

ISLAMIC-BASED CHARACTER EDUCATION IN YASALMUNA KINDERGARTEN OF PALANGKARAYA

Husnul Khatimah¹, Aghnaita²

^{1,2}IAIN Palangka Raya, Palangkaraya, Indonesia
Email: khatimahhusnul689@gmail.com¹, aghnaita94@gmail.com²

ABSTRACT

Providing a good example as an Islamic character in children is the starting point so that children have a good personality so that they can become pious children. The role and figure of an educator or teacher becomes the initial milestone in the development of Islamic character (*akhlaqul karimah*) in students. In the overall teaching of Islam, morals occupy a special and very important position. Moral teachings in Islam are adapted to human nature. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research related to how Islamic-based character education has been applied by educational institutions, especially early childhood education institutions. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive approach that aims to describe, reveal, explain and analyze real problems. The research was conducted at Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya in March 2023 and the research subject was the teacher of Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya. The results obtained were to instill Islamic character in early childhood, which is done over moral habituation and guidance. Instilling Islamic character in children is to have a good character to God, to fellow, and to the environment.

Keywords: *Character, Character Education, Early Childhood, Education, Islamic Character*

ABSTRAK

Memberikan teladan yang baik sebagai karakter Islami pada anak menjadi titik awal agar anak memiliki kepribadian yang baik sehingga dapat menjadi anak yang saleh. Peran dan sosok seorang pendidik atau guru menjadi tonggak awal terbentuknya karakter Islami (*akhlaqul karimah*) pada anak didik. Dalam ajaran Islam, akhlak menempati posisi yang istimewa dan sangat penting. Ajaran akhlak dalam Islam disesuaikan dengan fitrah manusia. Oleh karena itu, peneliti tertarik untuk meneliti terkait bagaimana pendidikan karakter berbasis Islam yang telah diterapkan oleh lembaga pendidikan khususnya lembaga pendidikan anak usia dini. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, yang bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan, mengungkapkan, menjelaskan dan menganalisis masalah-masalah yang ada secara nyata. Penelitian dilakukan di TK Yasalmuna Palangkaraya pada bulan Maret 2023 dengan subjek penelitian adalah guru TK Yasalmuna Palangkaraya. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh adalah untuk menanamkan karakter Islami pada anak usia dini, dilakukan dengan pembiasaan akhlak dan bimbingan. Penanaman karakter Islami yang diajarkan adalah penanaman karakter kepada Allah, penanaman karakter kepada sesama makhluk hidup dan penanaman karakter pada lingkungan.

Kata Kunci: *Anak Usia Dini, Karakter, Karakter Islami, Pendidikan, Pendidikan Karakter*

Introduction

Character education has recently become a prominent and hotly discussed theme. No less than public officials, such as the president and other national leaders, complained about the decline of the nation's moral values. The phenomenon that occurs in society is the behavior that follows the development of a trendy lifestyle.

This can be seen from the style of dress, style of speech, lifestyle that follows the popular foreign cultures. This causes chaos and anxiety about ethical values. These behaviors lead to promiscuity, use of illegal drugs, drunkenness and gambling (Hayati, 2018).

In Indonesian Law Number 20 of 2013 concerning the National Education System chapter 1 article 1 point 14 states that: "Early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed

at children from birth to the age of six which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help the growth and development of physical and spiritual so that children have readiness to enter further education" (Suyadi, 2014). Furthermore, because every child has various physical and spiritual characteristics and potential, it is necessary to instill character education in children from an early age.

Character education is the main tool that must be optimized in preparing the human generation due to the decline in the value of human moral character caused by the distance of humans from character education. Instilling character education in early childhood is expected to develop children's potential to have better guidance, and to be able to foster children to have independent, empathetic, and moral personalities (Shofa, 2017).

According to Damsuki, in Islamic terminology, character or better known as morality, is a trait imprinted in the soul in which actions in harmony with the Quran and hadith are born easily without requiring prior thought and contemplation (Damsuki, 2015). In all Islamic teachings, morals occupy a special and an important position. Moral teachings in Islam are adapted to human nature. Good and bad values, commendable and despicable, apply anytime and anywhere in all aspects of life, and are not limited by space and time.

