

The Influence of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping Students' Religious Character

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Abstract

Schools play a very important role in the formation of student character to make children have the characters that are expected in society. Islamic religious education can build good practices in instilling good characters in students' daily lives. The purpose of this research is to find out the importance of Islamic education in shaping the character of students. This research uses the method of collecting and analyzing data in accordance with the literature review which utilizes as a basis such as sources of scientific journal writings, articles, and books related to Islamic Education. Islamic education is the basis for shaping the character of students in educational institutions. The development of Islamic education can develop a sustainable Islamic character in the school environment or society and also Islamic education has many benefits in daily life. Islamic religious education aims to prepare students to be able to believe, understand, live and practice the teachings of Islam. Thus, this education contributes to the formation of personal and social qualities of students, as well as encourages them to achieve achievements in the aspects of faith and religiosity.

Keywords: character, role, foundation, practice, formation

INTRODUCTION

Interaction with the environment, such as family, school, and friends, plays an important role in shaping students' character. The process of character formation begins in the family environment, which is the first education for the students' children. Education is an important means in forming students who have good morals, intelligence, skills, and creativity, so that they can become quality human resources (Puspitasari et al., 2022)

Character education is expected to change children into better individuals. However, character education is not just about being recorded or memorized; This is a process that is directly integrated into children's daily lives. The family, school, and community environment have an important role in this. Character education can be realized through habituation and example that is carried out consistently. Therefore, the success of character education is a shared responsibility between

parents, schools, and the surrounding environment. Through parents, children have the opportunity to imitate the good behavior they witness at home. In schools, teachers provide knowledge about good actions and how to do them. Meanwhile, in society, children can apply what they have learned from parents and teachers (Samuji, 2022).

Islamic Religious Education is expected to form religious students, namely individuals who continue to strive to perfect faith and piety, and have noble morals. These noble morals include ethics, ethics, and morals, which are the result of education itself. Therefore, it is hoped that these humans will become resilient in facing various challenges, obstacles, and changes that arise in social interaction, both at the local, national, regional, and global levels (Ainiyah, 2013)

Therefore, this research was made to provide additional references in the Islamic religious

education curriculum to better understand the influence of Islamic religious education on students' character as well as the role, strategy and process of forming students' character. It is hoped that we can find the right solution in forming a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also solid in morals and ethics. This is very important to create a society that is able to face the challenges of globalization without losing the identity and noble values of the nation (Muis et al., 2024)

METHOD

This research utilizes the *Library research method* to explore theoretical and conceptual understanding of the role of Islamic religious education in shaping Islamic character. Through a literature study, this research will explore various literature related to the concept of education, Islamic character, character formation strategies, character formation processes, and the challenges and roles of Islamic religious education. The purpose of this research is to produce an in-depth understanding as well as a strong conceptual analysis related to the role of Islamic religious education in the development of Islamic character.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The definition of education according to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI) is a process that changes the attitudes and behaviors of individuals or groups in order to mature humans. This is done through teaching and training efforts, which include educational processes, methods, and activities.

Education is actually an effort made with awareness and careful planning, to develop all human potential. This is so that individuals have spiritual strength, intelligence, and noble morals, so that they can grow into mature and complete individuals. All of this is an important provision in facing life in the midst of society and the nation.

In the Islamic perspective, faith is understood as a spiritual potential that needs to be actualized through righteous deeds. By realizing righteous deeds, one will achieve a spiritual achievement known as *taqwa*. These righteous deeds include the harmonious connection between the individual and himself, which constitutes personal piety; relationships between human beings that produce social piety; as well as good interaction with nature, which fosters piety towards the surrounding environment. The quality of this pious deeds will affect the degree of devotion of a person before Allah SWT. Therefore, this process plays an important role in shaping students who are religious and (Salisah et al., 2024).

