

IMPLEMENTATION OF HMJ PROGRAM IN DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STUDENTS

Tasya Billah Putri^{1*}
Ela fadila Azmi²
Widya Aprillia³
Khairul Amri⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

*Email: tasyabillahputri@gmail.com

Abstract: *Soft skill development is an essential component in shaping student competencies to prepare them for the demands of the workplace. As a student organization, the Departmental Student Association (HMJ) plays a crucial role in providing a non-formal learning environment that fosters communication, leadership, collaboration, and organizational management skills. This study aims to describe how the HMJ program is implemented to develop students' soft skills and to assess the extent to which it contributes to their personal development. The research method used is descriptive qualitative, with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. The findings demonstrate that various HMJ programs, such as leadership training, self-development seminars, social activities, and event management, have a positive impact on increasing students' self-confidence, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, student participation in committee and organizational activities strengthens their adaptability and sense of responsibility. Overall, the study confirms that HMJ programs are an effective and sustainable medium for developing students' soft skills. Therefore, institutional support is needed to expand collaboration opportunities and improve the quality of activities to achieve optimal results.*

Keywords: *Implementation, Hmj, Soft Skills, Pai*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in developing students' potential comprehensively, encompassing not only academic aspects (hard skills) but also non-technical aspects (soft skills) such as communication, leadership, group collaboration, emotional management, and social ethics. Mastery of these interpersonal skills is a crucial element supporting individual success in professional environments and social life (Wibowo, 2016).

Within the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program, interpersonal skills development takes on even deeper significance, given that PAI students are prepared as future educators, preachers, and agents of social transformation. They are expected not only to master Islamic knowledge and teaching methods but also to interact effectively, lead, collaborate, and demonstrate noble morality in social interactions. Islamic education intrinsically aims to develop individuals with knowledge, faith, and morals, making interpersonal skills a crucial component of PAI educational goals (Zuhairini, 2015).

Formal classroom learning processes are generally still oriented toward mastering cognitive and conceptual aspects, thus under-facilitating the development of students' soft skills. These conditions demand alternative non-formal learning options that provide contextual learning experiences through social interaction and hands-on practice. In this regard, student organizations are a strategic tool for supporting the development of students' soft skills, particularly through the Islamic Education Student Association (HMJ). Student organizations are considered effective in developing soft skills because students are actively involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of various organizational activities (Hidayat & Ulfah, 2025).

The Islamic Education Student Association (HMJ) on campus serves as an intra-departmental organization that serves as a vehicle for academic and scientific development and character development for Islamic Education students. Various programs, such as leadership training, Islamic scientific discussion forums, educational seminars, public speaking and da'wah training, and socio-religious activities, serve as learning platforms that foster students' communication skills, leadership, teamwork, and social responsibility. Research by Lestari & Kurniawati (2023) revealed that active student participation in student organizations significantly contributes to improving leadership skills, interpersonal communication, and a sense of responsibility.

The implementation of the Islamic Religious Education Student Association (HMJ PAI) program aligns with the principles of Islamic education, which emphasize proactive self-development. This is affirmed in the word of Allah SWT.

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ ﴿١١﴾

Meaning: "For him (man) are (angels) in turns, from before him and behind him, guarding him by Allah's command. Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. If Allah wills evil for a people, none can avert it, and they have no protector besides Him." (Q.S. Ar-Rad, verse 11) (Religion, 2014).

This verse explains that efforts to improve and transform self-quality, including in the realms of attitude, social skills, and leadership, must be carried out consciously, planned, and continuously. In this context, the programs organized by the Islamic Religious Education Student Association (HMJ) serve as a medium for implementing these values, as they encourage students to actively participate in the process of developing their potential through organizational experience.

Although the Islamic Religious Education Student Association (HMJ PAI) on campus has implemented various activities that have the potential to support the development of students' soft skills, in practice, several problems still arise, including low levels of student participation and the lack of explicit formulation of soft skills development objectives in the curriculum. work program planning, and limited evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of HMJ activities on improving students' soft skills.

