#### Saudi Journal of Business and Management Studies (SJBMS) ISSN 2415-6663 (Print)

Scholars Middle East Publishers Dubai, United Arab Emirates Website: http://scholarsmepub.com/ ISSN 2415-6671 (Online)

## The Strategy to Develop Children' Moral Intelligence through Religious Stories Illustrated

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#### **Article History**

Received: 22.05.2018 Accepted: 27.052018 Published: 30.05.2018

#### DOI:

10.21276/sjbms.2018.3.5.12



**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to obtain information about the effectiveness of illustrated religious stories in developing early childhood moral intelligence. The research was conducted in Raudhatul Athfal (RA) al-Akhyar Muara Bungo, Jambi Province. In this research, the researcher has used Action research method with Kemmis & Mc Taggart model, which includes four stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The subjects of this study were 20 children of RA. The study was conducted in two cycles consisting of three meetings in each cycle. The technique of data collection is done through observation, interview, and documentation. In analyzing the data, the researcher used quantitative and qualitative approach. Quantitative analysis uses percentage and frequency tables to see changes in a score of achievement level of moral intelligence while the qualitative analysis uses Miles and Haberman model analysis. The results show that the moral intelligence of children can be enhanced through religious picture story. Before the action of moral intelligence, the child is in the category of developing the category of growth in the second cycle. The results provide the implications for schools or developers of moral creativity in early childhood.

**Keywords:** Moral Intelligence and Religious Illustrated Stories.

#### INTRODUCTION

The child is the future of a nation because they are the next generation who continue the leadership of nation. To prepare their future, education has a very important role. Education, as a social institution, cannot be separated from society by all its aspects, including moral issues. Education determines the level of morality of a nation. The morality is a very important issue that must be developed through education. Therefore, in Law no. 20 of 2003, on the national education system, states that: education is a conscious and learn the process of learning spirituality, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills in needing him, nation and state society. (Law on National Education System No. 20 of 2003) Similarly, the words of Prophet Muhammad SAW which means "I am only sent to perfect the attitude". (H.R. Buhari & Muslim).

But in the feild shows that this nation is facing the moral crisis. This is due to the declining and less internalized moral values embedded in the children of this nation. For the examples of moral crisis are: the occurrence of promiscuity, brawl, murder, rape, drugs, cyberbullying, and others. This moral crisis not only done by adults or adolescents but it involves the children. Various cases of child abuse, as reported in merdeka' newspaper during November 2014, beside of

that the news from the online media are more than 90 cases. In December 2014, it received more than 140 stories of child abuse. One of them are the case of Fajar Murdianto: Fajar Murdiyanto, a students of elementary school Klumprit 1, Mojolaban, Sukoharjo was died, allegedly persecuted by some friends in class. His freind had known that case and they told to fajar's parent when they come to the funeral. In South Sumatra, Jihan Salsabila (10), a third grade of SDN 14 Muara Enim, was killed after being beaten by four of his classmates. And a second grade student was beaten by his classmate because he did not give his money to them. (Http://www.merdeka.com).

Children who grow in situations and environments that are colored by violations of the rights of others: (violence, coercion, ignorance, ambiguity between right and wrong, good and bad, unlawful behavior.) The low moral intelligence of children will jeopardize their future especially in the present era of modernization. It can be seen from the declining attitude of young generation now, the less respect to parents, teacher and poeple older than them and increased savagery attitude such as: violence, cheating, lying and others.

The description above shows that there has been a failure of moral education in children. Moral education must be built from early childhood (0-8). Neuroscience research shows early age is a very important period of physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. At this age the development of both physical and psychic are very quickly. Since birth a child already has approximately 100 billion brain cells or neurons. Buzan [1], furthermore, according to Bloom at the age of 0 - 4 years of brain development of children has reached 50% then at the age of 8 years has reached 80%, and the remaining 20% occur in the age range thereafter. The brain cells (neurons) are interconnected with other nerve cells in building the base of intelligence. These brain cells will not grow and develop optimally without any stimulation and are utilized through proper nutrition and education. Certainly in this context including the stimulation of the development of moral intelligence as expressed by national education leaders, 7 years is a sensitive period of development of character, Dewantara [2].

