

ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: HOW NURTURING ISLAMIC VALUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD WITH BUILDING FOUNDATION OF FAITH

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Abstract: Early Islamic education is essential for a child's character and spiritual growth, as well as for building a solid foundation in morals and faith. The concept of tauhid (the oneness of Allah), the teachings of the prophet Muhammad saw, fundamental Islamic rites, ethical values like compassion, honesty, and respect, and fundamental behaviors like salah (prayer) and zakat (charity) are all the goals of this study. Children are taught to important ideas like the value of prayer, respect for parents, and the lessons of the Qur'an using age-appropriate techniques like storytelling, interactive exercises, and basic acts of worship. Rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, this educational approach combines spiritual teachings with holistic developmental methods. Practices such as Quranic recitation, storytelling, prayer, and role modeling are adapted to suit the cognitive and emotional needs of young learners. By integrating faith-based education with modern pedagogical strategies, children are encouraged to develop critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and a deep connection to their religious heritage. Early Islamic education seeks to foster a close relationship with Allah, cultivate moral character, and provide kids the skills they need to live their life in accordance with Islamic teachings. The study's findings offer the finest guidance for understanding and implementing childhood in early childhood, which is beneficial for those who develop positive personalities. This study uses the qualitative methodology that Parents, educators, and the broader community are central to this process, working collaboratively to create a supportive environment that reinforces faith and ethical behavior.

Keywords: *Islamic education, zakat, prayer, ethics, Islamic values, act of worship of Islamic, storytelling*

Introduction

Islamic education in early childhood refers to the period of learning which takes place from period of learning and takes place from birth to around eight years old, which is a critical time for cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. During this stage, children engage in activities and experiences that help them to develop foundational skills for later learning.

In early childhood Islamic education is a vital phase in a child's development, and this stage is crucial as it provides the foundation for lifelong learning, emotional well-being, and social skills. During these formative years, children experience significant cognitive, social, and physical growth, making early education essential for fostering their potential. By engaging in play-based learning, children develop critical skills such as problem solving, language, and early literacy, all within a nurturing and supportive environment. Early childhood education, whether in preschools, daycare centers, or home settings, plays a key role in preparing children for future academic success and overall development in Islamic.

Islamic education during early childhood holds profound significance as it lays the foundation for spiritual, moral, and intellectual development in alignment with Islamic principles. This formative stage of life is characterized by rapid cognitive and emotional growth, making it an ideal period to instill core values and beliefs rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Early childhood education in an Islamic context emphasizes the holistic nurturing of a child's physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, preparing them for a balanced life as devout Muslims and responsible members of society.

The essence of Islamic education lies in the concept of *tarbiyah*, which refers to nurturing and developing a child's character in harmony with divine guidance. It aims to shape individuals who embody qualities such as *taqwa* (God-consciousness), *akhlaq* (good morals), and a strong sense of *ubudiyah* (servitude to Allah). This holistic approach contrasts with secular educational models by integrating faith into every aspect of learning, ensuring that knowledge and spirituality coexist harmoniously.

In early childhood, Islamic education encompasses both formal and informal methods. Formal education often takes place in Islamic preschools or family settings, focusing on activities such as memorizing short Qur'anic verses, learning basic supplications (*du'as*), and understanding fundamental Islamic concepts like kindness, gratitude, and respect. Informal education, on the other hand, occurs through daily interactions, parental role modeling, and immersion in an Islamic environment that reinforces these values.

The role of parents and educators is central in this process, as they are seen as the primary guides entrusted by Allah to shape the child's worldview. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized this responsibility, stating, "Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock" (Sahih al-Bukhari). This underscores the importance of early intervention in fostering a love for Allah, His Messenger, and the principles of Islam.

This study seeks to explore the principles, practices, and significance of Islamic education during early childhood, shedding light on its impact on a child's holistic development. By examining both traditional and contemporary approaches, this research aims to provide insights into how Islamic educational values can be effectively implemented in early childhood settings to nurture future generations of morally upright and spiritually conscious individuals.

