New Students' Self-Adjustment at Ar-Risalah Islamic Junior High School: Roles and Supporting Factors

Abstract: The purpose of this research is to determine teachers’ roles in improving students' self-adjustment and its supporting factors at Ar-Risalah Islamic Junior High School, Padang, Indonesia. This is qualitative descriptive research with data collected from teachers, students, principals, and other school officials through interview, observation, and documentation. The data collected were analyzed using reduction and triangulation processes. The result showed that the teacher had expertise as a motivator to support and trigger the student enthusiasm in adapting and learning new materials at school. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors of the self-adjustment process were parents that have not been able to let their children go to boarding schools and teachers without psychological backgrounds, because this background are needed for better approach and intervention for children to make them enthusiasm in learning in boarding school.

Keywords: Supports; self-adjustment; adaptation; teacher; school

INTRODUCTION

Self-adjustment is an individual’s ability to understand and take certain actions as well as get acclimatized to the group’s expectations (da Costa et al., 2018; Japar, 2014; Li et al., 2017; Noviandari & Mursidi, 2019). Meanwhile, good self-adjustment is the ability to manage oneself while facing these changes quickly. According to Gimenez-Serrano et al. (2021), adjustment constitutes 2 aspects, namely personal and social. Personal adjustment is individuals' acceptance of their personality, meaning that they tend to accept their existence irrespective of their expectations. Meanwhile, the social adjustment occurs within the scope of societal relations in which the individual lives and interacts namely family, school, or playmates.

Every human being engages in self-adjustments daily to achieve balance, especially in a new atmosphere such as school, dormitory, and other places (Na et al., 2015). Therefore, students are bound to fail in adaptation without the teachers’ help in the new school environment. They need to be able to adapt and become mature in character formation to become skilled and accepted by the environment (Karadağ et al., 2020; Naziah et al., 2020). In educational institutions, the teacher’s spirit is perceived as the determinant
of the learning processes in terms of changing the students' character. Accordingly, the teachers are the spearhead in such processes.

Government Regulation number 74 of 2008 concerning Teachers and Lecturers in Chapter I, Article 1 states that "Educators are professionals with the main task of teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students from early childhood to, elementary, and secondary education". Based on this regulation, teachers are not only tasked with delivering subject matter in the classroom, rather, they are also responsible for guiding, educating, and ensuring the students are independent.

Kadafi et al. (2021) stated that the tasks and roles of educators involve carrying out scientific education because it has a significant influence on the formation of personality and human dignity. However, in general, parents and Muslim educators are also responsible because it is in sync with their duties, namely providing education from a human perspective. This is realized by maintaining the students' human nature as given by God (R. H. R. Alfaiz et al., 2020; Ikhwani et al., 2020; Rahawarin et al., 2020; Sokip et al., 2019). Sultan (2014) reported that the code of ethics for teaching is that teachers need to love their students as much as they love themselves. This simply means that they have to assume that the students are part of themselves. Furthermore, teachers need to use their position and wealth of knowledge to help students fulfill their educational needs. For instance, the students need to be visited or assisted when sick and run out of supplies. This illustrates that teachers are advised to treat them with love (Anand et al., 2021; Baten & Simons, 2014).

Self-adjusting means accepting people as they are, irrespective of all their weaknesses and strengths. Besides, there is a need to understand and evaluate other individuals objectively (Metzger, 2014; St-Charles et al., 2015). Meanwhile, certain privileges need to be recognized despite their shortcomings (Alfaiz et al., 2019). Furthermore, people have to realize that they are part of the community or environment, therefore it is important to adapt to the social rules, regulations, laws, customs, and religious teachings. According to this definition, mentally healthy individuals are able to control all factors to overcome any form of agitation, such as emotional pressures and frustration.

Modern Islamic Boarding School is an educational institution with accommodation facilities. All students live in the dormitory and comply with all the rules (Halik, 2016; Musaddad, 2021; Pasi et al., 2020). Those accustomed to the caress and attention of their parents are bound to feel uncomfortable certainly and have difficulty adapting to the new atmosphere. Therefore, the research location is Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School, located in Air Dingin, Balai Gadang Village, Koto Tangah Sub-district, Padang, Indonesia.