Therefore, education from an early age to improve the moral intelligence of children required an appropriate strategy that can stimulate the imagination, so that the moral intelligence of children can develop. One of these strategies, according to the researchers is to use a religious story illustrated. The illustrated religious story that the teacher reads to the child can stimulate the child's intelligence, instilling into the child's soul a belief in solid moral values because it is targeted to religious values or religiosity. In addition, the image media will make it easier for children to understand the messages contained in the story, and become more attractive to children.

The Story Telling method has been used since revealed revelation up to now, even in the development of this method has become part of language learning and has specified a special hour for it. The story is one of the principles in education and it can stimulate the interest of young children. The child will be more interested in the story than the others because he left a clear impression in his soul, the story of embracing the preferred values through empathy and alignment to the cast who plays a major role in attracting the attention that stimulates the awareness of thought and reason. Dimas [3] Stories have an important pedagogical effect that has encouraged educators long ago to use them in educating children and teaching them about good examples, religious values, ethics and morals. This is because the story with the various events and events that the characters depicted in the story can attract attention and cause the attraction for the listener to follow and listen to it. To follow and evoke the various impressions and feelings that make them involved in it will be emotionally affected emotion. So, their minds and souls can receive wisdom, advice and lessons contained therein as well as exemplary and values that bring them feelings of pleasure. Najati [4] next

Pravamayee Samantaray stated: "Storytelling, the art of narrating a tale from memory rather than reading is one of the oldest of all art forms. Storytelling is the original form of teaching and has the potential of insight into human behavior, Samantaray [5]. In addition, storytelling for children of age has important meanings as follows: 1) communicating cultural values, 2) communicating social values, 3) communicating religious values, 4) inculcating work ethics, ethos of time and ethos of nature, 5) help develop children's fantasies, 6) help develop children's cognitive dimensions, 7) help develop children's language dimension.

Thus a story containing religious values is believed to be able to cultivate the soul of a child who has strong moral strength. Religious values have the power to inspire and teach children about morals, Rahim and Maila [6]. Rossano identifies moral experts / exemplars and see if religious people dominated their ranks; the most commonly cited moral paragons are religious as Gandhi, Mather Teresa, and so on [7]. And he also reviews the current literature on religion and moral behavior [7]. Halstead [8], based on the above description, this study examines the strategy of developing early childhood moral intelligence through religious picture. Through the delivery of religious illustrations, the picture is expected to be one of the alternative learning strategies to develop the moral intelligence of early childhood, both on the aspect of moral intelligence of empathy, self-control, and kindness that is the focus of this research. This research focuses on the study of efforts to formulate a programmed learning strategy that is through pictorial picture story method to improve early childhood moral intelligence in Raudhatul Athfal Al-Akhyar Muara Bungo. Of the seven main virtues that form the foundation in building moral intelligence, namely empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and justice. In this study focused on three main virtues of empathy, self-control and kindness, because these three aspects are the moral core.

In particular the formulation of this research questions are:

- Can religious illustrations enhance the moral intelligence (empathy, self-control and kindness) of early childhood at Raudatul Athfal Al-Akhyar?
- How is the improvement of moral intelligence (empathy, self-control and kindness) of early childhood at Raudatul Athfal Al-Akhyar Muara Bungo during and after the action?

#### LITERATURE REVIEW Moral Intelligence of Early Childhood

According to Robert Coles moral intelligence is: "The capacity to understand right from wrong, it means to have a strong ethical conviction to act on them so that it behaves in the right and honorable way. This

