

Strengthening Character Education Through Islamic Religious Education

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Abstrak	
<p>Human beings are noble creatures, even more noble than angels. Character education is crucial to be instilled from an early age in order to develop a character that aligns with religious teachings. This research aims to analyze and explore the role of character education in the context of Islamic religious education. The main focus is to understand how character education can strengthen Islamic values within an individual. Therefore, based on research using a qualitative method with a literature review approach, the results indicate that character education plays a significantly important role in reinforcing Islamic religious education.</p>	<p>Kata kunci: Character; Education; Religion.</p>

Abstrak	
<p>Manusia merupakan makhluk yang mulia, bahkan lebih mulia daripada malaikat. Pendidikan karakter sangat penting ditanamkan sejak awal supaya mendapatkan karakter yang sesuai dengan syariat agama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis serta mengeksplorasi peran pendidikan karakter dalam konteks pendidikan agama Islam. Fokus utamanya adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana pendidikan karakter dapat memperkuat nilai-nilai Islam dalam diri seseorang. Maka dari itu, berdasarkan penelitian dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan ini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan karakter memiliki peran yang sangat signifikan dalam memperkuat pendidikan Agama Islam.</p>	<p>Kata Kunci: Karakter; Pendidikan; Agama</p>

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1. Introduction

Character education is something that is very important to maximize its application for the personal formation of every human being to be more civilized, moral, and have attitudes that are in accordance with Islamic law. Moreover, learning related to Islamic religious education must be based on the Al-Quran and Hadith in ethics. This is important because character education plays a key role in the formation of an individual's personality. Meanwhile, Islamic religious education has moral and ethical values that are important in the daily lives of Muslims (Verona, 2023).

This research focuses on the real conditions faced in the implementation of Islamic religious education. For example, problems such as how to integrate character values in the religious curriculum, the challenges faced in teaching and instilling these values in each individual. In this way, this research will provide a deeper understanding and more effective solutions regarding the role of character education in Islamic religious education.

Literally, character education involves the transformation or formation of a person's traits, behavior and personality according to established standards (Solihin et al., 2023; Zubaedi, 2011). However, in essence, character education is an effort to support children's spiritual and emotional growth from their nature towards a more advanced human civilization. Apart from that, character education teaches and encourages the practice of good habits in life so that students can understand, explain, and have a sense of caring, empathy, and commitment to implementing these habits wisely every day (Albi & Setiawan, 2023; Ainiyah, 2013). Thus, character education is able to make every individual have noble, moral character, and is able to instill good character in life.

In an effort to achieve national education goals, the Indonesian Government has initiated the "Cultural and National Character Education" movement since 2010. The aim of this movement is to build children's emotional intelligence through systematic and sustainable implementation. One of the aspects emphasized in character education is honesty, with the hope of producing the next generation who have good values to overcome inequality in society. Education is considered a conscious effort to shape students' attitudes in accordance with applicable norms, so that schools can function as institutions that prepare children academically and morally in society. The importance of education is also reflected in its role in improving the quality of human life through instilling moral values such as morals, which cannot be separated from the family, school and community environment.

The younger generation has now lost their moral standards due to the negative influence of globalization. Values such as honesty, respect, politeness and other noble qualities seem to be foreign to them. Among students, various detrimental actions occur such as bullying, promiscuous sexual behavior, brawls that result in fatalities, bullying, truancy, promiscuity and narcotics abuse.

Islamic religious education plays a crucial role in increasing students' understanding of Islamic teachings (Assilmi & Setiawan, 2022). This is especially important in forming students' religious character or morals because the subject matter contains high values, morals and ethics. Islamic religious education in schools is very important for students to gain a better understanding of Islamic

principles. Apart from that, this education also aims to develop faith, understanding, appreciation and application of Islamic principles.

Character formation can be done through Islamic religious education both in formal and non-formal educational environments. Character education is a learning process that is integrated into all student activities, both at school and in society, through habituation, example and continuous practice, not just material that is temporarily memorized and cannot be evaluated thoroughly.

2. Method

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a library research approach (library study). Research with this type of approach utilizes literature studies such as books, journals and other written documents. (Sugiyono, 2008) calls library research because the data or materials needed to complete the research come from libraries in the form of books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals, documents, magazines, and so on.

3. Results and Discussion

The results and discussion of the research are based on the research objectives previously explained, namely "Strengthening Character Education through Islamic Religious Education". Here's the description:

Character Education Concept

Character education in Islam is considered a very important part in forming a Muslim's personality. For centuries, this issue has been a major concern in Islam, and has even been known since 15 centuries ago. Islamic teachings set character education as the main goal that must be adhered to. In a hadith narrated by Imam Malik, Rasulullah SAW stated that his mission was to improve human morals.