Based on the initial observations carried out on August 24, 2014, at the school, most of the new students looked confused and cried, while some others were self-secluded and seemed unable to mingle with other students. In this context, guidance from the teachers both in the dormitory and classroom is needed for the students' self-adjustment process. A certain student hugged, joked, and played badminton with several others and the teacher on that particular day.

One of the caregivers that taught at the Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School Padang was also interviewed. It was discovered that generally, new students usually obey commands without much argument. However, in about a week, they start to hang out with their friends, thereby revealing their personalities related to their dependence on their parents. Usman & Hasna (2019) carried out several studies on students' self-adjustment and self-efficacy in the educational environment, which stated that an increase in self-adjustment leads to a rise in self-confidence, thereby driving to a positive self-efficacy. However, no research has been carried out on teachers' role in improving self-adjustment in the context of learning performance (Hasanah & Usman, 2020; Toharudin et al., 2019). This research aims to discover a teachers’ role in improving self-adjustment of student’s performance and also
factor that influence this process in Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School Padang.

Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School Padang has programs and tips to guide students on ways to adapt to the dormitory and school life. The guidance supports those that initially encountered problems during self-adjustment, properly blending with the environment, controlling their emotions, improving learning enthusiasm, encouraging themselves and others, and adequately carrying out their responsibilities and school assignments (Japar, 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the teachers' roles at the Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School Padang to improve students' self-adjustment. Based on these explanations, the research question is centered on the roles and strategies adopted by teachers in improving students' self-adjustment process irrespective of the supporting and hindering factors.

METHOD

Research Design

Qualitative research is a scientific process used to understand human problems in a social context by creating a comprehensive and complex description and reporting detailed views of information sources in a natural setting without any intervention (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Moleong, 2021). The phenomenology model was adopted to uncover, examine, and understand any unique context experienced by individuals (Rukin, 2019).

Research Instruments

Instrumentation involves observation guidelines, carried out to directly recognize the strategies adopted by the teachers both in the dormitory and school, to help the self-adjustment process of new students at SMP Perguruan Islam Ar-Risalah Padang. An open interview process was also carried out to obtain detailed and essential information. Moreover, documentation was performed to complete the qualitative research findings process as real field data.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using an interactive model designed by Miles and Huberman. This was continuously reviewed until the information became saturated. In addition, the interactive model consists of 3 stages, namely data collection, reduction, and display (Sugiyono, 2015). The collection process is carried out before, during, and at the end of the study. Ideally, this procedure is performed based on the research concept. The data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. Data reduction is essentially the process of merging all uniform information into a written form (script).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School is part of the Ar-Risalah Islamic College, which provides continuing education for 6 (six) years with boarding facilities (SMP or Junior High School and Madrasah Aliyah or Islamic Senior High School). The internal curriculum is affiliated with the Ministry of Education and it refers to those at the same level in the Middle East. Therefore, graduates are expected to compete in general sciences by adhering to the universal Islamic principles.

One of the prioritized curriculum contents is self-development which is part of the self-adjustment process in learning to be social at school, which is realized through extracurricular and extracurricular activities. Extracurricular self-development is in the form of Counseling Guidance and Educational Visits. Meanwhile, extracurricular include Scouting, Islamic Arts, Sports, and Life Skills.

| Teacher | Male | Female | Total |
|---------|------|--------|-------|
| Teacher | 19   | 29     | 48    |

Table 1 shows that Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School consists of 48 teachers, with 19 males and 29 females. According to the administrative staff, on average, the teachers possess an undergraduate degree from UNAND (Andalas University),
Table 2. Data of Students at Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School

| Class | Total Students | Total Learning Groups |
|-------|----------------|----------------------|
| I     | 192            | 6                    |
| II    | 184            | 6                    |
| III   | 171            | 6                    |
| TOTAL | 547            | 18                   |

Table 2 shows that there are 547 students categorized under 18 study groups.

