

Implications and Implementation of Character Education in The Development of Islamic Education

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to investigate the implications and implementation of character education in the development of Islamic education, addressing the critical need to integrate moral and spiritual values into educational practice. The research seeks to provide new insights into how curriculum design, teaching methods, and school culture contribute to shaping students into *insan kamil*—individuals who are intellectually, morally, and spiritually developed.

Design/Methodology/Approach – The study employs a qualitative approach using library research as its primary method. Data were gathered from various scholarly sources, including books, academic journals, and official Islamic education curricula, and analyzed through descriptive and thematic analysis to identify patterns and implications of character education in Islamic educational settings.

Findings – The results reveal that the integration of character education within Islamic education significantly strengthens students' religious identity and moral awareness. The study also finds that the success of character-based education depends on the synergy between curriculum content, educator competence, and the moral culture cultivated within schools. Furthermore, active collaboration among families, schools, and communities plays a pivotal role in fostering Islamic values and preventing moral decline among students in modern society.

Originality/Value – This research provides a novel perspective on the role of character education in Islamic educational development. It contributes to the ongoing discourse on moral education by offering a comprehensive understanding of its conceptual, curricular, and practical dimensions. The findings highlight the need for integrative strategies that bridge religious, academic, and social contexts, providing valuable implications for educators, policymakers, and future research in Islamic education.

Keywords: Character Education; Islamic Education; Curriculum; Implementation; Moral Development

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I. INTRODUCTION

Character education is a crucial foundation for developing individuals with noble character, responsibility, and integrity in social life. In the context of Islamic education, character education is not a new concept, but rather an integral part of the primary goal of education itself, namely to develop perfect human beings who are not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually and morally noble. Values such as honesty, trustworthiness, humility, patience, and sincerity have long been key pillars of Islamic teachings and are passed down through a systematic and ongoing educational process.

The rapid development of the times, marked by globalization, digitalization, and shifting values in modern society, presents new challenges for Islamic education. The unstoppable flow of information

and the culture of instant gratification influence students' mindsets and behaviors. Therefore, the implementation of character education in Islamic education has become increasingly urgent and strategic as an effort to counteract the increasingly worrying moral crisis and value degradation.

This article aims to analyze the implications and implementation of character education in the development of Islamic education. The primary focus is on how character education can be effectively integrated into the curriculum, teaching methods, and student development, across formal, non-formal, and informal settings. With this approach, it is hoped that Islamic education can be a transformative force in developing a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also morally and spiritually resilient.

II. METHOD

This research employed qualitative methods, utilizing descriptive data sources such as journals, articles, books, or other documents. This research was conducted in the form of a literature review, or literature study, which provides an understanding of the research topic by analyzing relevant literature or articles. Furthermore, the author conducted field interviews related to the topic being discussed.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Character education in Islam is not a foreign or new concept. It is at the heart of the apostolic mission, as stated by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Innamā bu'ithtu liutammima makārimal akhlāq" (Indeed, I have been sent to perfect noble morals). Character education in Islam rests on three main aspects:

- a. orientation to oneness of God,
- b. moral awareness, and
- c. habituation of righteous deeds.

Unlike the concept of character in secular approaches, which often emphasizes social moral aspects or generally agreed-upon values, character education in Islam is rooted in revelation (the Qur'an and Sunnah), thus possessing a transcendental dimension. Character is not merely seen as a social norm, but as a manifestation of human relationships with God (*hablum minallah*) and with fellow human beings (*hablum minannas*).

Character education in Islam requires a comprehensive and ongoing process. It is oriented not only toward imparting knowledge but also toward internalizing values, forming attitudes, and training behavior. Character education in Islam is characterized by:

1. *Tarbawi*: a continuous development process that gradually shapes personality.
2. *Taklifi*: encompasses the dimension of moral responsibility towards Allah, oneself, and the environment.
3. *Ta'dibi*: oriented towards instilling *adab* as a form of moral perfection.

According to Lickona, character is related to moral concepts (moral knowing), moral attitudes (moral feeling), and moral behavior. Based on these three components, it can be stated that good character is supported by knowledge of goodness, a desire to do good, and carrying out good deeds (Lickona, 2012). Based on national education goals, character education is an educational program (in school and out-of-school) that organizes and simplifies moral resources and is presented with attention to psychological considerations for educational purposes (Ma'zumi, Sujai Saleh, 2023).

In practice, character education must encompass all dimensions of the human being: reason, heart, and behavior. Therefore, the approach used must be integrated between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), for example, is not only taught as law, but also as a means of forming ethical awareness in life.

The modern and postmodern eras have brought significant challenges to character development. The currents of globalization, the development of digital technology, and the crisis of role models have made students more vulnerable to foreign values that are secular, individualistic, and materialistic. Islamic education is faced with a moral crisis, such as weak integrity, early corruption, violence in schools, and social media addiction.