Islamic religious education is a process that applies the values contained in the Qur'an. The main purpose of this education is to form noble morals and character for the students (*akhlaq al-karimah*). As explained by M. Athiyah al-Abrasyi, one of the main goals of Islamic religious education is the development of ethics and morals. Through this education, it is hoped that it can produce individuals who are moral, able to distinguish between good and bad,

stay away from despicable deeds, have a strong determination in achieving goals, and have a clean soul.(Adi et al., 2014)

Based on the explanation above, we can conclude that Islamic religious education aims to prepare students to believe, understand, live, and practice Islamic teachings. This is expected to form good personal and social qualities, so as to produce achievements in the aspects of faith and religion in students(Puspitasari et al., 2022)

Character, according to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI), refers to the character, psychological traits, morals, or ethics that characterize a person and distinguish him from others. Etymologically, the word "character" comes from the Greek, "karasso," which means blueprint, basic format, or visible fingerprint, as in fingerprints. There are also other opinions that consider it to be derived from the word "charassein," which means to make sharp or deep. In terms, character is understood as a better spiritual condition, which is built through individual awareness.

Character is a way of thinking and behaving that is characteristic of every individual in living life and interacting with others, both in the family environment, society, and in the context of the nation and state. This opinion is also emphasized by Simon Philips in Masnur's work, who states that character is a collection of values that form a system that underlies the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors shown by a person (Siswanto et al., 2021).

Religious character is a human nature

that always associates every aspect of his life with religious teachings. He makes religion a guide in his every speech, attitude, and action, and is obedient in carrying out God's commandments and distancing himself from all His prohibitions. A teacher has various important roles as an educator and motivator. The task is to provide direction so that students can carry out certain activities to achieve the desired goals. In addition, teachers also play the role of evaluators by assessing the activities that have been carried out, so that the extent of progress that has been achieved can be known. As designers and drivers, teachers function as mobilizers who encourage the education system in schools to become role models for their students. Therefore, it is important for a teacher to have a religious character, so that he can be an example that can be followed and respected by the students(Muslih, 2022).

Character education has a deeper meaning compared to moral education. This is due to the fact that character education is not only concerned with the concepts of right and wrong, but also focuses on trying to instill good habits in life. Thus, students are expected to develop awareness, high understanding, and commitment and concern to apply virtue values in daily life.(Samuji, 2022)

The Influence of Islamic Religious Education on Character Formation

Efforts to form Muslim personalities in students are carried out by Islamic Religious Education teachers through two learning

strategies, namely direct instruction and indirect instruction. Some of the factors that support teachers' steps in developing students' Muslim personalities include: 1) School policies, 2) Cooperation between educators, and 3) Family and community environment.

Meanwhile, there are also several factors that hinder, namely: 1) Lack of awareness of students about behavior that reflects Muslim personality, and 2) Family and community environment that is less supportive.

Overall, the implementation of teachers' strategies in Islamic Religious Education learning has had a positive impact on religious behavior, discipline, and mutual respect among students. However, special attention and improvement is still needed in the aspect of shaping their disciplinary behavior.

The value of religious character can be integrated into learning activities, both inside and outside the classroom. One way that can be done is to get students used to praying according to their respective beliefs before and after the learning process. In addition, some teachers also encourage students to recite short surahs before the lesson begins. Tolerance for differences in beliefs is very visible during religious activities. For example, on Fridays, Muslim students carry out activities of faith and piety, as well as collect infaq, while non-Muslim students can carry out their activities in the library in peace.

One of the efforts made by schools to improve the quality of education is to implement character education values. Among these values,

the value of religious character is the main highlight that reflects the characteristics of the institution. The application of religious values in character education is integrated in the learning process. In this process, character values are integrated into teaching materials and daily habits. The implementation of religious character is carried out directly through habituation activities. This activity aims to form a well-coordinated pattern of habits, starting from the time students arrive at school, before learning in the classroom, during the learning process, to when the learning activity ends. In addition, a series of special activities outside of learning also emphasized the application of these values (Anggraenie et al., 2022).

The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping the Character of Students

Islamic religious education has a very important role in shaping the character of students, especially in the digital era which presents various new challenges. In this education, the main focus is placed on instilling solid moral and ethical values, such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, discipline, and cooperation. These values are not just theories, but are expected to be internalized and applied in daily life by students (Salisah et al., 2024).

