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THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SHAPING A CHARACTER-BUILDING GENERATION**Muslem**

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Nusantara Banda Aceh

Email: muslem@stainusantara.ac.id**ABSTRACT**

Islamic education plays a strategic role in shaping a generation that is not only intellectually superior but also possesses strong character and noble ethics. This article aims to examine the contribution of Islamic education to character development through the internalisation of spiritual, moral and social values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review of various relevant books and academic journals. The findings indicate that Islamic education is capable of shaping students' personalities through the balanced integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This process is achieved through the instilling of the value of tawhid, the cultivation of noble ethics, the exemplary conduct of teachers, and the application of these values in daily life. Furthermore, Islamic education also serves as a moral bulwark in facing the challenges of globalisation and technological developments that may influence the character of the younger generation. Thus, Islamic education makes a significant contribution to fostering a generation of integrity, responsibility, and the ability to navigate the changing times wisely.

Keywords: *Islamic education, character, younger generation, ethics*

ABSTRAK

Pendidikan Islam memiliki peran strategis dalam membentuk generasi yang tidak hanya unggul secara intelektual, tetapi juga berkarakter kuat dan berakhlak mulia. Artikel ini bertujuan mengkaji kontribusi pendidikan Islam dalam pembentukan karakter melalui internalisasi nilai spiritual, moral, dan sosial yang bersumber dari Al-Qur'an dan Hadis. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur terhadap berbagai buku dan jurnal ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan Islam mampu membentuk kepribadian peserta didik melalui integrasi aspek kognitif, afektif, dan psikomotorik secara seimbang. Proses ini dilakukan melalui penanaman nilai tauhid, pembiasaan akhlak mulia, keteladanan guru, serta penerapan nilai dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Selain itu, pendidikan Islam juga berperan sebagai benteng moral dalam menghadapi tantangan globalisasi dan perkembangan teknologi yang dapat memengaruhi karakter generasi muda. Dengan demikian, pendidikan Islam memiliki kontribusi penting dalam menciptakan generasi yang berintegritas, bertanggung jawab, dan mampu menghadapi perubahan zaman secara bijaksana.

Kata kunci: *Pendidikan Islam, karakter, generasi muda, akhlak*

INTRODUCTION

The increasingly complex developments of our times in the era of globalisation and digitalisation demand a generation that is not only intellectually superior, but also possesses strong character and high integrity. Advances in science and technology have had a significant impact on the mindset, lifestyle and values embraced by the younger generation. On the one hand, this progress offers great opportunities to improve the quality of human life; on the other hand, it also presents various challenges, particularly regarding moral crises and the erosion of character. (Isti'anah & Ashari, 2024)

Phenomena such as the rise in deviant behaviour, a lack of a sense of responsibility, declining social ethics, and a lack of spiritual awareness among the younger generation serve as clear indicators that character education has not yet been fully successful. This situation demonstrates that an education system focused solely on cognitive aspects, without being balanced by moral and spiritual development, is insufficient to shape well-rounded individuals. Therefore, an educational system is required that can integrate knowledge, values, and attitudes into a harmonious whole.

In this context, Islamic education occupies a highly strategic position. Islamic education aims not only to impart knowledge but also to instil the values of faith, piety, and noble character. Islamic education is grounded in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, which govern all aspects of human life, both one's relationship with Allah SWT (*hablum minallah*) and one's relationship with fellow human beings (*hablum minannas*). Thus, Islamic education adopts a comprehensive approach to shaping an individual's character.

Furthermore, Islamic education emphasises the importance of balance between the physical and spiritual aspects, as well as between life in this world and the hereafter. This concept is reflected in the objectives of Islamic education, which aim to foster the '*insan kamil*'—a person who is spiritually, intellectually, and socially complete. The '*insan kamil*' possesses not only intellectual intelligence but also spiritual depth and emotional maturity, which are reflected in their daily behaviour. (Husyaini et al., 2024)

The role of Islamic education in character development is also evident in its teaching methods, which are not merely theoretical but also practical. Values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, tolerance, and social awareness are taught through setting an example, habit formation, and direct experience in daily life. Teachers in Islamic education do not merely act as conveyors of knowledge but also as role models who embody the moral values being taught. (Rochbani et al., 2024)

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However, Islamic education also faces various challenges in the modern era. The tide of globalisation bringing foreign cultural values, the uncontrolled development of social media, and the lack of supervision over the use of technology are factors that can influence the character of the younger generation. Therefore, Islamic education needs to innovate and adapt without abandoning its principles in order to remain relevant to the times.

