



## Teachers' Efforts in Overcoming Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic (CALISTUNG) Learning Difficulties in Grade I Students

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### ABSTRACT

*Learning difficulties are a certain condition characterized by obstacles, especially in learning activities to achieve goals. There are two factors that cause learning difficulties in students, namely internal factors and external factors. The purpose of this study is to describe the teacher's efforts in overcoming calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan. This research method uses descriptive qualitative. Data collection techniques are carried out by interviews, observation, and documentation. The interview used is semi-structured. Researchers carry out non-participant conservation data collection. Researchers obtained documents in the form of AISM books. Data analysis conducted by researchers is divided into four, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing / verification. The results of the research show that teachers overcoming calistung learning difficulties include: a) seek support and enthusiasm for intense learning; b) using the media book Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM); c) instructors (teachers) develop cooperation towards students. Supporting factors include: a) a comfortable learning environment; b) support from the school. While the inhibiting factors; a) lack of concentration of student learning; b) lack of support from parents. Solutions to overcome inhibiting factors include; the teacher gives assignments to students who experience learning difficulties; teachers try to help students who experience learning difficulties; teachers apply varied learning methods according to students' personalities. Therefore, teachers' efforts in overcoming learning difficulties are an important effort to foster student literacy through calistung activities.*

**Keywords:** Effort; Teacher; Difficulty learning; Student

### ABSTRAK

Kesulitan belajar ialah suatu keadaan tertentu yang ditandai dengan adanya hambatan-hambatan khususnya dalam kegiatan belajar untuk mencapai tujuan. Terdapat dua faktor yang menjadi penyebab kesulitan belajar pada peserta didik, yaitu faktor internal dan faktor eksternal. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan upaya guru dalam mengatasi kesulitan belajar calistung pada siswa kelas I MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan Kualitatif deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data yang dilakukan dengan wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Wawancara yang digunakan adalah semi struktur. Peneliti melaksanakan pengumpulan data oberservasi secara nonpartisipan. Peneliti mendapatkan dokumen berupa buku AISM. Analisis data yang dilakukan peneliti dibagi menjadi empat yaitu pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan/verifikasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru mengatasi kesulitan belajar calistung antara lain: a) mengupayakan dukungan serta semangat secara intens; b) menggunakan media buku Anak Islam Suka Membaca (AISM); c) tegana pengajar merangkai kerjasama terhadap siswa. Faktor pendukung diantaranya: a) lingkungan pembelajaran

yang nyaman; b) dukungan pihak sekolah. Sedangkan faktor penghambat; a) kurangnya konsentrasi belajar siswa; b) kurangnya suport dari wali murid. Solusi untuk mengatasi faktor penghambat antara lain; a) guru memberikan tugas kepada peserta didik yang mengalami kesulitan belajar; b) guru berupaya membantu peserta didik yang mengalami kesulitan belajar; c) guru menerapkan metode pembelajaran bervariasi sesuai dengan kepribadian siswa. Maka dari itu upaya guru dalam mengatasi kesulitan belajar merupakan upaya penting untuk membina literasi siswa melalui kegiatan calistung

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**Kata Kunci:** Upaya; Guru; Kesulitan Belajar; Siswa

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the weapons to eradicate ignorance, reduce poverty, as a means of prospering the lives of people from various walks of life, and building the dignity of the state and nation, it is very much considered by the government as an effort to improve the quality of education (Pristiwanti et al., 2022). Education is a fundamental human right and the most important precondition for everybody (Enginda, 2021). Teachers are like motors that move students in carrying out learning, teacher teaching ability is considered as a separate competence possessed by a teacher in an effort to achieve learning goals (Al-Aulia et al., 2018). But in actuality, students frequently require assistance in order to meet their learning objectives or exhibit the necessary behavioral changes (Kosilah et al., 2023). The success of achieving educational goals depends largely on the student's learning experience and how that learning process takes place (Arifin et al., 2023).

One of the most important parts of education is the educator, also known as the teacher. The educational process cannot take place smoothly without their presence. Teachers are individuals who provide knowledge and skills that benefit our lives (Baharun et al., 2021). As teachers, teachers play a very significant role in the field of education and are respected among the community. Teachers strive to realize the implementation of education in accordance with the principle of professionalism, so that every citizen has equal rights to quality education (Korompis et al., 2023). Teachers are also responsible for improving students' knowledge as well as helping them to grow and develop (Dita et al., 2020). Teachers achieve education through learning activities by teaching students. Students are children who are influenced by individuals and communities who carry out the learning process (Salmia, 2020). Educators must be able to respond intelligently and wisely, children who have learning difficulties show poor information processing skills (Anggriana, 2022).

MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan organizes reading, writing and numeracy activities (Calistung) to develop students' reading skills from low to high levels. This effort aims to encourage students to practice reading with the help of the book *Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM)* volumes 1 to 5. From these activities, teachers hope that students can be fluent in reading and writing in class. 3. In order to when completing the next learning can understand the content of the material delivered by the teacher in learning activities.

Education development is a form of investment in human resources that plays an important role in national development efforts globally. The management of school infrastructure is very important so that it is maintained and can be used properly by the school (Isnawardatul, 2020). Educational facilities include all tools that are used directly to support mobile or passive learning methods, so that the urgency of education can be realized concretely and on target. Furthermore, educational infrastructure includes various physical facilities that not only support the educational process indirectly, but are also directly used for teaching and learning activities (Sopian et al., 2019).

Learning difficulties are a certain condition characterized by obstacles, especially in learning activities to achieve goals (Tumatul et al., 2021). Learning difficulties often include problems caused by a lack of adequate learning (AL-Qadri et al., 2021). There are two factors that cause learning difficulties in students, namely internal factors and external factors. According to (Cahyono, 2019), Internal factors and external factors can cause learning difficulties in students. Internal factors include the physical condition of students and the psychological state of students, while external factors come from the environment around students, such as family, school, and community. Difficulties that are often encountered during learning in low grades are reading, writing, and arithmetic which can form things that complicate during learning and teaching activities in class. The learning difficulties faced by students will greatly affect their academic results, because to achieve good academic results students also need to put a lot of effort into learning (Permata et al., 2020). Thus, teachers need to have the ability to improve children's literacy and numeracy, especially in reading, writing, and numeracy (Latifah & Fitri, 2022). In the outside world calistung is a pro and con that is often debated, some people think that calistung can only be applied to children with a golden age with a brain that is able to develop rapidly, while there are those who argue that calistung is good to be applied to children as a place to play and socialize (Ma'ruf & Syamsudin, 2021).

Reading and writing skills at the elementary school level are very important in supporting students to master the delivery of the information they receive, while counting skills will support the development of children's logic and thinking skills (Nur et al., 2021). Reading skills involve several things such as recognizing words, understanding texts literally, interpreting, reading critically and reading imaginatively (Widyowati et al., 2020). Writing skills are able to train students to stimulate stored knowledge and experience again, help students to organize thoughts, and help students to absorb new information (Putra et al., 2021). The ability to count relates to the ability to recognize number and number symbols, as well as the ability to translate a number operation (Kibtiyah et al., 2023). Calistung is a basic skill to follow the learning process at school, the low ability of students to Calistung underlies the existence of this program (Diah et al., 2021). The needs of the times related to the willingness of competent and creative Human Resources must be developed in all sectors, including education (Tinggi et al., 2022). Children's abilities must be developed appropriately, in harmony, and balanced, through aesthetic activities children are able to gain knowledge that includes several developments, including language development, social emotional, physical, cognitive, motor, and artistic (Amini et al., 2023).

Calistung can be used as a means of developing children's multiple intelligences or commonly called multiple intelligences, Lack of creativity of elementary school students can trigger problems such as not developing children's intelligence in a better direction, or children will stag on one ability and find it difficult to make self-progress (Susandi et al., 2020). The teacher's method of giving lessons in class on average only uses lectures, teacher centers, and students are less given space to explore learning materials from sources other than textbooks (Fery, 2016), if teachers have not been able to create an innovative or fun classroom and learning atmosphere, at least they are able to present activities that can spur the emergence of multiple intelligence students.