The process of forming children's character is a shared responsibility between teachers, parents, and the community. This responsibility can be carried out through formal institutions in schools and non-formal institutions in the family and community

environment. Many parents entrust their children's character education to schools, but often lack personal support at home. This is not appropriate, because character formation in school will not go perfectly without cooperation with parents (Nurbaiti et al., 2020). In the world of education, the family is seen as the first and most important environment in educating children. The family has a very important role in shaping character and supporting children's development to face life in the future. Therefore, collaboration between parents and schools is very necessary so that this process can take place properly.

Islamic religious education is an important foundation in character formation, because this education teaches faith, which is the basis for the development of good and religious morals. Thus, this can give birth to students who have moral *karimah*. If there is no Islamic religious education subject, students can feel several negative impacts, including:

Many students will miss out on the opportunity to get to know the Qur'an and hadith if there is no Islamic Religious Education subject. Without this lesson, they would not know the source of the law in the religion they followed.

In addition, many students are not familiar with the procedures for ablution and prayer. Without learning about these two things, they will have a hard time meeting either of the existing graduation requirements.

In fact, there are students who have a religion, but do not understand the basic concept of that religion. This shows how important religious knowledge is to them.

Furthermore, the lack of Islamic Religious Education materials can result in a decrease in students with good morals. Material on faith and morals is very necessary to form a good character.

Therefore, Islamic religious education is very important in the formation of students' character. With the right education, we can create the next generation who are not only intelligent, skilled, and creative, but also have noble morals (Puspitasari et al., 2022).

Islamic religious lessons are seen as a crucial first step in managing and developing students' character in the classroom. Therefore, the application of religious character development strategies through learning Islamic religious education is very relevant. In this context, creating an environment outside the classroom and fostering an atmosphere of productive and successful learning activities is considered an effective educational approach to achieve learning goals, as well as producing individuals with positive character and personality.

The main foundation in the formation of children's morals lies in providing a good understanding of *aqidah*. Therefore, religious education is an important foundation in studying various other sciences, making learning Islamic religion in schools very crucial. Islamic religious

education serves as a basis for forming children who have noble character, have strong religious beliefs, and are highly educated. Thus, the main principle in the development of children's character is believed to be the introduction of Islamic religious education in the school environment.

Religious education emphasizes the cultivation of moral values that start from children's religious awareness. In it there is the teaching of Islamic history as a life example, the teaching of fiqh as a legal guideline in worship, the teaching of the Qur'an and Hadith as a guide to life, the teaching of aqidah as the foundation of religion, and the teaching of morals that function as a guideline for human behavior in living life, both good and bad.

The following is an explanation of the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in the formation of Islamic character:

Moral and Ethical Foundations: Islamic Religious Education provides a solid moral foundation, teaching ethical principles such as honesty, justice, and trust. Thus, Islamic ethics become a guide for individuals to act with integrity in every aspect of their lives.

Understanding Islamic Teachings: In addition to conveying information about religion, Islamic Religious Education also helps students to understand the practical application of Islamic teachings in daily life. This deep understanding of religion provides a strong foundation in the formation of Islamic character.

Development of Spiritual Awareness: Islamic Religious Education encourages the development of spiritual awareness through the teaching of worship practices, meditation, and reflection. This spiritual awareness allows individuals to face life's challenges with calmness and maturity.

Formation of Noble Morals: One of the important roles of Islamic Religious Education is to form noble morals, which include humility, compassion, and concern for others. These good morals contribute to creating a positive environment that supports the growth of good character.

Introduction to the Value of Good and Evil: Islamic Religious Education helps learners understand the moral consequences of their actions. With an awareness of the values of good and evil, individuals can make wiser moral decisions.