Character education can begin in the womb or from an early age. It is because the person's character will be easier to shape and develop during that time (Lickona, 2013). Instilling Islamic character in children is the starting point to have a good personality so that they can become pious children. In this case, the role and figure of an educator or a teacher becomes a milestone in the development of Islamic character (*akhlaku karimah*) in students.

Character education has a mission to develop basic characters that students should have. Respect and responsibility are two basic moral values that schools must teach. Other moral values are honesty, justice, tolerance, wisdom, self-discipline, helpfulness, compassion, cooperation, determination, and a set of democratic values (Darimi, 2018).

As stated in Indonesian Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, the government states that the purpose of education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who are faithful and devoted to God Almighty, have moral character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, become democratic and responsible citizens (Kurniawan, 2016).

Character education is carried out through the education of values or virtues that becomes the basic values of the nation's character. In essence, character education is the development of values derived from the view of life or Indonesian ideology, religion, culture, and values formulated in the goals of national education. (Zubaedi, 2011).

Therefore, the problem in this study is formulated as the process of developing Islamic character in early childhood. The research objective is to obtain a finding related to Islamic character education in early childhood. This research is expected to contribute in the form of additional knowledge regarding the steps of the teacher in the effort to develop *akhlaku karimah* in early childhood in Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya.

Research Method

In this study, the research method used is qualitative research that aims to describe, reveal, explain and analyze the concepts and practices of Islamic-based character education in Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya. In addition, the approach used here is to examine research problems that are still in the form of assumptions and to explore in more detail and depth about the participants' perspectives in order to describe them objectively. The subject of this study was the teacher of Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya. The study that had been conducted in March 2023 here used observation as the research technique. The researchers would observe how Islamic character education is in early childhood.

Furthermore, researchers also used interview techniques. To get more objective and credible results, the researcher carried out the data reduction stage based on the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews. Lastly, the final stage was presenting and drawing conclusions (Walidin, W., & Idris, S. 2015).

Results

As a Muslim, an Islamic character development is very much needed in the learning process to shape the personal character of students, especially children who are very easily influenced by the surrounding environment. At this age, children really need education and moral guidance because at this time children are more easily directed so that children become pious children. As Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya efforts to instill the Islamic character in early childhood is to carry out daily moral habits and guidance. The habit done every day is to say hello and pray before starting the learning activity, the children are accustomed to always pray before carrying out activities. This can be seen when the children are about to start learning, the teacher asks one of the children to lead his classmates to pray, even when they are going to eat they already know what they have to do – stretch out their hands to pray. Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya teachers always instill such habits so that Islamic character is attached to children.

Children are also always in the habit of tidying up and cleaning their learning equipment when either they finish studying or playing. This can be seen when researchers entered one of the classrooms and the children had just finished carrying out learning activities such as cutting and pasting fruit pictures, there was a lot of paper scattered on the floor, when the learning activities were done, some of them immediately cleaned up their stuff before being ordered. This shows that instilling character values in children will determine how the child acts.

As an interview with one of the teachers at Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya said:

“In instilling Islamic character in early childhood we carry out several learning and habituation programs such as daily prayer, ablution and prayer, memorizing short surahs of the Quran, asmaul-husna, introducing the pillars of faith and pillars of Islam, as well as how to dress for Muslims. We also do not forget to teach about how to be polite when going to the toilet and to always speak politely and not criticize other people. In addition to habituation methods such as reading a prayer when you want to study, want to eat, go to the toilet and go out, we also teach through the singing method in each lesson to instill Islamic morals and character. For example, when learning about plants, we teach how to care for plants to keep growing healthy, we also teach them about the importance of protecting the environment by not littering and getting children used to disposing of trash in its place. On the theme of animals, we invite children to an animal sanctuary to let them see firsthand the various kinds of animals Allah has created. We do not forget to always remind them to love animals, and not to hurt them. However, it is not only about animals but also every creature Allah created. We also teach them how important it is to apologize when they make a mistake and to admit their mistakes and to always love their friends.”

Based on the interview, researchers conclude that there are several Islamic character development in early childhood applied by Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya, i.e.: Character Education to Allah (Morals to Allah), Character Education to fellow human beings (morals to fellow human beings), and Environmental Character Education (morals to the environment).

Discussion

In essence, character education is an attempt to shape one's character so that one has a noble personality, and Islam has its own specific privileges in the development of character education (Darimi, 2018). Islamic character education is not only related to relationships between humans, but also to Allah and to all creatures (Purnomoaji and Wachid BS, 2021).