Character education is the primary solution to address this crisis. However, moral lectures or normative appeals are not sufficient. A systemic character education strategy is needed, including:

- Revitalizing the curriculum based on Islamic values.
- Role-modeling education: teachers as role models.
- Habitual activities such as congregational prayer, daily almsgiving, and spiritual mentoring.
- Character assessment as part of learning evaluation.

Development of Islamic Education

This phenomenon of disruption requires the world of Islamic education to adapt. Islamic education is now faced with new challenges, demands, and needs that have never existed before. Therefore, concrete steps are needed for Islamic education to remain competitive in this era of disruption. The solution is to participate in the disruption through renewal and development/innovation of systems, governance, curriculum, human resource competencies, facilities and infrastructure, culture, work ethic, teacher quality, teaching and learning processes, and management by developing a new digital-based service system. This will enable Islamic educational institutions to freely access all their educational and administrative needs. Otherwise, Islamic education will become increasingly left behind and obsolete, without losing its identity

as an Islamic educational institution characterized by adhering firmly to the principle of "al-muhafadhah 'ala al-qadim ash-shalih wa al-akhdzu bi al-jadid alashlah," which means maintaining Islamic religious traditions by steadfastly preserving their rich heritage and employing sound modern methods, management, and learning (Bahri, 2019).

In facing the challenges of globalization, an urgent need to improve the world of Islamic education in order to improve human resources (HR). Therefore, the following steps must be taken to improve the quality of education in the era of globalization: First, the orientation of Islamic education must emphasize the affective and psychomotor aspects. Second, in the teaching and learning process, teachers must develop a student-oriented pattern to foster the character of independence, responsibility, creativity, and Innovative development in students. Third, teachers must truly understand the true meaning of education. In other words, teachers not only transfer knowledge but also morals, skills, and develop students' personalities. Fourth, there is a need for guidance and training to increase students' motivation to learn so that children have a strong interest in learning. Fifth, education should be oriented towards the process, not the outcome. Sixth, the learning system must balance theory and practice. Seventh, comprehensive support and participation in educational practices should be provided, involving all components of the education system. Eighth, the teaching profession should be scientific and truly professional. Ninth, the government must have a consistent policy formula to accommodate all educational needs. One such measure is increasing the education budget by 25% (Armai, 2007).

The development of Islamic education is crucial because it plays a role in shaping individuals with noble character, strengthening Islamic identity, improving the quality of education, developing leaders grounded in Islamic values, and contributing to the development of a better society. By paying attention to and developing Islamic education, we can ensure that Islamic teachings remain relevant and provide significant benefits to the community and society as a whole.

Implications of Character Education in the Development of Islamic Education

Character education has broad implications for the establishment of a holistic and transformative Islamic education system. From an Islamic perspective, education is not only aimed at developing the intellect, but also at shaping morals and the soul. Therefore, character education is a fundamental element that determines the direction, content, and practice of Islamic education.

1. Implications for the Goals of Islamic Education

One of the main implications of character education is the need to redefine the goals of Islamic education. Education, which has historically been overly oriented toward cognitive aspects such as mastery of scientific material or memorization of religious texts, needs to be directed toward achieving personal integrity and social exemplarity. The goal of Islamic education should return to the concept of *insan kamil*, namely the spiritually, morally, and intellectually complete human being (Al-Abrasyi, 1970).

Thus, educational success is not only measured by academic achievement, but also by the success in developing students' character, which is noble, honest, disciplined, and responsible.

2. Implications for Curriculum and Learning Methods

The second implication lies in curriculum design. The Islamic education curriculum needs to be designed in an integrative manner, combining knowledge and character values. Every subject must have a character-building dimension, not just lessons on Aqidah and Akhlak. For example, in Islamic history lessons, values such as courage, justice, and leadership can be highlighted through the stories of the companions and Muslim figures (Zuhairini, 1995).

Learning methods must also be transformative and dialogical. Lecture-based teaching (teacher-centered) alone is insufficient to shape character. Experiential learning, role modeling, problem-based learning, and project-based learning approaches are needed that can instill values through direct experience and practice.

3. Implications for the Role of Teachers

Teachers in character education serve as moral and spiritual agents. Consequently, the quality of teacher character is an indicator of the success of Islamic education. Teachers are not only required to possess professional competence, but also personal integrity that reflects Islamic values. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the primary role model in character education, whose morals served as the primary means of transforming an ignorant society into the best nation (QS. Al-Ahzab: 21). Therefore, teacher professional development must include character training, spiritual development, and revitalizing the role of role models in learning.

4. Implications for School Culture and Climate

Character education also impacts Islamic school culture. Schools are not simply teaching values; they must become environments where these values are lived. A culture of discipline, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and a spirit of worship must be fostered through policies, daily habits, and even through the visual symbols and language used.

Consistent implementation of character education will create a school climate that supports the development of a strong Islamic personality.