Table 3. Habituation/Dormitory Program

| ROUTINE | SPONTANEOUS | EXEMPLARY |
|---------|-------------|----------|
| Flag ceremony | Greeting other people during meetings | Pray on time |
| Gymnastics | Tidy up sandals and shoes | Dress neatly in Islamic attire |
| Read 2 pages of the Qur’an daily | Exhibit Islamic behavior | Say good words |
| Memorize the Qur’an at least 1 page per week | Communicate in English or Arabic | Give compliments |
| Pray before and after studying | Throw garbage in its place | Discipline |
| Perform prayer sessions 5 times in the congregation | Discussion | Live simply |

This program is routinely performed at the Ar Risalah Islamic College. It involves all the teachers and caregivers in the dormitory as well as all the extended family members of the Ar Risalah Waqf Foundation. In addition, the students are given all forms of homework (PR). Ar-Risalah Islamic College has boarding facilities, therefore asides from academics, students also participate in parenting activities in the dormitories. This ensures the available time is arranged as effectively as possible, including PR. Nevertheless, homeworks are given after teaching the subjects that need continuous practice, such as Mathematics, Science, Religion, and Information and Communication Technology, with a maximum time consideration of ¼ of the face-to-face hours per week. Meanwhile, the teachers handling other subjects are advised not to give homework.

The Teachers’ Role in Increasing Self-Adjustment

Based on the interviews with teachers and caregivers, students’ self-adjustment to the new environment varies. The majority adapt quickly, while some others are slow. Those that adapt quickly are usually able to adjust to their new environment within a month. Meanwhile, it takes some others 3 months or more to be able to adjust to the new environment. This is evident in the results of the interviews with the teachers and caregivers, which are stated as follows:

...some students adapt quickly, while some are slow, and this takes a month or even longer,... (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, M: 11-17)......this process requires a maximum of 3 months.

However, some students slowly adapt to the new environment (R and He, W4, 07-11-2014, L: 30-33) ....they need at least 3 months because that is the adaptation period (F, W2, 05-11-2014, L: 37-38).

New students with slow self-adjustment usually exhibit certain behaviors such as crying, difficulty sleeping, always sickly, being alone, and not wanting to communicate with others. This is reported in the results of interviews with teachers and caregivers.

Students with slow self-adjustment tend to cry, find it difficult to sleep, and are always sick because they miss their parents (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, M: 106-
These students usually long for their parents, hence they tend to cry,... (R and He, W4, 07-11-2014, L: 21-27).

Behaviors such as crying, difficulty sleeping, being sickly, secluded, and not wanting to communicate with other people emerge because they miss their homes. This is normal and natural for every new student because they have never been separated from their parents. This is evident from the results of the interviews, which are reported as follows: ...

...new students cry because they miss home, this is normal because they have never been separated from their parents (R and He, W4, 07-11-2014, M: 60-64).

The teachers try to help with the process of self-adjustment to the new environment. First, the school organizes a Student Orientation Period (MOS) to help them get to know their new environment. They are introduced to new friends, seniors, ustadz and ustazah, classrooms, laboratory, etc. The results of the interview with the teachers (deputy head of curriculum) are reported as follows: ...

...Before lessons commerce, an activity called the Student Orientation Period (MOS) is held. During the MOS, they get to know their environment, make new friends, are introduced to the seniors, ustadz and ustazah... The MOS committee also introduces them to other facilities such as the laboratories and classrooms....including culture, rules, organization, and several other activities....This lasts for a week and at the end, there is usually an outbound to lighten the atmosphere... (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, L: 49-85).

Second, the school organizes training sessions for all homeroom teachers every new academic year, to understand every problem faced by students, especially the new ones... (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, M: 203-208)

The training given to new teachers is known as Intensive Teaching Learning (ITL), and it lasts for 7 days. During this process, they are introduced to the foundation, its history, the existing structures, and ways to handle certain problems faced by the students... (D, W3, 07-11-2014, M: 380-386)

Third, dormitory caregivers (musyirif) also play a role in helping the new students’ self-adjustment process. For example, the caregivers (musyirif) approach, persuade, and advice any new student crying. An interview excerpt is reported as follows...

...they persuade and talk to them and assuming they are unable to handle the situation, then they communicate with their parents... (F, W2, 05-11-2014, M: 88-99)

...they are encouraged and motivated.. (R and He, W4, 07-11-2014, L: 73-77).

...However, when any of them remembers their parents, they are told to read the Qur'an because at that time they are being tempted by Satan... (M & HR, W5, 18-11-2014, L: 10-15).