Based on the above, it is clear that Islamic education plays a vital role in shaping a generation of strong character. Consequently, research into the role of Islamic education in character formation is highly relevant. This article aims to examine in depth how Islamic education can contribute to shaping a generation that is not only intelligent but also possesses noble moral values and is capable of facing the challenges of the times with wisdom.(Koimah et al., 2024)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review method, with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the role of Islamic education in shaping a generation of good character. This approach was chosen as it enables a comprehensive exploration of the concepts, theories and values contained within various academic sources. The literature review was conducted by examining various relevant references, such as books, scientific journals, academic articles, and other sources related to Islamic education and character building(Setyosari, 2016).

Data collection was carried out through documentation, namely by identifying, classifying, and reviewing written sources relevant to the research topic. The data sources used consist of primary data in the form of major scholarly works in the field of Islamic education, as well as secondary data in the form of previous research findings that support this study. The selection of sources was carried out selectively, taking into account the credibility, relevance, and recency of the information used.

Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive-qualitative approach by interpreting and synthesising various findings from the sources that had been examined. The data obtained were analysed to identify patterns, concepts, and relationships between variables related to character formation from an Islamic education perspective. The results of the analysis were then presented systematically to provide a clear picture of the contribution of Islamic education in shaping a generation of noble character and strong moral values(Susanto et al., 2025).

HASI DAN PEMBAHASAN

The Concept of Islamic Education

Islamic education is a process of nurturing, teaching and shaping the human personality based on the values of Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an and the Hadith. This education is not merely focused on the transfer of knowledge, but also encompasses the development of attitudes, behaviour and a deep spiritual awareness. From an Islamic perspective, education has a very broad objective, namely to shape individuals who are balanced between the physical and spiritual aspects, the worldly and the hereafter, and the individual and the social. Therefore, Islamic education cannot be separated from the purpose of human life as servants of Allah SWT who have a responsibility to worship and act as His vicegerents on earth. (Yafithufail & Kahfi, 2025)

Conceptually, Islamic education emphasises the holistic development of human potential, encompassing cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudes), and psychomotor (skills) aspects. These three aspects must operate harmoniously to produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess noble character and the ability to apply their knowledge in daily life. In this regard, Islamic education adopts a holistic and integral approach, where every learning process is always linked to divine and humanitarian values.

Furthermore, the concept of Islamic education also emphasises the importance of instilling the value of Tawhid as the primary foundation in character formation. Tawhid is not merely understood as belief in the Oneness of Allah SWT, but also as the foundation for thinking, behaving, and acting. With a strong understanding of Tawhid, individuals will possess a high level of moral and spiritual awareness, enabling them to control themselves from deviant behaviour and be motivated to do good. (Sari & Irawan, 2023)

Furthermore, Islamic education prioritises the concepts of tarbiyah, ta'lim, and ta'dib as the three main pillars of the educational process. Tarbiyah refers to the process of nurturing and developing potential in a gradual manner; ta'lim relates to the transfer of knowledge; whilst ta'dib emphasises the cultivation of good manners or moral character. These three concepts complement one another and form the foundation for the implementation of an ideal Islamic education. Without a balance between the three, the educational process will not be able to produce well-rounded individuals.

The primary aim of Islamic education is to create an 'insan kamil'—a perfect human being in the sense of possessing a balance between intellectual intelligence,

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spiritual strength, and emotional maturity. An 'insan kamil' is not only capable of understanding knowledge in depth but is also able to apply it in daily life and bring benefit to society. This concept serves as an indicator of the success of Islamic education in shaping an individual's character. (Nuzuli et al., 2025)

In practice, Islamic education also places great emphasis on the importance of setting a good example (*uswah hasanah*) in the learning process. Teachers do not merely act as conveyors of material but also as figures who serve as role models in attitude and behaviour. This exemplary conduct has a profound influence on shaping the character of learners, as moral values are more readily accepted through real-life examples than through theory alone.

Furthermore, Islamic education prioritises the principle of habituation in character-building. Values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and social awareness are instilled through continuous practice, thereby becoming ingrained habits within the individual. Thus, Islamic education not only imparts knowledge but also builds a strong and consistent character.