The importance of developing multiple intelligences or multiple intelligence students considering that in the era of globalization like today humans are obliged to have competence,

the development of multiple intelligence can be done since children of low grade age considering that at that age children are vulnerable to rapid development both cognitive, attitude, and psychomotor (Komang et al., 2018). Biologically reviewed, intelligence is an individual's ability to adapt to the surrounding environment, while psychologically intelligence is a cognitive ability that is present from birth and is a genetic factor of both parents, but operationally intelligence is a combination of biological and psychological intelligence (Salsabilla & Zafi, 2020). Low-grade students have emotional levels and mood changes, the selection of learning models and media used in the learning process needs serious attention. Permendiknas number 41 of 2007 is a reference in the use of learning methods in schools. In the era of globalization like today, multiple intelligence really needs to be developed in elementary school students, where each individual is required to be rich in competence, supported by the age of elementary school children is a phase of rapid development of cognitive intelligence, attitudes, and psychomotor (Komang et al., 2018). Howard Gardner said that intelligence is a skill involving three components, namely the ability to solve problems, generate new problems, and create something new (Ardiana, 2022).

The age of children can be said to be the golden age in developing the potential of multiple intelligences that exist within themselves (Ebni et al., 2019). The golden age of children begins from birth to 6 years. At this time, the development of the child's brain is taking place very quickly (Fauziddin, 2016). Every individual has at least one type of ability and intelligence, so that no one is incapable in the concept of intelligence, learning based on multiple intelligences contains teaching and learning activities that lead students to have multiple intelligences that can encourage students to overcome problems or create new products that have a value (Susandi et al., 2020). Children's intellectual development is formed due to the interaction of children with the environment that leads to a learning process, but in this case teachers and parents also have a role in children's intellectual development, while children's creativity can be increased by implementing extracurricular activities in elementary school (Mairina, 2021).

Based on previous research conducted by Utami et al., (2020) shows that teachers pay more attention to students who have learning difficulties. Another study conducted by Paba et al., (2021) showed that the reading, writing, and numeracy skills of grade I students of SDI Bobawa are still relatively low. Another study by Chan et al., (2019) states that some students experience difficulties in the learning process, such as difficulties in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Research conducted by Diah et al., (2021) shows that there are students who have not been able to calistung due to lack of learning readiness and lack of simulation. Then another study relevant to this study Fitriyah (2020) states that most students are proficient in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but there are three students who still face difficulties in these. This research is different from other studies where this study focuses on teachers' efforts in overcoming student learning difficulties using Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM) book media.

Given the importance of the role of teachers in the world of education, based on the problems previously described, researchers are encouraged to study and explore intensely, how "Teachers' Efforts in Overcoming Calistung Learning Difficulties in Class I Students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan". This research is expected to provide insight into how teachers' efforts in overcoming calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI

Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan, factors that support and hinder teachers' efforts in overcoming calistung difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan, solutions to overcome factors that hinder teachers' efforts in overcoming calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan. With this research, it can be used as a reference to further explore further research in developing student literacy through calistung activities that may be integrated into other activity programs.

## **METHOD**

### **Type and Design**

In this study, researchers used descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research method that focuses on understanding natural phenomena obtained through verbal or oral expressions from individuals to be the subject of observation (Abdussamad, 2021). research method used is qualitative descriptive which aims to explain the meaning of data or phenomena that can be observed by researchers by presenting evidence. Descriptive qualitative research is a study method that aims to reveal facts with proper interpretation. This method is used to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study (Abdussamad, 2021).

### **Place and Time of Research**

The research was conducted at MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan which is located at Kranggan Kulon, Wirogunan, Kartasura District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java. The research was conducted in the odd semester of the 2023 academic year.

### **Data and Data Sources**

The data taken in this study is qualitative data. The sources used in this study are grouped into two: a) Primary Sources, namely data obtained from the behavior of the event itself, with in-depth interview methods and observations (Kaharuddin, 2021). The primary data in this study were teachers and students. b) Secondary sources are sources of information that are not obtained directly, for example in the form of documents or information obtained through other people (Zaputri, 2021). Data sources in this study are the main data sources consisting of written sources, observations, interviews, and documentation.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection techniques are techniques or ways that can be done by researchers to collect data (Minsih et al., 2019). In the process of collecting this research data, using various techniques such as interviews, observations, and documentation to collect the necessary data and information. Researchers used interview techniques, where they conducted detailed interviews about teachers' efforts to overcome learning difficulties. Then observation, researchers collect data through direct observation in the field by plunging into the research location. The research documentation includes the book *Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM)* owned by students.

