

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION: THE ISLAMIC APPROACH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Abstract: Early Childhood Education (PAUD) provides a thorough understanding of Islamic religious education, which aims to instill in everyone the virtues of honesty, high morality, and responsibility, in addition to teaching general information. PAUD provides a strong foundation for this education's future. The goal of this study is to show the importance of Islamic education from an early age, since this is a crucial period for a child's development. At this age, children will be more equipped to understand and apply Islamic teachings, such as following the sunnah, adhering to the principles of the Qur'an, praying, learning how to pray, and getting acquainted with religious music. It is anticipated that early exposure to Islamic education will produce individuals with strong morals and religion.knowledge from an early age. The knowledge gained will continue to be used in daily life and serve as a roadmap for the future. The purpose of this conference is to investigate practical approaches to incorporating Islamic teachings into early childhood education while fostering an atmosphere that fosters the intellectual and spiritual growth of the students. By taking an Islamic approach to early childhood education, we are sowing the seeds of a generation that will be not only more intelligent but also deeply religious and morally upright. They hold the key to the country's future, and it is our duty to give them the greatest foundation possible.

Keywords: Islamic religious education, noble morals, child development, golden period, integrity, individual character

Introduction

Early childhood education has a significant impact on a child's moral, intellectual, and emotional development (PAUD). This is the ideal time to teach children morality, values, and basic knowledge because their thinking is still quite open and their brain development is proceeding very swiftly. Islam as a whole provides a unique framework for developing young brains in accordance with divine and universal principles.

The holistic development of a child—including social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual components—is highly valued in Islamic education. When Allah SWT says, "And He taught you what you did not know" (QS. Al-Baqarah: 2:239), it emphasizes the need of fostering knowledge from an early age. Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad SAW exemplified a prophetic educational paradigm that prioritizes understanding, empathy, and gradual teaching methods—all of which align with modern educational methodologies.

It is a long-term investment to provide suitable education now in order to produce a better generation with good morals. Furthermore, Islam views children as a responsibility that must be nurtured, safeguarded, and directed in conformity with the precepts of the Qur'an and Sunnah. "O believers!" proclaims Allah SWT. Protect yourself and your loved ones from the hellfire. (QS: 6; At-Tahrim). This essay illustrates that the main responsibility of parents is to assist their children in becoming pious, obedient people. Islam maintains that education

should start at home and that parents should serve as the main teachers. Children have been taught about Allah from ancient times through simple activities including reading prayers, hearing short quotes from the Qur'an, learning how to pray, and understanding Islamic manners in day-to-day interactions. However, the issues of our time are becoming increasingly complex. Apart from being raised in a multicultural environment, kids are also exposed to information and technology that might not always be consistent with Islamic values. Islamic teachings must therefore be strategically and pertinently incorporated into the early childhood education system.

This means developing creative teaching methods, such as incorporating Islamic stories, educational games, religious music, and kid-friendly practical exercises. This comprehensive approach turns Islamic education from a learning process into a life experience that continues into maturity. This essay's goal is to investigate the importance of Islamic teachings in providing a solid basis for early childhood education. Through this in-depth discussion, we aim to determine the best means of producing a generation that is outstanding not only in knowledge but also in religion and morals. We are producing a generation that has the potential to greatly benefit Muslims and the international community by providing them with a strong foundation at an early age.

Literature Review

Al-Ghazali contends that children ought to be educated since they are unique human beings with potential and intrinsic tendencies toward both right and bad. Therefore, a good education is one that instills the qualities of honesty, patience, sincerity, and compassion in children, allowing them to reach their innate potential. This will help children learn to avoid evil and to follow the path of righteousness (Janna, 2013). Introducing many life concepts to young children is a great way to get them ready for adulthood.

It takes a very long time for a human to mature from birth until he can live alone, in contrast to other living things (Bronowski: 1973). Schooling at this age is crucial for creating a solid foundation for a child's future moral and personality development because 80% of a child's brain development occurs before the age of eight.