In the world education, Islamic education is a holistic and dynamic process that seeks to nurture the mind, body, and spirit of individuals in accordance with the principles outlined in the Quran and the Sunnah. It is an education system that transcends mere academic learning, emphasizing character development, ethical conduct, and the cultivation of piety. At its core, Islamic education aims to promote the well-being of individuals and communities by instilling values such as justice, compassion, humility, and respect for others.

From an early age, Islamic education focuses on the acquisition of knowledge through various sources—starting with the study of religious texts, including the Quran, Hadith, and the teachings of esteemed scholars. This foundation provides students with an understanding of their purpose in life and their relationship with God, fostering a sense of responsibility and a commitment to ethical behavior. However, Islamic education is not confined to religious teachings alone; it also emphasizes the importance of pursuing secular knowledge in areas such as science, mathematics, history, and the arts, believing that intellectual pursuit is a form of worship when aligned with Islamic values.

Moreover, Islamic education encourages the development of critical thinking and the use of knowledge for the greater good of society. It emphasizes the importance of community service, justice, and the protection of the environment, highlighting the

interconnectedness of all creation. The goal is not only to produce scholars but also to nurture individuals who are capable of leadership, empathy, and making informed decisions that contribute to the welfare of the Muslim ummah (community) and the world at large.

In essence, Islamic education provides a balanced approach to learning, where spiritual and intellectual growth are intertwined, fostering individuals who are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of the modern world while remaining grounded in their faith and ethical values. It is an education system that promotes both personal growth and societal progress, aiming to cultivate individuals who are knowledgeable, wise, compassionate, and devoted to serving the greater good.

Literature Review

Islamic education enhancing their emotional with Social development in Islamic education. According to Mannan (2018) argues that Islamic early childhood education serves as a crucial component in fostering a balanced worldview, where faith and reason coexist harmoniously. By integrating religious teachings with intellectual development, children can grow into well-rounded individuals who not only excel in academic pursuits but also embody Islamic values in their everyday lives. This holistic approach to education contributes to the development of a child's character, preparing them for both spiritual fulfillment and worldly success. Islamic education in the reality give the positive impact for early childhood such as good attitude, helping people, and respecting to people.

Early exposure to Islamic teachings, therefore, is not only about knowledge acquisition but also shaping the child's worldview. By fostering a love for ALLAH, his prophet, and his teachings from a young age, Islamic education helps cultivate a sense of spiritual belonging and identity, which According to Hassan (2020), early exposure to essential Islamic concepts such as the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid), the stories of the Prophets, and basic rituals like prayer helps children form a deep connection to their faith. This early spiritual foundation not only shapes their religious identity but also fosters a sense of security and purpose, which serves them well throughout their lives. By learning fundamental teachings of Islam, children develop an innate understanding of their place in the world, contributing to positive self-esteem and emotional resilience.

Metode

1. Research design

This study uses a qualitative research design to investigate the basis of faith for educators, parents, and children. Understanding how to apply and foster Islamic values for childhood and the inherent elements of this integration, as well as identifying practical methods for a well-rounded religious foundation in early childhood, are the main goals of the research.

2. Participants

The study includes three groups of participants:

- Early childhood educators--teachers in Islamic educators obligate to improve and to teach about Islamic education for childhood, and the teacher must have the experience about Islamic education such as tauhid and experience to nurture for early childhood.
- Parents— parents of young children attending Islamic schools who are provide facilities and implement Islamic education in the house or outside house.
- Children—aged 1-8 years old that exposed to both Islamic education and general education in their early-age

3. Data collection.

Data will be collected with using the following methods:

- Interviews with educators Islamic education in their perceptions building foundation of faith in nurturing islam values.
- Survey administrated to parents and discuss about education for childhood to implement and nurturing values Islamic education and gather their opinion about Islamic education with founcaion of faith
- Classroom observation of children nurturing foundation of faith with playing games about islamic

4. Data analysis

The data is collected through interviews,survey,and observation will be analyzed using textual analysis.This type of data is non-numerical and focuses on language, content, and meaning. It includes anything from words, sentences, and phrases to entire documents or transcript about islamic education with foundation of faith this opportunities for integration such as giving discussing their expectations for Islamic education.