wonderful aptitude encompasses some of the pain and to stop oneself from acting on cruel intentions; to control one's impulse and delay gratifications; to listen openly to all sides before judging; to accept and appreciate differences; to decipher unethical choices; to emphasize; to stand up against injustice, and to treat others with compassion and respect, Coles [9]. In line with Cole, Michele Borba said that moral intelligence is the ability to understand right and wrong that is to have a strong ethical belief and act on that belief, so that people are right and honorable. This moral intelligence encompasses the main characters, such as the ability to understand the suffering of others and do not act evil, able to control the impulse and delay gratification, listening from various parties before giving judgment, accepting and respecting differences, being able to understand unethical choices, fight for justice and show affection and respect for others, Borba [10] Next according to Kruger moral intelligence is The core of moral intelligence is moral decision making, which has both a cognitive and component behavior, Kruger [11]. Thus according to Kruger moral decision making has a close relationship with moral intelligence as a component of knowledge, moral decision making refers to the determination of an acceptable choice of society, where individuals can take responsibility. Lennick and Kiel define moral intelligence as: "Moral intelligence is presented as the ability to methodically apply universal moral principles to one's ethics, objectives, and dealing the mental capacity to determine how universal human principles should be applied to our personal values, goals, and actions. According to Clarken moral intelligence is "It involves the way we think, feel and act. In general, moral intelligence increases each actor's survival chances and wellbeing. Besides, moral intelligence could include recognizing problems, setting goals, deciding on what is the right thing to do, taking action and persevering, Clarken [12]. Zubaedi then reveals that moral intelligence is "the ability to understand right and wrong, that is to have a strong ethical belief and act on that belief, so that people are right and honorable, Zubaedi [13].

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that moral intelligence is the ability of a person to understand what is right and wrong so that a person has a strong ethics in embracing his daily life, built on seven basic goodness that are empathy, self-control, kindness, heart conscience, respectness, and fairness. In this study, te researcher only examine the three aspects of moral intelligence: the aspect of empathy, self-control and kindness, because, according to Borba these three aspects are the core of moral intelligence.

Empathy is the core of moral emotion that helps children understands the feelings of others. This ability enables the child to become sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, encouraging him to help the person in distress or pain, and leading him to treat people with affection, Borba [10]. The ability to empathize is the ability to know how other people feel, Goleman [14]. Empathy is the ability of a person to understand about the feelings and emotions of others and the ability to imagine oneself in another's place. Emphatic is the ability to put oneself in the feelings or thoughts of others without having to actually engage in the feelings or responses of the person. Emphatic is the ability to feel the emotional state of others, feel sympathetic and try to solve the problem, and take the perspective of others. An educator feels responsible for the success of a student. An educator will feel sad if there are students who did not succeed or did not pass, so will try as much as possible to help the students. An educator will help with a bold and do not expect a reward or pamphlet if his students succeed. Emphatic is the realization and understanding of the feelings, needs and other personal suffering. While Damon empathy is to react to the feelings of others with an emotional response similar to the feelings- feelings of others. Emphatic as emotional state but also influenced from the child's cognitive power.

Self-control is one's ability to control behavior, the tendency to attract attention, the desire to change behavior to suit others, to please others, to always conform to others, to close their feelings of self-control with regard to how the individual controls the emotions and drives in him. Kindness is a skill that helps a child demonstrate his concern for the welfare and feelings of others, by developing this virtue, the child is more compassionate and less self-conscious, and realizes good deeds as righteous actions.

#### **Religious Illustrated Stories**

Berice Dudley stated that, storytelling is: "the art in which a teller conveys a message, truths, information, knowledge, or wisdom to an audience often subliminally - in an entertaining way, using whatever skills, (musical, artistic, creative) or props he chooses, to enhance the audience's enjoyment, retention and understanding of the message conveyed, Stories are sometimes told purely for joy and delight [15].

The description above explains that storytelling is an art in conveying message, belief, information, knowledge or wisdom to the listeners. Storytelling is also an entertainment that is believed to be worth from generation to generation. Storytelling is also capable of developing children's moral intelligence. Through storytelling or listening to the story of learning to understand the knowledge of the world, knowledge of which is good and bad and get a variety of information in a way that is believed to be able to effectively improve the moral intelligence of children. Religious values have the power to inspire and teach children about morals [6]. Moral or good morality needs to be associated with a sense of faith in God, the day of heaven, and hell, without it all, do not expect to create a barrier between good and bad [16]. Kneth, in Nasih Ulwan, also states "Character will not be realized if it is not accompanied by three beliefs: the belief in God, believing that the spirit will be eternal and convinced that there will be reckoning after death [17].