Prevention Against Negative Behavior: Islamic religious education provides in-depth insight into the negative impact of behavior that is contrary to the teachings of Islam. With a positive approach, Islamic Religious Education helps students avoid behaviors that harm themselves and others. Thus, Islamic Religious Education has a very important role in the development of Islamic character, which can have a positive impact on individuals and society.

Strengthening Islamic Identity: Islamic religious education plays an important role in strengthening students' Islamic identity.

Through the teaching of Islamic history, cultural values, and worship practices, students can develop a strong identity. This strong Islamic identity not only builds confidence, but also provides emotional stability for them.

Development of Moral Independence: In addition to teaching moral rules, Islamic religious education empowers students to develop independence in making moral decisions. The ability to make the right decisions in a moral context is a reflection of mature and responsible character.

Parent and Community Engagement: Harmonious cooperation between schools, parents, and the community is essential to ensure consistency in the delivery of Islamic values. A supportive environment helps to shape the overall Islamic character, thus creating a positive educational climate.

Development of Social and Humanitarian Understanding: Islamic religious education also educates students to become sensitive to social and humanitarian needs. This awareness of social responsibility is the foundation for the development of characters who care and contribute to the welfare of the community.

Thus, the role of holistic and integrated Islamic religious education is essential in creating an educational environment that supports the formation of a sustainable Islamic character. As a result, not only individuals who adhere to religious teachings are produced, but

also a positive impact on society as a whole.(Yusri et al., 2023)

The Process of Forming the Character of Religious Students

The importance of religious values in character education Religion plays a very important role as a guide for human life. With a deep understanding of religion, one will have a solid foundation in taking action. Religious values provide guidelines regarding the rules of life and help in controlling oneself from behavior that is not in accordance with religious law. Therefore, strong religious values are a foothold for students to become individuals who are able to control themselves from negative things in the future.

Character education has a noble goal, which is to shape each individual into a human figure who has the main values as the basis for building good character, in accordance with the norms that apply in society. These values are sourced from religious teachings, local wisdom, and the philosophy of our nation. One of the most important values in human life is religious values. When a person is able to love His God, his life will be filled with goodness. Moreover, if love for God is also manifested through affection for His other creations, such as the entire universe and its contents. Thus, loving His creation means also loving fellow humans, animals, plants, and the surrounding environment. Individuals who have this kind of character will always strive to behave with love and kindness.

The formation of students' religious character is carried out at school through religious activities that are carried out routinely every day. The method used is habituation, which is an educational approach that takes place gradually. With this habit, good qualities can be instilled as part of the routine, so that students can do it easily and lightly, without spending a lot of energy or having difficulties in their implementation. The cultivation of religious character is considered a crucial and strategic element in achieving national education goals. This religious character guides individuals to love Allah SWT, as well as strengthen their faith and piety. By instilling religious character, a person will be directed towards a better life, because feelings of love, faith, and piety to Allah SWT will guide them in carrying out the teachings of Islam as well as possible (Basri et al., 2023).

Strategies for Religious Character Formation in Madrasah

Character education (morals) in Islam emphasizes the importance of instilling good attitudes and behaviors in every individual. This aims to enable the individual to be able to contribute positively to himself and the community around him. In the Islamic perspective, the relationship between the individual and society is reciprocal, where the two are bound by ethical values and norms. Aminah Ahmad Hasan calls this relationship '*il_qah rūhiyyah khuluqiyah*', which describes interactions based on the applicable code of

ethics. Therefore, to form a child's character, it can be done through various approaches. In addition to what has been explained earlier, the formation of children's character can also be realized through attitudes that reflect these values:

Discipline Cultivation, Amiroeddin Sjarif explained that discipline is basically a form of sincere obedience, which is based on awareness to carry out duties and responsibilities, and behave in accordance with norms or codes of conduct that should be applied in a certain environment. Meanwhile, Satria Hadi Lubis in his book "It's Time to Improve Yourself" stated that discipline means carrying out everything according to the existing rules. This rule can be in the form of provisions made by humans or God's provisions which are reflected in the laws of nature (*kauniyah verses*) and the laws of truth (*qouliyah verses*). All of these rules have a significant role in shaping individual character and morals.