Results and Discussion

Many prople when they have a children did not give some the best learning about basic islamic education because that is not important eventhough they gave some the basic islamic education for earlychildhood that is not full about implementing and nurturing foundation of faith.this study give the how to implementing and nurturing about islamic educationin early childhood with foundation of faith such as nurturing Islamic education in early childhood focuses on instilling moral values, developing a strong connection with Allah, and teaching the foundational principles of Islam from a young age. The aim is to shape a child's character and understanding of the faith in a way that is developmentally appropriate and engaging. components of Islamic education to use in early childhood such as:

1. Tawhid (Monotheism): Teaching the oneness of Allah, emphasizing the concept of a creator who is merciful, powerful, and all-knowing. Simple stories of prophets can help convey these ideas.

2. Akhlaq (Character and Morality): Instilling values like kindness, honesty, respect, gratitude, and sharing through role models like Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and other righteous individuals. This can be done through storytelling, songs, and activities.

3. Basic Rituals: Introducing simple acts of worship, such as reciting short duas (supplications), learning how to perform ablution (wudu), and basic knowledge of prayer (salah).

4. Love for the Qur'an: Encouraging children to develop an early love for the Qur'an by reading simple verses and stories from the Qur'an that highlight moral lessons.

5. Stories of the Prophets: Narrating stories of prophets in a simple, engaging manner, focusing on key lessons like patience, trust in Allah, and perseverance.

6. Respect for Parents and Elders: Teaching children the importance of respecting their parents and elders, as this is emphasized in Islam.

7. The Five Pillars: Introducing the Five Pillars of Islam (Shahada, Salah, Zakat, Sawm, and Hajj) in a simplified manner, appropriate for the child's level of understanding.

8. Islamic Etiquette: Teaching children proper manners such as saying "Bismillah" before eating, greeting others with "Assalamu Alaikum," and showing respect in daily interactions.

The approach to teaching should be interactive, positive, and gentle to foster a love for Islam and build a strong spiritual foundation. Games, songs, and hands-on activities are useful in reinforcing these concepts in an enjoyable and memorable way..

Conclusion

Islamic education in early childhood is a cornerstone for building a strong moral, spiritual, and intellectual foundation that supports lifelong development. Rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, it emphasizes the importance of instilling core values such as faith, kindness, honesty, respect, and a sense of accountability to Allah from an early age. These formative years are crucial, as children are highly impressionable, and the values imparted during this time significantly influence their behavior, identity, and worldview.

One of the unique aspects of Islamic education is its holistic approach, which integrates spiritual growth with intellectual and social development. It does not merely focus on memorizing religious texts but emphasizes understanding and applying Islamic principles in daily life. Through practices such as Quranic learning, storytelling, role modeling, and prayer, young learners are introduced to a way of life that balances their spiritual needs with their intellectual and emotional growth.

Islamic education also recognizes the importance of parents, teachers, and the community in shaping a child's development. Parents serve as the first educators, setting the stage for moral and religious learning, while teachers in Islamic preschools and madrasas play a complementary role in reinforcing these values. The collaboration between the family and educational institutions creates a supportive environment for children to thrive.

Furthermore, the adaptability of Islamic education allows it to coexist with modern pedagogical approaches. By incorporating play-based learning, creative activities, and critical thinking exercises, educators can make Islamic teachings more relatable and engaging for young minds. This fusion of traditional values with contemporary methods ensures that children develop a well-rounded personality, equipped to navigate the challenges of a rapidly changing world while staying true to their faith.

In a globalized society, Islamic education in early childhood also fosters intercultural understanding and respect by teaching children the importance of compassion, empathy, and coexistence. These universal values, rooted in Islamic teachings, prepare children not only to be good Muslims but also responsible global citizens who contribute positively to their communities.

In conclusion, Islamic education in early childhood is an essential foundation for raising ethical, knowledgeable, and spiritually aware individuals. By nurturing a love for learning, fostering moral character, and building a connection with faith, this approach lays the groundwork for children to grow into confident, compassionate, and purpose-driven adults. Its timeless relevance, holistic principles, and adaptability make it a vital part of early childhood development, enriching both the individual and society at large.

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