5. Implications for Educational Evaluation

Evaluation in Islamic education has tended to emphasize cognitive aspects, such as written exams or memorization. With the implementation of character education, the evaluation system must encompass both affective and psychomotor aspects. This means the need to develop character assessment instruments such as attitude observation.

Implementation of Character Education in the Development of Islamic Education

The implementation of character education in Islamic education requires a systemic, integrated, and sustainable approach. Character education cannot be merely a peripheral part of the education system; it must be at the core of all learning, nurturing, and development processes in Islamic educational institutions, both formal and non-formal.

1. Integration of Character Values in the Curriculum

Effective implementation of character education in Islamic education begins with designing a curriculum that integrates character values across all subjects. Values such as amanah (responsibility), sidq (honesty), tawadhu (humility), 'adalah (justice), and istiqāmah (consistency) are not only taught theoretically but must be brought to life in the learning process across subjects (Muhaimin, 2002).

For example, in Arabic lessons, teachers can instill the values of perseverance and discipline in memorizing vocabulary. In Islamic Cultural History (ISCR) lessons, students are encouraged to understand the values of leadership and struggle exemplified by the Prophet's companions. A character-based curriculum also needs to be designed in a spiral and cumulative manner, so that the instilled values are continuously and gradually developed according to the age and development of the students.

2. Teacher Exemplary Behavior as a Means of Internalizing Values

Teachers are key actors in the implementation of character education. In Islam, teachers serve not only as instructors (mu'allim), but also as moral educators (murabbī) and moral role models (uswah hasanah) (Al-Syaibani, 1979). Therefore, teacher character is the most effective means of transforming values into students.

Exemplary behavior in terms of honesty, simplicity, time commitment, and respect for knowledge will become a hidden curriculum that shapes students' character indirectly but profoundly. Therefore, teacher training in the dimensions of character and spirituality is a crucial investment in strengthening Islamic education.

3. Strengthening Islamic School Culture

The implementation of character education must impact the entire educational ecosystem. Schools need to create a culture conducive to the growth of positive values. An Islamic school culture can be formed through the practice of worship (congregational prayer, dhikr, voluntary fasting), polite social interactions, charitable activities (social service, almsgiving), and the enforcement of fair and educational discipline (Lickona, 2004).

This culture involves not only teachers and students, but also the entire school community, including educational staff and the principal. The physical environment also needs to support the internalization of values, such as the presence of verses or hadiths on school walls, a comfortable prayer room, and open discussion spaces.

4. Experience-Based Learning and Character Projects

One effective implementation strategy is experiential learning. This method emphasizes active student involvement in activities that encourage them to apply character values in real-life contexts. For example, students participate in social projects, simulated deliberations, or leadership activities in student organizations (Kolb, 1984).

Through this method, students not only "know" about values, but also experience and practice them directly. This aligns with the Islamic principle that knowledge must be accompanied by good deeds.

5. Parental and Community Involvement

Character education will not be successful if it relies solely on the school environment. Comprehensive implementation must involve the family as the primary educational environment and the community as an external supporter (At-Tahrim: 6). In Islam, the responsibility for a child's education is a shared responsibility between parents, teachers, and the community (ummah).

This synergy can be realized through Islamic parenting activities, school collaboration with mosques or social institutions, and parental involvement in character development programs. Parents also need to be equipped to ensure that the values taught in school align with parenting styles at home.

6. Authentic and Continuous Character Evaluation

The implementation of character education must be accompanied by an appropriate evaluation system. Character assessment cannot be conducted solely quantitatively but requires an authentic approach, such as behavioral observation, self-reflection, character journals, and peer assessment. This evaluation is formative and aims for development, not simply measurement (Zubaedi, 2011).

Assessments must also be delivered in a communicative and constructive manner, so that students are aware of their character strengths and weaknesses and are motivated to continue developing.

IV. CONCLUSION

Character education in the context of Islamic education is not merely a supplement, but rather the very spirit that animates the entire educational process. It is not only aimed at producing intellectually intelligent students, but also at fostering a generation with noble souls firmly bound to divine values. The implications of character education demand a paradigm shift in Islamic education from a purely cognitive approach to a holistic approach encompassing the affective and psychomotor dimensions rooted in the values of monotheism and the morals of the Prophet Muhammad.

In implementation, character education must be integrally present in the curriculum, learning methods, school culture, and exemplary practices. Teachers, as the primary actors, are not merely transmitters of knowledge but also living reflections of values. School culture provides a fertile ground for cultivating and nurturing character through habituation, experience, and social interaction. Furthermore, family and community involvement is a crucial foundation for building sustainable value synergy.

Amidst the challenges of the digital era, identity crisis, and moral decadence, character education in Islamic education plays a strategic role in supporting the moral resilience of the Muslim generation. It is the answer to the spiritual aridity and value-lackness of the modern, pragmatic education system. Therefore, strengthening character education in Islamic education is not an option, but rather a necessity to produce a generation of insan kāmīl human beings who are complete in knowledge, morals, and faith who are ready to build a just and moral civilization..

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