In the modern context, the concept of Islamic education remains relevant and adaptable to the changing times. Despite facing various challenges such as globalisation and technological advancements, the core values of Islamic education remain the primary guiding principles in shaping a generation of strong character. Therefore, reinforcing the concept of Islamic education is of paramount importance in the effort to create a generation that is not only intelligent but also possesses integrity and noble moral character. (P'tikaf, 2024)

The Concept of Character in Islam

From an Islamic perspective, character is synonymous with the concept of *akhlak*, which refers to the inner qualities reflected in a person's outward behaviour. *Akhlak* is not merely understood as a momentary action, but as a habit deeply ingrained within the self, prompting a person to act spontaneously in accordance with the values of goodness. Therefore, character in Islam is integral, encompassing interrelated spiritual, moral, social, and emotional dimensions. *Akhlak* serves as the primary indicator of the quality of one's faith, as strong faith is reflected in good behaviour. (Harahap, 2025)

The concept of *akhlak* in Islam is rooted in the Qur'an and the Hadith as the primary guides for life. The Qur'an provides numerous guidelines regarding character values such as honesty (*shiddiq*), trustworthiness, justice (*'adl*), patience (*sabr*), and compassion (*rahmah*). Meanwhile, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as the foremost example for Muslims, demonstrated the practical application of these values in daily life. This is emphasised in a Hadith stating that he was sent to perfect

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human character. Thus, character in Islam is not merely theoretical, but has concrete examples to be emulated.

Furthermore, character in Islam is closely linked to the concept of Tawhid. Belief in the Oneness of Allah (SWT) serves as the primary foundation for character development, as every human action is believed to be accounted for before Him. This awareness encourages individuals to consistently behave well, honestly, and responsibly, whether in the presence of others or in private. In other words, character in Islam is built upon a strong sense of inner control. (Febriansyah & Amin, 2024)

In Islam, akhlak is also divided into two main categories: akhlak mahmudah (praiseworthy character) and akhlak mazmumah (blameworthy character). Akhlak mahmudah encompasses traits such as honesty, humility, generosity, patience, and discipline, whilst akhlak mazmumah includes traits such as arrogance, envy, malice, and oppression. Character education in Islam aims to cultivate akhlak mahmudah whilst controlling and eliminating akhlak mazmumah. This process requires continuous nurturing through education, the environment, and life experiences (Fa'idah, 2025).

Furthermore, the concept of character in Islam also emphasises the importance of balance between the relationship between humans and Allah (hablum minallah) and the relationship between humans and their fellow human beings (hablum minannas). Good character is reflected not only in ritual worship but also in social interactions such as respecting others, upholding justice, and showing concern for the surrounding environment. Thus, character in Islam possesses both individual and social dimensions that are inseparable. Character development in Islam is also influenced by several factors, including the family environment, formal education, and society. The family, as the primary environment, plays a crucial role in instilling foundational character values from an early age. Formal education then reinforces these values through a systematic learning process, whilst the social environment provides a space for individuals to practise the values they have learnt. (Muhibah & Rudiana, 2026)

In practice, character development in Islam is carried out through various methods, such as setting a good example (uswah hasanah), habit formation (ta'wid), advice (mau'izah), and the use of rewards and punishments. Setting a good example is the most effective method because learners tend to imitate the behaviour they observe. Meanwhile, habit formation helps to shape positive behaviour into ingrained habits within the individual.

In the modern era, the concept of character in Islam remains relevant as a solution to the various moral crises occurring in society. The moral values taught in Islam are universal and can be applied in various contexts of life. Therefore, strengthening character education based on Islamic values is crucial for fostering a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also possesses high moral integrity.