Fourth, the caretaker conducts training sessions for new students to provide motivation and reinforcement, enabling them to adjust to the new environment. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a female caregiver (Musyrifah)

...First, the students, are undergoing a training session for only 2 days, to motivate and strengthen them, thereby increasing their survival and adaptation rate ... (I'm, W7, 23-10-2014, L: 20-25)

In terms of learning patterns, Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School implemented a boarding facility, meaning that all students are expected to live in the dormitory to participate in learning and parenting activities in the hostel. These are admittedly dense, such as congregational
prayers, memorizing the Koran, *halaqah*, mentoring, and other time and energy-consuming procedures.

However, when viewed from the students' perspectives, especially in terms of affective and psychomotor abilities, the activities carried out by Ar-Risalah Junior High School are considered forced. In terms of affective abilities, hindering a 12-year-old's emotional attachment to their parents causes the majority to cry in their early days at school. Likewise, the psychomotor ability, the students feel forced to carry out several activities. Based on interviews with several teachers, it was concluded that in the first month, they obey set rules because the environment has not yet contaminated them. However, after a while, they start to disobey some burdensome activities, including congregational prayers, where the priest reads long verses close to one page of the Koran.

On Tuesday, November 18, 2014, the observation activity disclosed that whenever the teachers passed the new students, they greeted and briefly interacted with them. A similar attitude was also exhibited when they met with caregivers. Regarding the relationship with the senior students, it appears that they studied together and interacted in English. Likewise, the same language was used to play with friends, and they did not seem to fight. Based on the observations in the dormitory, it was discovered that students obey set rules, such as taking a cold shower in the large bathroom provided.

The closeness between teachers and new students strengthens their relationship. This means that the role of assisting them in developing self-adjustment establishes the distance between them. The classic reason is that it triggers the teachers' authority according to the students' perspective. However, it doesn't make sense because they act as second parents, enabling them to discuss their condition with the teachers directly. Based on their roles and responsibilities, they need to listen to each student's complaints. This classic reason does not apply to Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School because the relationship between teachers and students is similar to that between children and parents.

This subject matter has a boring characteristic because it requires concentration because even though the teachers are talented and proficient in delivering and presenting the lesson, the students' brains are still limited in terms of absorbing the study material. Therefore, the educators are allowed to include sideline jokes to eliminate the boredom in the classroom atmosphere due to the numerous activities (Kasmar et al., 2019; Maya, 2017). The various interactive processes in social life, especially in the dormitory, help them to be able to adapt and adjust to their environment. In psychology, this principle is called self-adjustment, which means to adapt to ones' demands and needs in a social environment (Hastiani et al., 2020).

Based on observations made, both in and outside the classroom, such as dormitories and around the college, it seems like the students joke a lot with their teachers. Likewise, excerpts from interviews prove that socially, the relationship between teachers and students at the Ar-Risalah Islamic College is like water, they are cordial, compared to in other schools. A similar finding was also discovered in the relationship between caregivers and students in the dormitory. The following are excerpts from interviews with teachers and caregivers

...they have an extremely cordial relationship with the students in Ar-Risalah compared to other schools (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, L: 298-301).
...this is because they spend 24 hours with the students, in class, and in the dormitory. It seems that the frequent meetings make them closer compared to other schools. (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, M: 303-311).

An inspiratory forum is held to channel their burdens to establish the intimacy between students and teachers, caregivers, and seniors. This activity relieves them of the pressure that results from mind splitting. This forum also serves to channel the students' desires to gain a positive impact on self-adjustment. This is
because negative feelings that tend to disturb their minds are eliminated, and any emergent problem is properly resolved. In this case, teachers and caregivers willingly listen to their students' stories. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a caregiver (musyrifah)

...there is a forum to acquire ideas, afterward, a briefing is held with all the teachers... (F, W2, 05-11-2014, L: 328-331).

Teachers’ attention is evident when any of the new students are sick, and they immediately visit them in the dormitory to ascertain their condition. This strengthens their relationship because they feel the teachers' presence aids them in recovering quickly. However, assuming the reverse is the case, they are taken to the clinic in Ar-Risalah for treatment, and the caregivers render extra services such as feeding them with milk. The teachers' and caregivers' roles, is similar to that of the new students' parents. Relating to their feeding, the caregivers usually have a meeting with the students once a month to discuss the type of food they like. This is to ascertain that the students enjoy the meals served by the kitchen staff daily. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a caregiver.