### **Data Analysis**

In this study, the data analysis method was implemented by implementing the Huberman and Miles models (Sugiyono, 2019) which includes four steps: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. Data collection is collected for model analysis first, including observations, interview results and various documents classified according to the research problem. Furthermore, data reduction is carried out, at this stage a process of sorting and selecting the data needed later. If it is felt that there is data that does not support

the research, then the data will be deleted. Then after the data is classified at the data reduction stage, proceed with the presentation of the data. The presentation of data is carried out to make it easier for researchers to draw conclusions. Drawing conclusions is the final stage, where researchers draw conclusions based on data that has been reduced and presented in the previous stage.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan which is located at Kranggan Kulon, Wirogunan, Kartasura District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java. This study aims to describe teachers' efforts in overcoming calistung's learning difficulties, describe supporting and inhibiting factors, describe solutions to overcome inhibiting factors. From the results of the interviews that have been conducted get the following results:

### **Teachers' efforts in overcoming Calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan**

In MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan class IA, there are still students who have difficulty in learning calistung. Teacher effort is how teachers solve problems and how to teach their students in class to improve their students' abilities (Zuraida & Wahidah, 2019). Each student experiences a different level of difficulty when learning calistung. Students face many difficulties in different learning activities. In order to overcome the difficulties of grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan in learning calistung, teachers have made several efforts. This is based on the following interview results.

#### a. Seek support and enthusiasm for intense learning

The results of an interview with class teacher IA MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan found that when students experience difficulties in calistung, teachers convey encouragement in the form of advice and encouragement. For example, in the process of learning and teaching activities, teachers motivate students to actively participate and contribute fully in reading activities in front of the class and write some words or sentences contained in books. Observation of this action shows that there are students who do not have fluent reading skills, some only know letters but do not have the ability to write, and some are only able to write but are not able to understand the context or meaning of their writing. When doing counting activities, when given questions to add or subtract, some students may have difficulty in completing calculations easily. In accordance with the duties of teachers, they should be able to spark interest in learning and support students, thus fostering student motivation and enthusiasm for learning. As per opinion (Endriani, 2016) which states that providing encouragement and direction to children can increase their enthusiasm in learning and activities. The role of the teacher as a mobilizer is crucial in the learning interaction process (Kurniati et al., 2019).

#### b. Using the media book Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM)

The results of interviews about teachers using AISM book media to overcome student learning difficulties. From the interviews that have been carried out, it is known that there is a form of collaboration carried out using the media of the book Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM). For example, the teacher asks each student to come to the front one by one with an AISM book and read it, both during the first hour and during class hours. This action is carried

out with the intention of improving the basic skills of students. The documentation of the book Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM) is presented in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1.** AISM Book

The Islamic Children's Book Loves to Read (AISM) was chosen to be a learning medium in learning activities. The book consists of five volumes, and each volume has different challenges. AISM volume 1 discusses syllables with the vowel "a", while AISM volume 2 discusses syllables with vowels "I and U". AISM volume 3 discusses syllables with vowels "O and E", and AISM volume 4 discusses words that use dead letters such as "ban, bam, bat, bar" and also "ab, ad, af, ag, ah". While AISM volume 5 includes readings from the letters "nga, ngi, ngu, nge, ngo". AISM books are tailored to students' reading fluency levels. By using the AISM book media, students will find it more helpful in the learning process because this book has been compiled regularly, starting with easy reading and then getting more complex. With the help of this medium, the students can gain basic knowledge about literacy through basic reading skills more easily. With this AISM book, it is hoped that students who face these difficulties will get the support needed to improve their self-skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Findings from interviews show that some students are making progress, but there seem to be some students who have not shown significant progress due to a lack of habits to perfect the material that has been taught at home. As per opinion (Restu et al., 2022) Regarding the nature of literacy is the ability of students to understand texts that have an impact on their ability to think and process information obtained from reading.

c. Instructors (teachers) develop cooperation towards students

The results of the interview showed that the strategy used to overcome student learning difficulties was to provide tutoring during learning and teaching activities, with direction by the teacher and by repeating learning material so that students considered getting a good response to the learning process that occurred. Teachers act as educators to ensure that all students are able without difficulty to explore the learning material provided. This is the main

goal because teachers are fully obliged to support students to achieve good understanding. This is in accordance with opinion (Kiki & Zahwa, 2020), The importance of the teacher's role as a trainer in carrying out the task of educating students.

### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Teachers' Efforts in Overcoming Calistung Learning Difficulties**

The results of interviews that have been conducted with teachers regarding supporting factors for teacher efforts in overcoming calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan are as follows.