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Thus, it can be concluded that character in Islam is a comprehensive and profound concept, which not only governs individual behaviour but also shapes the personality as a whole. Through the understanding and practice of good moral values, individuals are expected to become people of faith, who are God-fearing, and who bring benefit to themselves and the wider community. (Dewianti et al., 2024)

The Role of Islamic Education in Character Building

Islamic education plays a highly strategic role in shaping the character of the younger generation through a comprehensive and sustainable approach. Unlike education systems that focus solely on cognitive aspects, Islamic education integrates spiritual, moral and social values into every learning process. This means that Islamic education serves not only as a means of transferring knowledge, but also as a process of holistic character development. In this context, there are several key aspects that serve as pillars in character building through Islamic education. (Muhyidin et al., 2025)

Firstly, the instilling of the value of Tawhid serves as the primary foundation in character building. Tawhid is not merely understood as belief in the Oneness of Allah SWT, but also as the basis for thinking, behaving, and acting. Through Islamic education, students are taught to realise that every action they take is under the watchful eye of Allah SWT and that they will be held accountable. This awareness fosters strong self-control, thereby encouraging individuals to behave honestly, with discipline, and responsibly. Thus, the value of tauhid serves as a moral foundation guiding individuals in every aspect of life.

Secondly, the cultivation of noble character is a key method in Islamic education for shaping character. Values such as honesty, politeness, responsibility, hard work, and social concern are not merely taught theoretically, but are also practised in daily life through learning activities and social interactions within the school environment. This process of instilling these values is carried out continuously so that they become deeply ingrained and form part of the students' personalities. In this regard, the educational environment plays a vital role in creating a conducive atmosphere for the formation of positive habits. (Fauziah et al., 2024)

Thirdly, the integration of knowledge and action is a hallmark of Islamic education in character-building. Knowledge acquired does not merely stop at conceptual understanding but must be manifested in concrete actions. Islamic education emphasises that knowledge without action has no value; therefore, students are encouraged to apply their knowledge in daily life. For example, an understanding of the importance of honesty must be manifested in honest behaviour in various situations, both within the school environment and in the wider

community. Through this integration, the character that is formed is not merely theoretical, but tangible and practical.

Fourthly, the role of the teacher as a role model (*uswah hasanah*) is crucial to the success of character education. Teachers do not merely function as conveyors of subject matter, but also as figures whom students emulate. The teacher's attitudes, behaviour, and manner of interaction serve as a tangible example for pupils in shaping their character. Therefore, teachers are required to possess high moral integrity and be able to reflect Islamic values in their daily lives. This role model has a very strong influence, as students tend to imitate what they see rather than merely hearing theory. (Nugraha et al., 2024)

In addition to these four aspects, Islamic education also plays a role in fostering social awareness and responsibility towards the environment. Values such as mutual aid (*ta'awun*), justice, and concern for others are taught as integral parts of the character every individual should possess. This is crucial for nurturing a generation that is not solely focused on personal interests but also demonstrates care for society and the surrounding environment. (Khairani & Rosyidi, 2022).

In practice, the role of Islamic education in character formation is inseparable from the support of various parties, such as the family, school, and community. Synergy between these three environments is essential to ensure the character-building process runs optimally. The family, as the primary environment, plays a role in instilling foundational values; the school reinforces these through systematic learning; whilst the community serves as the setting for the implementation of these values. (Hakim, 2017)

Thus, it can be concluded that Islamic education makes a significant contribution to shaping the character of the younger generation. Through the instilling of the value of *tawhid*, the cultivation of noble moral conduct, the integration of knowledge and action, and the exemplary conduct of teachers, Islamic education is able to produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess strong moral and spiritual integrity. This makes Islamic education one of the primary solutions to the character crisis in the modern era. (Hakim, 2017)

CONCLUSION

Islamic education plays a vital and strategic role in shaping a generation of individuals of strong character, noble ethics and robust moral integrity. This is evident in the approach of Islamic education, which not only emphasises intellectual development but also integrates spiritual, moral and social values into every stage of the learning process. Rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith, Islamic education is capable of

shaping individuals who possess self-awareness, a sense of responsibility, and a commitment to the values of goodness in daily life.

Through the instilling of the principle of tawhid, the cultivation of noble character, the integration of knowledge and action, and the exemplary conduct of teachers, Islamic education plays a role in shaping character that is not merely theoretical but also practical. This character-building process is ongoing and involves various environments, such as the family, school, and community. Synergy between these three environments is a key factor in ensuring the success of character education based on Islamic values.

Thus, strengthening Islamic education has become an urgent necessity amidst the challenges of globalisation and the rapid development of technology. Efforts to innovate teaching methods without abandoning fundamental Islamic values must continue so that Islamic education remains relevant and capable of addressing the challenges of the times. Through such strengthening, it is hoped that a generation will emerge that is not only intellectually intelligent but also possesses strong character, noble morals, and the ability to contribute positively to society.

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