...especially for sick students, the teachers visit them in the dormitory to ascertain their condition and then take them to the clinic for treatment. Sometimes, caregivers feed them with milk... (F, W2, 05-11-2014, L: 284-290)

...once a month, they are asked to discuss their favorite food. (F, W2, 05-11-2014, L: 318-319)

Attention is also given to students that have just entered their teenage years, particularly those that are menstruating for the first time. Not everyone understands the signs of puberty, this is because the students come from different families and regions. They are also congratulated by their fellow students and caregivers that teach them to deal with problems regarding menstruation. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a caregiver.

...when students experience menstruation for the first time, they are congratulated by friends and ustadzah,... and are later taught ways to deal with puberty... (F, W2, 05-11-2014, L: 304-30)

Inhibiting and Supporting Factors in the Students’ Self-Adjustment Process

Based on the subjects that were interviewed, the new students' self-adjustment is determined by 2 attributes, including supporting and inhibiting factors. Furthermore, supporting factors are positive qualities that help the self-adjustment process of new students. On the contrary, inhibiting factors are negative attributes that complicate this process. These 2 greatly affect the self-adjustment process of new students at the Ar-Risalah Islamic College, thereby ensuring they are able to survive and adjust to the new environment. Conversely, the majority are also unable to adapt and decide to leave school.

The supporting factors are manifested through a Student Orientation Period (MOS) activity for new students organized by the school. This is a guidance service to introduce them to the environment. It is carried out due to the assumption that adapting to a new environment is not usually a pleasant experience. This activity is important for the new students of Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School to adapt to the new environment, friends, seniors, ustadz, ustadzah, etc.

They need to understand their surroundings as soon as possible. In this case, the physical environment (such as buildings, equipment, and other structural facilities), materials, condition of the activities (type and duration), regulations, various other provisions (namely discipline, rights, and obligations), existing personalities, duties assigned to each individual, etc needs to be considered (Hrich et al., 2019). These environmental conditions have an enormous impact on the students' self-adjustment process (Yuzarion et al., 2020).

The following is an excerpt from the interview with the teacher
... During MOS activity, the students are given several tasks related to getting to know the environment, their friends, male and female seniors, ustadz..., certain facilities such as laboratories and classrooms,... in addition, they are introduced to the school culture, rules, organizations, and activities...(Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, L: 49-85).

Besides, there is a training program for each teacher at the beginning of the new academic year, aimed at teaching them ways to understand and deal with problematic students. Furthermore, new students are also given motivational training after spending a night in the dormitory (Bhatti & Song, 2019). In addition, a halaqah or mentoring program is routinely carried out once a month. The following is an excerpt from the interview with one of the teachers.

Halaqah or mentoring is a form of guidance for students in Islamic studies. They are divided into several groups consisting of 12 students. This activity is held once a week, particularly on Fridays at 10 am. (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, L: 324-330)

The inhibiting factor that complicates the self-adjustment process is that students are inseparable from their parents. This inability is tolerated within the first and third months of resumption. However, the parents of those that are unable to adjust after the first 3 or even 6 months are invited to ascertain their continuity at the Ar-Risalah College. The following is an excerpt from the interview with a teacher

... A total of 3 new students left the school because of the same problem, namely being inseparable from their parents. (Hi, W1, 05-11-2014, L: 196-200)

Contrarily, some parents are inseparable from their children due to feelings of loneliness. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a caregiver (musyrif)

...due to the strong inner bond, some parents wait for their children in the dormitories during the visit hours of 09 a.m to 5.30 p.m. In addition, when they see their children, they look at them for a long time irrespective of their desire to pray in the congregation at the mosque. This is an obstacle for the children's self-adjustment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the roles and strategies adopted by teachers in developing the self-adjustment process of new students at Ar-Risalah Islamic College Junior High School Padang, during the student orientation period (MOS), which is usually carried out for 3 days at the beginning of every academic year, motivates them in adapting to the new environment. Students are always entertained weekly, either by watching movies together, swimming, and other recreational activities.

Other efforts carried out by teachers include holding regular meetings once a week and monitoring students during classes through attendance and homework. Students are also permitted to communicate with their parents and psychologists.

Some of the factors affecting students’ self-adjustment are close attachment to their parents and vice versa, therefore their talents are not fully channeled, and caregivers do not have a psychological background.

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