During this period, when connections between neurons are rapidly formed, a child's intellectual growth depends on suitable psychosocial stimulation (Suryana et al., 2022). Children's intelligence develops to 50% between the ages of 0 and 4, 80% between the ages of 4 and 8, and 100% between the years of 8 and 18, per neurology research by Osbon, White, and Bloom (2004). Children, on the other hand, grow physically by 25% at age 0, 90% at age 6, and 100% at age 12. The early years of a child's life are therefore very important for the development of their later years. Islamic religious education is an important topic that must be covered in connection with early childhood education.

Religious value education is linked to a child's engagement with the application of religious teachings in everyday life as well as the implementation of the lessons taught in Islamic religious education. Early Islamic value teaching is crucial since it can lay the groundwork for children's future development, claim Latuconsuna et al. (2020). Teachers must also give children appropriate and efficient supervision and direction so that they can understand the religious tenets of early life. Hakim claims that faith, worship, and morals are among the religious values of Islam. It is anticipated that early religious activities will benefit youngsters by helping them grow up to be pious worshippers and conduct in accordance with their religion's principles. Children who receive incorrect training on a regular basis will not be very concerned about religious life in their daily lives as adults (Fitriyah, 2019; Saputra,

2014). Since PAUD teachers are among the individuals who have the closest influence on children's life, kids will readily copy any attitudes they observe in them. Youngsters are still unable to distinguish between acts that can and cannot be imitated. As a result, any act that the youngster witnesses is regarded as one that can be emulated. To ensure that the attitudes and behaviors that children imitate are ones that are expected to be ingrained in them, educators must be aware of how to act and behave in front of youngsters. Islamic value education in early infancy is something very vital, as it can serve as a basis for children's future growth, according to (Latuconsuna et al., 2020).

Research Methodology

This study uses the literature review method, a technique that aims to collect, analyze, and synthesize a range of relevant material, in order to completely understand the significance of the Islamic perspective in early childhood education. Among the literary sources reviewed include the Qur'an, hadith, traditional Islamic literature, academic journals, and past research on Islamic education and early childhood development. The literature was gathered from scholarly sources such as Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and ProQuest, and it was then selected based on its relevance, dependability, and alignment with the study question. The study found key topics, such as Islamic value-based learning approaches, the importance of the golden period in character formation, and the implementation of Islamic principles. The results of the analysis were used to produce a conceptual framework that blends Islamic philosophy with modern teaching techniques.

Discussion

In the Islamic tradition, early childhood education provides a strong foundation for developing a generation of morally pure, pious, and character-driven people. Often called the "golden period," early childhood education is a critical stage in a child's development when their brains are developing quickly and their learning abilities are at their peak. Youngsters at this age have extraordinary abilities and rapidly acquire values and behaviors that will influence them later in life. Islam holds that in addition to imparting knowledge, early childhood education should instill strong moral, social, and spiritual values. The foundation of the Islamic approach to early childhood education is the importance of developing faith in Allah SWT at a young age. This method could begin by introducing children to the concept of monotheism through simple activities such as teaching daily prayers, having them memorize short portions from the Qur'an, and discussing the importance of devotion like prayer. Furthermore, youngsters learn to adore the Prophet Muhammad SAW through his excellent stories, which stimulate their curiosity and help them understand the value of virtues like compassion, patience, and honesty. After that, they will try to live their lives in accordance with these principles. Regarding what needs to be done, moral education for kids can help shape their character and habits that will affect their lives in the future or in the present. Some of the tenets of early childhood moral education can be used with the following educational models:

1. Fostering Constructive Behavior

Since behavior is not always simple or quick, especially for children who periodically want to rebel, we must instill it gradually. To help young children move from bad behavior to good behavior, we as educators or as a child's role model must be able to provide a positive example. Due to the fact that children's behavior is more malleable and easier to develop than that of adolescents. If we first establish the habit of saying "thank you" when the child helps

us, asking for help when we need it, and apologizing to the child when we make a mistake, he will imitate what I do. 2.

2. Instilling good values in children

It is easier to inculcate positive values in children because they are still innocent and do not have many complex ideas. Their minds are still light, so they just consider what they observe. Presenting a tale method is all that is required to instill excellent values. This strategy is an educational aspect that sharpens the intellect and is very influential in deciding the values of Islamic faith and morals. It goes without saying that the stories that will be recounted need to be planned in advance. The stories should be shared if they have a beneficial effect; otherwise, they shouldn't be. The stories of the 25 prophets and apostles, as well as other Islamic tales, should be taught to parents as they educate their children. can have a good influence on their children. For example, if parents want their children to have a patient nature in their children, they can tell the story of the prophet Job AS. How he was patient in facing the calamity of his children's deaths and steadfast in facing the illness he suffered for years. If stories like this are told to students, especially children, they will have an impact Foundations of Moral Education.