Based on this description, research on the implementation of the HMJ program in developing PAI students' soft skills is crucial. Therefore, this study is expected to provide an empirical overview of the role of the Departmental Student Association (HMJ) for PAI students as a means of developing students' soft skills, while also serving as a foundation for strengthening and refining the HMJ work program to make it more structured and systematic, and to have a tangible impact on developing PAI graduates who are professional, virtuous, and competitive.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Implementation

According to the Great Indonesian Dictionary, implementation refers to implementation and implementation. Experts, including Usman (2002), define implementation as "an activity, action,

or mechanism within a system. It is not merely an activity, but rather a planned activity to achieve a desired goal." From this definition, it can be concluded that implementation is more than just an activity; it is a planned and rigorously executed activity based on specific norms to achieve a set goal. Therefore, implementation is not independent but is influenced by other conditions. Setiawan (2004) adds to his perspective on implementation, stating that "implementation is the expansion of activities that adapt to the interaction between goals and actions to achieve them, and requires an efficient network of implementers and bureaucracy." From this definition, implementation can be interpreted as the process of carrying out a new idea or series of activities, with the hope that other individuals will accept and adapt within the bureaucratic structure to achieve goals that can be achieved through a trusted network of implementers. Harsono (2002) also states that implementation is the process of transforming policy into action, moving from the political to the administrative aspect. Policy development aims to improve a program (Rosad, 2019).

The implementation of education must continually evolve in line with the times. This is because education is a necessary provision for humans to navigate an increasingly complex and evolving life. To prepare students for rapid social, cultural, and technological changes, student competencies must be developed to be more relevant to current needs. Skills and matching relate not only to the industrial and professional worlds, but also to a rapidly changing future. Universities are required to design and implement innovative learning processes so that students can achieve learning objectives that encompass aspects of attitude, knowledge, and skills optimally and consistently relevant (Syaroni et al., 2024).

Departmental Student Association (HMJ)

Departmental student associations are organizations consisting of students from the same study program. These organizations have regular and clear social and community activity programs under the supervision of the relevant higher education institution, ensuring that student associations can work together effectively throughout their implementation. Typically, every department or study program at a university has a student association, as this organization is crucial for applying the knowledge learned.

The duties of the Student Association (HMJ) are:

- 1) Based on the field of study and curriculum, plan and implement student activities registered with the HMJ, related to the development of concepts, knowledge, and professions relevant to the field of study.
- 2) Actively participate in competitions, conduct research, and implement the Tri Dharma of Higher Education.
- 3) Compile an Accountability Report (LPJ) in line with the student activities undertaken and submit it to the relevant department head. (3)

Soft Skills

Soft skills are important life skills and abilities, both for oneself, in group interactions, and in relationships with society and the Creator. Possessing soft skills can make one's presence felt within the community. These skills include communication skills, emotional intelligence, language skills, group skills, ethics and morality, politeness, and spiritual skills. Furthermore, Elfindri and colleagues emphasized that soft skills are all characteristics that support the application of a person's hard skills. Soft skills significantly influence how someone utilizes hard skills. If someone masters them well, their knowledge and abilities can bring prosperity and comfort, both to themselves and to those around them. On the other hand, if someone lacks adequate soft skills, their hard skills can actually pose risks to themselves and others.

Meanwhile, according to Liza Marini, soft skills complement technical skills. These skills are elements of a person's intelligence and are often a requirement for obtaining certain positions or jobs.

The importance of mastering soft skills needs to be emphasized to students as they prepare them to enter the workforce and industry. This is especially true for universities, both public and private, that aim to produce graduates.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. A qualitative approach is defined as one that involves observing, interacting with, and attempting to understand the language or interpretations of individuals within their social environment (Zuriah, 2006), as reported in the journal (3). The choice of a qualitative approach was based on the research objective, which focused on an in-depth study of the implementation of the Departmental Student Association (HMJ) program and its contribution to the development of soft skills in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program students. Through this approach, the researcher sought to uncover real-world conditions, emphasizing the perspectives of the research subjects within a natural context.

