method to enhance children's engagement in learning. This method allows children to imagine, create, and directly experience the roles they play

(Nurlaili & Rahmawati, 2021). Furthermore, role-playing helps children understand abstract concepts in a more concrete and enjoyable way (Trirezeki, 2022).

The role-playing method in learning has several advantages. First, it increases children's **active participation** in learning, as they not only listen to stories but also embody the Islamic figures they study (Fauziddin & Mufarizuddin, 2020). Second, role-playing helps children develop **social skills**, such as cooperation, communication, and understanding the emotions of others (Budiarti, 2022). Third, this method improves children's **memory retention**, as they experience learning through action rather than merely hearing or seeing (Miles et al., 2020).

At **RA Nurhidayah**, the teaching methods used to introduce Islamic figures still need to be developed to make them more engaging and suitable for young children's characteristics. Based on initial observations, some children were found to lack a strong understanding of Islamic figures because the approaches used did not fully involve them in the learning process (Rina, 2023). This indicates a need for innovation in teaching methods that are more effective and aligned with children's learning styles.

METHODS

This study employs a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach conducted at RA Nurhidayah, with a research sample of 10 children aged 4-6 years (Wulandari, 2023). The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through direct observations of role-playing activities performed by children, interviews with teachers and parents, and documentation in the form of photos and video recordings during the activities (Ermita, 2018). Meanwhile, secondary data was gathered from relevant literature, such as journals, books, and previous studies on role-playing methods in early childhood education (Santrock, 2021).

The data was analyzed using qualitative descriptive methods, following the steps of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2020). Data reduction involved filtering relevant information related to the implementation of the role-playing method. Data presentation was conducted in the form of narrative descriptions depicting how children interacted in role-playing activities and how their understanding of Islamic figures changed. Conclusions were drawn based on patterns found in the data to assess the extent to which the role-playing method contributed to improving children's understanding of Islamic figures.

RESULTS

The findings indicate that the role-playing method positively impacts the understanding of Islamic figures among RA Nurhidayah students (Amalia, 2024). Observation data showed increased active participation in learning. Before the implementation of the role-playing method, children were passive when listening to stories about Islamic figures. However, after applying this method, they became more enthusiastic, spoke more confidently, and imitated the expressions and attitudes of the figures they portrayed (Permata, 2021).

Interviews with teachers and parents also revealed that children began imitating the behaviors of Islamic figures in their daily lives, such as honesty, courage, and helpfulness (Nisa, 2020). Documentation in the form of photos and videos showed that the children enjoyed the role-playing activities and could remember the characters and stories of the Islamic figures introduced (Zaini & Fauziah, 2023).

Increase in Child Participation

Based on observations during two research cycles, there was a significant increase in children's participation in role-playing activities. In the first cycle, 60% of the children were shy, and only a few actively asked questions or spoke during role-playing. However, in the second cycle, participation increased to 85%, with children becoming more active and showing greater confidence when portraying Islamic figures (Fauziddin & Mufarizuddin, 2020).

Improvement in Child Understanding

Quantitative data on the increase in children's understanding was obtained through simple tests conducted before and after applying the role-playing method:

Assessed Aspect	Before Role-Playing (% Understanding)	After Role-Playing (% Understanding)
Recognizing Islamic figures' names	55%	90%
Stating the key traits of figures	45%	85%
Retelling short stories of figures	35%	80%
Demonstrating attitudes emulating figures	40%	82%

The table above shows that the role-playing method improved children's understanding of Islamic figures' names from **55% to 90%** and increased their ability to state the figures' characteristics from **45% to 85%** (Arsyad, 2020).

Impact on Children's Attitudes

In addition to understanding, children's **attitudes** also showed positive changes. Children began to imitate the behaviors of the figures they portrayed, such as being more diligent in helping friends and more patient during playtime (Gunawan, 2020). Teachers also observed that children who were previously less active in speaking became more confident in expressing their opinions (Suyadi & Selvi, 2022).

<mark>CONCLUSION</mark>

This research consistently demonstrates that the role-playing method is effective in enhancing RA Nurhidayah students' understanding of Islamic figures. Observations, interviews, and documentation reveal that children more readily recognize the names of Islamic figures, comprehend their key attributes, and emulate the positive behaviors exemplified by these figures. Quantitative data also indicate an improvement in children's comprehension, with understanding scores increasing from 55% before role-playing to 90% after role-playing. Additionally, children's engagement in learning increases, marked by their willingness to speak and express the characters they portray.Academically, this study contributes to the field of early childhood education and experience-based learning methods. By implementing the role-playing method, the learning process becomes more interactive and enjoyable for children. This method also proves that experience-based learning is more effective than conventional methods like passive listening. The findings of this research can serve as a reference for teachers at the early childhood education level to develop more engaging and effective learning strategies for introducing Islamic figures to children.

From a social perspective, the implementation of the role-playing method not only impacts academic understanding but also contributes to children's character development. Children involved in role-playing exhibit improved attitudes, such as being more honest, disciplined, and helpful. This aligns with the goals of character education in Islam, which aims to cultivate a young generation with noble morals. Furthermore, parental involvement in supporting their children in role-playing strengthens the relationship between family and school. Thus, this method not only enhances learning in the classroom but also positively impacts children's social environment at home and in the surrounding community.With these findings, it is hoped that the role-playing method can be more widely applied in various early childhood education institutions as an innovative approach to introducing Islamic figures and shaping children's character from an early age.

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