3. Esrablishing the foundations of faith in islam

laying the groundwork for trust Faith, or belief, is a fundamental idea in Islam that we must cherish. It is our duty as child educators to inculcate the foundations of faith. As mentioned in (QS. Luqman, 31:13;), Luqman first gave advice about faith, just like he did when he counseled his son. Meaning: Remember Luqman's advice to his son, "O my son, do not associate partners with Allah, indeed, associating partners with Allah is indeed a great injustice." In his book, Umar Hasyim responded to Allah's aforementioned statements by saying: "Therefore, teach children to believe in only one God from an early age. Learn to use it effectively. Adapt it to their age by beginning with brief poem readings and prayer, followed by a little comprehension and use. Therefore, it is impossible to separate worship from comprehending the reason for praising Allah. It will eventually lead to monotheism, of course. Therefore, their identity and way of life are based on the doctrine of monotheism. Their approach to life in the hereafter is determined by their tawheed.

But it's also crucial to create a social environment that supports children's early Islamic education. To ensure that children are reared in an environment that fosters their intellectual and spiritual development, families, schools, and the community must collaborate. This quest can be aided by deliberate actions such as Islamic parenting, Islamic community building, and Islamic-based early childhood teacher training.

When paired with a holistic Islamic viewpoint, early childhood education can contribute to the development of a generation that is not only more educated but also more moral, socially conscious, and pious. It is expected that youngsters who receive a strong Islamic education will be prepared to deal with modern difficulties using the values that govern their lives. The way we educate the next generation will have a significant impact on the country's future, thus it is our duty to give them the best education possible, both materially and spiritually.

However, creating a social environment that supports Islamic education in the early years is also important. To ensure that children are reared in an environment that fosters their intellectual and spiritual development, families, schools, and communities must collaborate. This quest can be aided by deliberate actions such as Islamic parenting, Islamic community building, and Islamic-based early childhood teacher training. When paired with a holistic Islamic viewpoint, early childhood education can contribute to the development of a

generation that is not only more educated but also more moral, socially conscious, and pious Children who grow up with a solid Islamic foundation should be able to handle life's obstacles with the principles that serve as their compass. The younger generation's education will have a significant impact on the country's future, thus it is our duty to give them the best education possible, both here on Earth and in the hereafter.

Conclusion

The foundation for producing a generation of morally pure, pious, and well-rounded people is early moral instruction. The early years are a wonderful opportunity to instill Islamic values that will form the basis for children in future generations, as they are the most favorable for development. Through play, storytelling, daily routines, and other developmentally appropriate activities, values such as honesty, accountability, self-control, and empathy can be continuously taught using a holistic approach.

Early Islamic education helps children develop a harmonious personality in their social relationships as well as a link with Allah SWT. Early exposure to Islamic values tends to give children a strong spiritual foundation, enabling them to tackle life's obstacles with sound moral ideals. Furthermore, this strategy promotes the development of admirable ideals that benefit society in addition to becoming personal necessities.

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The success of this moral education depends on a number of sources of support. Parents have a vital role in creating an Islamic home environment and providing a good example since they are the main educators. Instructors at PAUD institutions must also be able to integrate Islamic beliefs into the curriculum and learning activities through creative, captivating methods. Society and the social environment, particularly the Islamic community, also influence an ecosystem that promotes the moral growth of children. However, particular attention is needed to address the issues of the globalization and technological advancement period. The production of pertinent Islamic media, digital literacy for parents and educators, and oversight of digital content children access are all calculated measures to prevent externally imposed values from being undermined. When early childhood education is carried out with a thorough Islamic approach, it can produce a superior generation that is not only intellectually bright but also passionately religious and ethically upright. It is expected that this generation's future leaders will be fair, responsible, and helpful to the community. Implementing moral education consistently from an early age is a long-term investment that will create a peaceful, harmonious community based on Islamic principles.

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