According to Farida Nuraini stated that "child's mind is picture". All the information he receives, he will think in the realm of his mind in the form of concrete, form in accordance with his own thoughts. To be effective, images should be placed in a meaningful context and students should interact with the image to convince the occurrence of information [18]. Gerlach and Ely in Anitah state that images are not only worth a thousand languages, but also a thousand years or a thousand miles. Through the image can be shown to the learning of a place, people and everything from an area far from the reach of self-study. The images can also give a picture of the time to the past or future portraits. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the illustrated religious story is a process of conveying messages, beliefs, imformations, knowledge or wisdom that contain religious values based on Based on the above explanation, it can be concluded that the illustrated religious story is a process of conveying messages, beliefs, information, knowledge or wisdom that contain religious values based on images to children.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used qualitative research method with action research, and the aim of this research is to know the effectiveness of religious story pictorial in development of moral intelligence early child, especially on aspect empathy, self control and kindness. The action research model used is Kemmis & Mc Taggart model which includes four stages: planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were 20 children of RA group B. The study was conducted in two cycles consisting of three meetings in each cycle. At the first meeting in each cycle, the illustrated religious story illustrates the development of

the moral intelligence of the empathy aspect, the second meeting on self-control and the third aspect of kindness. The data collection technique is done through observation, interview, and documentation study. For that purpose, the research instrument was made in the form of observation sheet of children moral intelligence, interview notes and field notes. Instrument validation is done through expert judgment and consulted with promoter and co-promoter. Data analysis used quantitative and qualitative approach. Qualitative data were analyzed using Miles and Haberman analysis model while quantitative data was analyzed by descriptive statistic analysis technique.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION Findings

The results showed that the improvement of children's moral intelligence in both aspects of empathy, self-control, and kindness has increased from every meeting and from pre-cycle to second cycle. Following the action in this study, there was a change in attitude or behavior related to the moral intelligence of the child, both on the aspect of empathy, self-control and goodness presented religious story pictorial in 6 meetings.

Attitudes or behaviors can be seen, both in class activities and during play. Children seem to be accustomed to attitudes, acts or words that indicate moral intelligence in both aspects of empathy, self-control and kindness as well as sharing a cake with a friend, coaxing his crying friend, reminding friends of breaking rules and so on. In teacher assessment, it is seen that the

Score of children's intelligence achieved at the end of cycle II average in category of developing according to expectations. Improvement of Morale Intelligence in these three aspects can be seen in the following diagram:

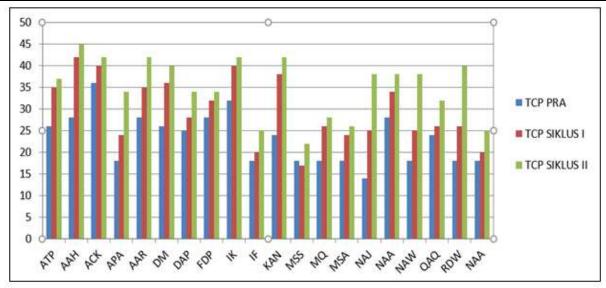


Fig-1: Comparison of Moral Intelligence Children Aspect of Empathy Before does the strategy, Cycle I and Cycle II

The results of the Cyclical II assessment showed that, on average, TCP The moral intelligence of the empathy aspect of the class was 28.4, ie in the Evolving Category of Expectations. This indicates an increase in the category of Cycle I. The lowest TCP score is 18 in a child named MSS. The target agreed by the researchers with the collaborators is 75% of the

maximum TCP = 36. Thus, the target has been met because the minimum TCP of children is 18. From the results of reflection on this cycle II, the researchers and teachers agreed to stop the action in cycle II because the moral intelligence score of children empathy aspect has been fulfilled, that has succeeded to increase 75% from TCP maximum that are 15 children from 20 children.