The concept of character education has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which is proven by his main task as perfecting the morals of his people, according to Allah's commands (Ibrahim, 2018). The substance of the meaning of character in Islam is in line with the concept of morals, both of which discuss human actions and behavior. Al-Ghazali explained that morals are attitudes that are embedded in the soul, resulting in actions without the need for long thought (Ainiyah, 2013). Suwito said that morals are also known as the science of behavior or temperament, because through this science we understand the virtues of the soul and how to cleanse a dirty soul. Character is typical values that are reflected in behavior, describing goodness, positive actions, and positive impacts on the environment, which are formed through the mind, heart, physical activity, as well as individual or group feelings and thoughts (Anwar, 2021).

Character Education Method

Character education should start from basic human principles called nature. Every individual is born with their own nature, including reason, passion (body), heart and spirit. Islamic religious education aims to improve the progress of society, both as individuals and as members of society, so that Islam considers education to be a crucial element in humanizing humans (Purwanto et al., 2023). Children are born with innate purity or potential that can be developed, and if they

are raised in an environment rich in Islamic guidance, they will internalize the Islamic way of life and norms, and vice versa. To create a society that adheres to humanitarian norms both individually and socially, effective Islamic education is needed so that students are able to implement Islamic teachings in accordance with its principles (Qomarudin, 2019). Therefore, to produce individuals and generations who have character or morals that are in line with norms that can elevate a society to a high level of civilization, character education must be instilled from an early age. Character formation cannot occur instantly, but requires a continuous process that is supported by the environment in which children are raised, especially the family environment which has a large role in forming Islamic personality values (Salsabila et al., 2020).

There are several methods in character building education that can be used to achieve this goal, including:

- 1) Exemplary Method: Using positive examples through words and actions to guide students, an approach that was successfully used by the Prophet Muhammad in his preaching.
- 2) Habituation Method: Instilling good habits in behavior, skills, abilities and thought patterns on an ongoing basis. Embedded habits make implementation easier.
- 3) Method of Giving Advice: Providing explanations about the truth and benefits with the aim of avoiding danger and leading to happiness and benefits. Stories from the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet Muhammad are often used to illustrate the values taught.
- 4) Motivation and Intimidation Method: Using motivation through hopes of happiness and love, as well as tarhib as a warning for wrong behavior. The use of convincing language is very important in this method.
- 5) Persuasion Method: Make students confident about the teachings by using logic and reason, encouraging them to use reason to differentiate between right and wrong.
- 6) Story Method: Using stories from the past to teach moral values to students. These stories are able to raise awareness, provide inspiration, and teach desired values (Fatah, 2009).

Each method has advantages and different approaches in forming good character and personality in students. In the context of Islamic education, the application of these methods can improve understanding and practice of Islamic teachings in a comprehensive and planned manner.

Strengthening Character Education Through Islamic Religious Education

Based on relevant data, the influence of Islamic religious education in shaping religious character in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era is a very complex thing in everyday life. In this context, the importance of the teacher's role in interacting directly with students during the teaching and learning process becomes clearer. Some of the character education strategies implemented include: 1) Exemplary; 2) Learning; 3) Empowerment and acculturation; 4) Strengthening; and 5) Assessment. The integration of character education into religious education is crucial (Ainiyah, 2013).

Education in Islam emphasizes the importance of morals or character as the main focus. This can be seen from the prophet's hadith which emphasizes the importance of teaching kindness and educating children. The concept of Islamic education recognizes that humans have the outward potential to do good, do harm, and have spiritual aspects. Islamic education includes knowledge, morals and beliefs, and pays attention to all individual potential through a holistic approach (Setiawan, 2021). Moral principles such as hikmah, syajaah, iffah, and 'adl underline the importance of controlling good desires. Islam emphasizes the importance of education in forming morals in children, as a foundation for success for other potentials. The formation of children's character is the main goal of education in Islam, with an emphasis on getting closer to Allah as a measure of human perfection. This illustrates the importance of character education in creating a dignified and respected society.

4. Conclusion

The importance of character education in Islam to shape the personality of a Muslim is highly emphasized, as stated by the Prophet Muhammad. This concept has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW as a main part of Islamic teachings. Character education does not only focus on actions and behavior, but also involves aspects of spiritual values and human nature. Character education methods in Islam include example, habituation, advice, motivation, persuasion, and moral stories. The role of character education is very important in forming religious character in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, where the role of teachers becomes very vital in the learning process. The integration of character education in Islamic religious education is very important to form a generation that has noble and religious morals, in accordance with holistic Islamic principles.

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