Data analysis techniques in this research were conducted continuously and interactively, encompassing the stages of data grouping, data presentation, and conclusion formulation. Data obtained from the field were filtered and classified according to the focus of the research study, then compiled and presented in descriptive form. The final stage of analysis was carried out by formulating conclusions based on trends and key findings emerging from the data processing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the HMJ Program in Developing Islamic Religious Education Students' Soft Skills
The implementation of the Islamic Religious Education Student Association (HMJ) program is a concrete process of organizational planning, realized through various student activities. Research results indicate that the implementation of the Islamic Religious Education Student Association (HMJ) program is carried out through various activities designed to actively involve students, such as training sessions, scientific discussions, religious activities, and social activities. These programs are designed not only as organizational routines but also as non-formal learning media that provide students with hands-on experience. Through active involvement in each stage of the activity, students learn to understand organizational dynamics, from planning, implementation, and evaluation. This process demonstrates that the implementation of the HMJ program plays a strategic role in developing students' personal and social skills on an ongoing basis.

Student involvement in the HMJ program provides a contextual learning environment that cannot be optimally achieved through classroom instruction. Students are trained to communicate effectively, convey ideas, and collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds and backgrounds. This experience aligns with Astin's (2014) view that students' active involvement in organizational activities significantly contributes to the development of their social skills and personality. Furthermore, the implementation of the HMJ program also encourages students to learn to take responsibility for their assigned tasks. Each program requires commitment, discipline, and the ability to manage time effectively. Thus, HMJ serves as a learning platform that instills professional values from an early age, which are essential for Islamic Religious Education students to face the challenges of the workplace and community service.

The Islamic Religious Student Association (HMJ PAI) program contributes to the development of various aspects of students' soft skills. Communication skills are evident through student involvement in meetings, discussions, and the verbal and written presentation of ideas.

Furthermore, leadership and teamwork skills are developed through the division of roles and responsibilities within the activity committee structure. This demonstrates that organizational experience provides students with the opportunity to learn decision-making and complete tasks collectively (Ramadhan et al., 2022).

Furthermore, students are trained in discipline, time management, and the skills to face and resolve problems that arise during activities. For Islamic Religious Religious Students, the Islamic values internalized in the HMJ program strengthen the development of ethical attitudes, moral responsibility, and social sensitivity, as emphasized by the fact that Islamic education emphasizes not only cognitive aspects but also the development of attitudes and behaviors (Irsad, 2016).

The successful implementation of the HMJ program in developing students' soft skills is supported by the motivation of the management, strong cooperation among members, and support from the department. A conducive organizational environment encourages students to participate more actively and develop their potential. Institutional support is considered a crucial factor in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of student organization activities (Mohamad Mustafid et al., 2023).

However, this study also identified several obstacles in program implementation, including limited student time due to busy academic schedules, low participation by some members, and limited supporting resources. These obstacles require ongoing evaluation and strategic improvements to ensure the HMJ program runs more optimally and sustainably.

Overall, the implementation of the Islamic Religious Education Student Association (HMJ) program significantly supports the development of soft skills in students in the Islamic Religious Education Study Program. HMJ serves as a social learning space, providing students with opportunities to gain hands-on experience. Through involvement in organizational activities, students complement classroom learning, particularly in developing interpersonal skills and mental readiness. (Navisya, 2020) emphasizes that the formation of a student's character and personality does not occur quickly, but rather through a continuous process of habituation supported by real-life experiences. In this context, the HMJ PAI program makes a significant contribution to developing students who not only possess academic excellence but also possess proportionate social, leadership, and spiritual skills. Therefore, the implementation of the HMJ program can be understood as an integral part of the overall development of Islamic Religious Education students, thus producing graduates who are prepared to fulfill their roles as educators and agents of change in society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion outlined above, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Departmental Student Association (HMJ) program has made a significant contribution to the soft skills development of students in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Study Program. Various activities organized by HMJ encourage active student involvement in the organizational management process, from the planning stage to the evaluation of activities. Student participation in the HMJ program has contributed to the improvement of non-academic skills, including communication skills, collaboration, leadership, time management, and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, the instillation of Islamic values integrated into HMJ activities has strengthened students' religious attitudes, responsibility, and social ethics.

Although implementation has encountered several challenges, such as time constraints and low student participation rates, the HMJ program has generally demonstrated a positive role as a

non-formal learning tool. Therefore, the HMJ program can be viewed as a crucial part of the overall development process for PAI students, supporting the development of graduates who possess not only academic competence but also social, leadership, and spiritual readiness to face community life.

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