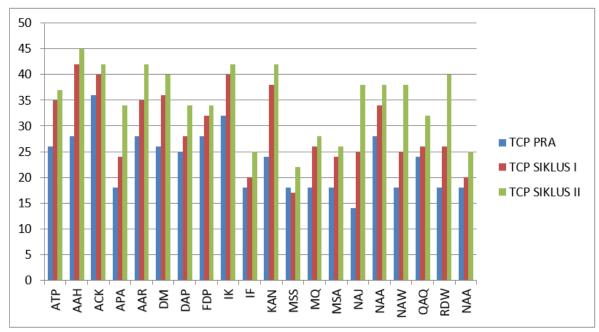


Fig-4.47: Comparison of Children's Moral Intelligence Aspect of Self-Control Before does the strategy, Cycle I and Cycle II

The results of the Cycle II assessment showed that, on average, TCP The moral intelligence of the class self-control aspect is 38.4 i.e. in the Evolving Category of Expectations. This indicates an increase in the category of Cycle I. The lowest TCP score is 22 in a child named MSS. The target agreed by the researchers

with the collaborators is 75% of the maximum TCP = 48. Thus, the target has been fulfilled because the minimum TCP of children is 22. From the results of reflection on this cycle II, the researchers and teachers agreed to stop the action in cycle II because the moral intelligence score of children self-control aspect has

been fulfilled, that has succeeded to increase more 75% from TCP maximum that are 16 children from 20

children.

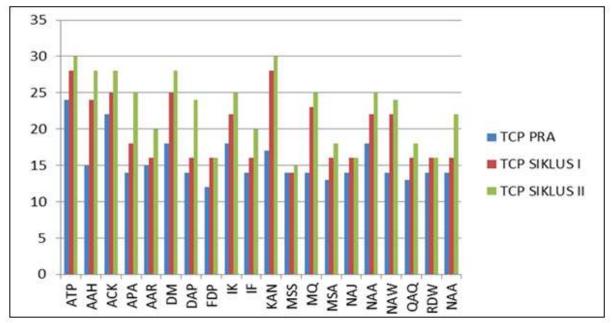


Fig-4.48: Comparison of Moral Intelligence of Children Aspect of Goodness Before does the strategy, Cycle I and Cycle II

The results of the Cyclical II assessment showed that, on average, TCP The moral intelligence aspect of class kindness is 22.6, i.e. in the category of Growing up Expectations. This indicates an increase in the category of Cycle I. The lowest TCP score is 16 in a child named MSS. The target agreed by the researchers with the collaborators is 75% of the maximum TCP = 30. Thus, the target has been met because the minimum TCP of children is 12. From the results of reflection on this cycle II, the researchers and teachers agreed to stop the action in cycle II because the moral intelligence score of the child's aspect of kindness has been fulfilled, which has succeeded in increasing more 75% of TCP maximum which are 16 children from 20 children.

#### DISCUSSION

To develop the moral intelligence of children so that they have the ability to understand right and wrong they need to get guidance as early as possible. Experts agree that the child's moral intelligence will continue to grow along with the stage of its development. For that, the surrounding environment needs to provide guidance or stimulation of good values, values based on religiosity in children during the development process so as to optimize the development of their moral intelligence. Robert Cole [19] stated that the earlier it is taught to the child, the greater the capacity of the child to achieve a solid character that is growing to think, believe, and moral act. As a child shows rebellion behavior when angry or sad to be persuaded is the embodiment of the child has not been able to control themselves. In accordance with the indicators that children of child-bearing age must attain, the behavior should be guided and directed from an early age, in order to develop according to the stage of child development itself.

Mentions that, every child goes through different stages of development. When the child has been directed but it turns out the implementation needs to be warned even to be persuaded, it is because children tend to only imitate what adults do. Piaget calls it the stage of heteronymous morality. Children tend to imitate the rules given by the people who have a skill. When adults who are considered to be people who have a good ability not only watching it, then they tend to be difficult to understand the good and bad values.

The child's moral is also egocentric, when confronted in a situation that does not match what he wants; he will ignore the moral values he already knows. His egocentric nature enables him to be easily tempted by the things he wants more. This is also due to the characteristics of children's moral intelligence is unreflective or not deep. Morbian intelligence according to Borba [10] as the ability to understand right and wrong. A deep understanding of a moral stated, makes one difficulty in judging the value of right and wrong. Kruger calls it moral decision making and Piaget calls it moral judgment. In the process of assessment and consideration there is moral reasoning. Kohlberg called it by moral thinking the reason that is used by someone to decide why something is good or bad, right or wrong. This idea is based on the assumption that the development of moral intelligence is related to the ability of the individual to digest and interpret the information into the realm of cognitive development.