#### **a. Comfortable learning environment**

The results of interviews conducted with IA homeroom teachers at MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan showed that teachers can improve learning effectiveness by creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere as an element that helps in dealing with learning problems from students. Comfort in the classroom can increase student engagement in communicating with classmates. It is also able to increase student participation in various learning activities. In a supportive environment, students will be more encouraged in learning activities and play a full role in learning and teaching activities. This can grow their overall learning experience.

By creating an exciting learning environment, learning and teaching activities are able to support the comprehensive growth of student talents. The talent of students is able to reach its peak when they feel the freedom of anxiety and great burden during the learning process. Thus, it is necessary to show that the learning atmosphere in the classroom is always fun so that students feel encouraged and excited in the learning process. In this way, the learners are able to improve their skills better and efficiently. As per opinion (Rohayati et al., 2018), if the environment around students provides calm, comfort, cleanliness, and freshness, then students will be able to concentrate optimally.

#### **b. Support from the school**

With the availability of proportional facilities, teachers are able to present efficient learning and teaching activities and students are able to carry out learning more optimally. Good educational facilities are also able to support students in achieving a better level of material preparation and increase their learning motivation. Adequate learning facilities are needed to create a comfortable learning atmosphere, which will support the achievement of student learning. As a result, learning facilities become one of the important elements in achieving learning objectives.

The results of interviews conducted with teachers regarding the inhibiting factors of teacher efforts in overcoming calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan are as follows.

#### **a. Lack of concentration of student learning**

The results of interviews with class teacher IA MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan regarding the lack of concentration of student learning showed that some students tried to understand the subject matter and were active in learning activities. Even so, there are some other students who tend to be inactive and not interested in teaching and learning activities. Such actions can show that the learning method used is not in accordance with the learning style of individual students. Students' varying interests in the subject matter can also affect



how active they are in the teaching and learning process. Thus, teachers need to understand the needs and individual learning styles of each learner in order to align learning plans that are more efficient and enjoyable for all learners.

b. Lack of support from parents

The results of interviews with teachers, the lack of awareness of students about learning is caused by their unsupportive nature and actions. However, another factor that has an impact is also the lack of support from parents. Despite the efforts implemented by the school, the lack of direction and motivation from parents while at home has caused the situation to become chronic. As per opinion (Abdullah et al., 2021) states that parental support involves awareness of the responsibility to continually educate and nurture the child by providing assistance in meeting the child's basic needs. This includes paying attention, creating a feeling of security and comfort, and giving affection to children.

### **Solutions to Overcome Inhibiting Factors of Teachers' Efforts in Overcoming Calistung Learning Difficulties**

Solutions are carried out by teachers to overcome inhibiting factors in overcoming calistung difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan, including; Teachers assign tasks to students who have difficulty in reading, writing, and arithmetic using the book *Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM)* by making student AISM learning reports that can be taken home and repeated at home. The goal is for students to get used to learning to read diligently at home; Teachers continue to try to help students who have difficulty in reading, writing, and counting by repeating unknown letters regularly through the use of the book *Islamic Children's Loves to Read (AISM)*. Often teachers require learners to face the front of the class to read some letters or words given by the teacher; Teachers also apply learning methods that vary according to the personalities of their students. Teachers conduct fun study sessions by combining play and singing activities so that students feel excited in learning to read, write, and count. As per opinion (Ramli et al., 2013) Teachers can use a variety of activities and techniques such as discussions, storytelling, songs, role plays, visual demonstrations, and pattern searching.

### **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that teachers at MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan provide various efforts to overcome calistung learning difficulties in grade I students. In addition to providing support and enthusiasm for learning intensely, teachers also use the media of books *Islamic Children Love to Read (AISM)*, as well as teaching staff to arrange cooperation with students. Supporting and inhibiting factors for teachers' efforts in overcoming calistung learning difficulties in grade I students of MI Muhammadiyah PK Wirogunan, namely supporting factors include a comfortable learning environment, as well as support from the school. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors of this study were lack of concentration of student learning and lack of support from parents. The solution to the inhibiting factor is that the teacher gives tasks to students who have learning difficulties, the teacher continues to try to help students who have learning difficulties, and the teacher also applies learning methods that vary according to the personality of the students. With this research, it can be used as a reference to further explore further research in developing student literacy through calistung activities that may be integrated into other activity programs. Therefore, teachers' efforts in overcoming

learning difficulties are an important effort to foster student literacy through calistung activities.

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