Examples, In the Qur'an, the word "exemplary" is expressed by the term "*uswah*," which is then followed by the adjective "*hasanah*," which means good. Thus, there is an expression "*uswah hasanah*" which is interpreted as a good example. Exemplary behavior emphasizes more aspects of behavior through real actions, rather than just talking without any action, especially if the atmosphere supports children to imitate what a teacher does. Therefore, in the process of education, Allah chooses an example or example as the best

model, so that it is easy for humans to understand and apply.

Creating a conducive atmosphere is very important because this will create a climate that supports character building. Therefore, the various efforts related to character formation need to be organized in such a way, especially for the individuals involved in it.

Habituation, The habituation process greatly affects the growth and development of children, which is mostly influenced by the surrounding environment. An environment that is able to teach positive habits will shape children to get used to doing good. On the other hand, if a child grows up in an environment that teaches crime and violence, it is possible that he will grow up to be a violent perpetrator. Therefore, habituation in children needs to be done continuously. This means that children must be trained with patience and perseverance, and strive to eliminate any bad habits that may exist.

Implementation of Religious Character Formation in schools.

Tadarus Al-Qur'an, Etymologically, tadarus means learning. However, in a more specific context, this term refers to the activity of reading the Qur'an with the intention of worshipping Allah and delving into the teachings contained in it. Tadarus can also be interpreted as an effort to read, learn, and actualize the values contained in the Qur'an. This activity is a very noble worship before Allah SWT. In conclusion, tadarus is an activity of

reading and studying the Qur'an that is done solely as a form of worship to Allah. In this article, the author will focus more on the activity of reading the Qur'an.

Congregational Dzuhur Prayer, Congregational prayer is a valuable moment to get to know each other and establish relationships between fellow Muslims. In the implementation of the five-hour prayer, as well as when entering and exiting the mosque, the worshippers have the opportunity to interact. This is a great time for them to exchange news and get to know each other's situations, which can encourage visits to the sick, help those in need, and show concern for those affected by disasters. All of this can strengthen relationships and increase a sense of brotherhood among Muslims. When two people perform prayers together, where one of them follows the imam, then both are included in congregational prayers. In the implementation of congregational prayers, at least an imam and a makmum are needed.

Dhuha prayer is part of religious behavior that reflects a person's attitude and behavior in accordance with Islamic law. This behavior is important in social interaction with fellow humans in society. Religion becomes the main foothold in every decision made, making it more than just a relationship between an individual and God. Religion also plays a role in building social awareness and relationships between members of society. This religious behavior can be demonstrated through actions that carry out religious teachings, both in relation to God and

fellow creatures. In the context of social relations, a person's religious behavior can be clearly seen, especially in daily life in society. Thus, this religious behavior also reflects the Islamic morals that are expected to be possessed by every individual.

The impact of the formation of students' religious character in Madrasah can be explained as follows:

Tawakal, One of the impacts of the formation of students' religious character can be seen in their daily behavior, namely a sense of tawakal to Allah SWT. Through interviews with teachers and students, it was revealed that after participating in religious activities, especially congregational dzuhur prayers, students feel more tawakkal and leave all affairs to Allah SWT after trying their best. This happens because they believe that carrying out the zuhur prayer in congregation will make all their affairs easier.

Thankfully, the formation of religious character also brings another positive impact, namely students who are able to be grateful to Allah SWT.

Politeness, The next impact is the formation of polite attitudes in students. From the results of interviews with madrasah heads, staff, teachers, and students, it can be concluded that after carrying out religious activities, especially congregational prayers, students feel more able to show polite attitudes to teachers, parents, and peers.

In addition, the formation of religious character also encourages students to display a patient attitude. The analysis shows that through the religious programs implemented, students can apply a patient attitude in daily life.