The characteristics of moral development of children described above require appropriate moral education formula and in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood itself. Among the characteristics of early childhood according to Siti Aisyah is a child has a great curiosity and rich with fantasy and imagination. The child is also a figure who has good imitative ability (good imitator). Thus, the wrong approach to improving the moral intelligence of children is through the provision of religious illustrations.

The story is a description, description or description of a particular event or event. According tells the story is the activity tells something that tells about the actions, experiences, or events that really happened or the results of fiction. He say that storytelling is one of the oldest forms of art, entertainment and view that have been trusted in value from the next generation of genitals. Storytelling is also a creative process for children. In the course of its development the story not only activates the intellectual aspects but also aspects of sensitivity, subtlety, emotion, art, fantasy, imagination that not only gives priority to the left brain. Storytelling is able to help children's social skills. Speaking orally supports children to learn to read, understand the world's knowledge and make good social-emotional children. In addition, the story also tells the activities that can be done children with a sense of fun.

According to Moeslichatoen [20] tells stories to communicate values, culture, and social, religious, inculcate work ethic, time ethic, and natural ethos, and develop child fantasy, child cognition dimension, and child language dimension. Furthermore, Musfiroh [21] states that storytelling is useful for sharpening children's imagination, developing language skills, social aspect, moral aspect, religious awareness, emotional aspect, achievement spirit and child concentration training. Then Bettelhem tells the story of helping the child cope with the psychological problems he has to pass to become an adult.

Religious stories have strong a fundamental message in instilling good values in children. Rahim and Maila [6] states religious values have the power to inspire and teach children about morals. Rossano [7] identifies moral experts / exemplars and see if religious people dominated their ranks; the most commonly cited moral paragons are religious as Gandhi, Mather Teresa, and so on. And he also reviews the current literature on religion and moral behavior. Then Halstead declared "Muslims believe that moral behavior presupposes faith and that is genuine only if it results in moral behavior". Further According

to Ahmad Syantut "Moral or good morality needs to be associated with a sense of faith in God, the day of heaven, heaven and hell, without it all, do not expect to create a barrier between good and bad. Likewise Nasih Ulwan [17] states "Character will not be realized if it is not accompanied by three beliefs: belief in the existence of God, convinced that the spirit will be eternal and convinced that there will be calculations after death.

Thus it can be understood that through the illustrated religious story, the child's moral intelligence can be improved. By telling stories that contain Islamic-based moral messages can develop a mindset and planting of religious values as a solid foundation for the formation of children's moral intelligence. This religious-based story-telling activity will also provide a space for children to learn how to identify other people's feelings, develop the concepts of understanding, emotions and feelings such as sadness, joy, sympathy, anger, anxiety, happy and other emotions that are very beneficial to the development of intelligence moral.

In addition, no less important, able to bring the atmosphere of a more natural and fun class, although in it is taking the transmission of the order of values and morals. Children will be more eager to learn because in essence children are happy with the story. So it can be understood that the activities of religious stories illustrated will be very effective to socialize and inculcate the values of the religious in order to improve the moral intelligence to the child. Because religious stories are loaded with meaning or contain religious messages that are believed to have an important role in socializing new values to children so that in turn becomes a solid foundation for the formation of children's moral intelligence.

# CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS CONCLUSION

- Improving the moral intelligence of children can be done through the delivery of religious stories illustrated. Religious picture story method is one of alternative strategy that can be done by teacher / parent in improving moral intelligence, well at empathy aspect, self control and kindness.
- Improvement of moral intelligence through religious story can be categorized increased significantly; because it has reached the expected level of completeness of 75% of 20 children are in the category of complete or developed as expected, meaning that has reached the target of 75% as expected.

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

The results provide implications for schools or teachers to develop stories containing strong creative moral messages to improve moral intelligence in early childhood.

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