Al-Ukhuwah, The last impact that can be observed is the establishment of ukhuwah (brotherhood) among students, which is a reflection of the religious values that have been instilled in them (Abdul Razak et al., 2019)

The Challenges of Islamic Religious Education in Forming a Religious Character

Islamic religious education faces various challenges that should be addressed wisely, by combining the values of existing religious and cultural teachings. One of the challenges faced by Islamic educational institutions, as well as Islamic religious education itself, is the flow of globalization and industry (Kholis, 2022). The challenges of Islamic religious education in shaping religious character in the modern era can be seen from various aspects. One of the main challenges is the lack of emphasis on education that focuses on morals, morality, and practical experience to shape Islamic character in everyday life. Islamic religious education teachers also face difficulties in fostering students' character, especially due to environmental and family influences. In addition, Islamic education must also be able to adapt to the changing times and challenges that arise, so a design that is in accordance with these dynamics is needed.

Some students tend to only follow the rules and carry out tasks when they are under the supervision of the teacher. This reflects their lack of awareness of behavior that should reflect Muslim personality values. Once they leave the classroom and feel confident that no one is watching, they often show freedom to act according to their own desires.

With diverse backgrounds, students have different personalities, so a varied approach is needed in the development of Muslim character. While such efforts can help students in forming characters that are in accordance with Islamic teachings, the family environment can also play a role in influencing their development, and not all students come from households that uphold education, traditions, or religious values.

Islamic religious education must be able to offer solutions to various problems faced, while still considering the needs of society and changing times. To achieve this goal, there needs to be a strengthening of the role of instructors in accompanying students in the development of their moral character and increasing the effectiveness of Islamic religious education. The education should emphasize the moral, ethical, and experiential aspects of learning. In addition, the revision of the Islamic religious education curriculum is very necessary in order to produce more quality human resources and remain able to compete in the global context. Thus, Islamic religious education will have a significant role in shaping a society that has a strong moral

responsibility and Islamic character(Yusri et al., 2023)(Yusri et al., 2023).

With the various challenges and opportunities that exist, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) needs to continue to be developed and adapted to the needs of the times, without ignoring the essence and basic values taught. With the right approach, PAI can form individuals who are not only firm in faith and noble character, but also able to face global challenges with wisdom and resilience(Muis et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Islamic religious education holds a very crucial influence in the formation of Islamic character. More than just conveying knowledge about religion, this education also functions as a pillar that shapes the morals, morality, and character of students. The process of developing Islamic character includes the cultivation of religious values, the internalization of Islamic teachings, and the development of spiritual intelligence. Islamic religious education is considered an educational system that allows individuals to direct their lives in accordance with Islamic ideals. The goal is to create a human being who is whole, faithful, devout to God, and able to actualize himself as the caliph of Allah on earth.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning in schools has a very important role in efforts to shape students' character. The process

of forming children's character will be more optimal if it is based on religious awareness, not solely by behavior that only follows existing traditions in society. Indicators of the success of character education can be seen from three aspects: first, a person who has recognized something good (knowing the good) in terms of cognition; second, loving the good in the affective dimension; and third, acting the good in the form of actions that are psychomotor. A person's character is formed through habits that are carried out repeatedly over a long period of time, as well as the exemplary influence of the surrounding environment. One way to form this habit is to involve children's religious behaviors, which are supported by the school, community, and family environment.

Schools have an important role in maximizing the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Some of the efforts that can be made include: 1) ensuring that there are professional teachers, who have deep knowledge, good character, and are able to be role models for students, 2) conducting learning not only in the classroom, but also holding religious extracurricular activities that are carried out seriously as part of the learning process, 3) requiring students to carry out certain worship at school under the guidance of teachers (such as carrying out Zuhur prayers congregations regularly), 4) provide a proper place of worship for religious activities, 5) familiarize good moral behavior in the school environment carried out by the entire school

community (for example, through the greetings, greetings, and smile programs), 6) require all teachers to integrate religious education in every subject taught, as a form of comprehensive character education. If all these efforts can be implemented, then the goal of national education to create a generation that believes and fears God Almighty, has noble character, is healthy, knowledgeable, skilled, creative, independent, and becomes democratic and responsible citizens, can definitely be achieved.

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