The main source of education about Islamic character is the Quran. While the example used as a model in Islamic character education is the Prophet Muhammad SAW who had a noble character. It is hoped that the people will be able to have noble morals as proof that the peace of the Prophet Muhammad will come.

The purpose of Islamic character education is morals towards God and towards His creatures, namely morals towards other humans and towards other living things (Hayati, 2018). Therefore, it is important to instill Islamic-based character education in early childhood so that they get used to living and growing according to their nature and avoid everything that is bad in the midst of an increasingly rapid development of the era.

As referring to the results of research conducted at Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya, there are several ways to develop and educate Islamic character (morals) in early childhood:

Character Education to Allah (Morals to Allah)

The starting point for morals towards Allah is the recognition and awareness that there is no God but Allah. He has commendable qualities; such a great nature, let alone humans, even angels would not be able to reach His essence (Hayati, 2018). This is taught to children by introducing *asmaul-husna* or commonly known as the good names of Allah, teaching the pillars of faith and pillars of Islam and also being taught how to worship and how to purify oneself before worship because it is one of the morals towards Allah. The practice of prayer education that is taught to children is not only so that children have theoretical knowledge about prayer, but also have practical knowledge and understanding of prayer, and thus the child will be able to pray correctly as Rasulullah SAW taught.

As he said that was narrated from Anas'i: Anas bin Malik said that Rasulullah SAW said; *"Son, do not turn your head here and there during prayer, for that will spoil the prayer; if you must do that, then it is permissible to do so only in voluntary prayers, and not in obligatory prayers."* (HR. at-Tirmizi) (Imam al-Hafizh Abi Abbas Muhammad bin Ismail Volume I: 260).

Allah Swt. says in the QS. Luqman [31]: 17:

﴿يٰٓبُنَيَّ اَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاَصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا اَصَابَكَ ۗ اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْاُمُوْر

"O my dear son! Establish prayer, encourage what is good and forbid what is evil, and endure patiently whatever befalls you. Surely this is a resolve to aspire to."

From the verse above, it is necessary in the current era for educators to instill religious values and morals to God in children from an early age, because this aims so that when children grow up they will tend to have a positive attitude towards their religion.

Character education to fellow human beings (morals to fellow human beings)

There are many details that the Quran provides with regard to the treatment of fellow human beings. Instructions regarding this matter are not only in the form of a prohibition on doing negative things such as killing, injuring the body, or taking property without a good reason, but also extending to hurting one's heart by telling someone's disgrace behind them, regardless of whether the disgrace is right or wrong. Even while giving material to those who hurt him. As Allah says in QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 263:

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَدَىٰ ۖ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٦﴾

“Kind words and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury. And Allah is Self-Sufficient, Most Forbearing.”

As was done by educators at Yassalmuna Palangkaraya Kindergarten to instill morals in fellow human beings, namely by carrying out habituation such as getting used to saying sorry when they make mistakes, respecting those who are more mature and loving friends and saying polite and polite things, this is also taught through a song entitled “I’m a Sholeh Child” while the contents of the song are as follows.

In English:

*“I’m a pious child obedient always,
To my father and mother is also my teacher,
I love friends, I do not differentiate
Bow down to Allah, I will not leave.”*

In Indonesian:

*“Aku anak sholeh taat selalu,
Pada ayah ibu juga guruku,
Ku sayangi teman, tak ku bedakan
Sujud pada Allah, tak ku tinggalkan.”*

As Asiqoh stated in Mislikhah that by singing songs and giving examples of concrete actions to children, children will easily obey the teacher’s orders. Because the characters of children’s songs are cheerful, singing children’s songs will turn on a cheerful atmosphere so they feel happy doing learning. Thus, conveying a message or character value in a children’s song will be easier to get children’s attention (Mislikhah, 2021).

Environmental Character Education (morals to the environment)

The environment here is everything that is around humans, animals, plants and inanimate objects. As taught by the educators at Yasalmuna Kindergarten of Palangkaraya, children are accustomed to disposing of trash in its place as a form of love for the environment.

Fadillah and Khorida stated that early childhood was expected to be able to arouse and realize environmental concern, the method was to introduce children to the importance of protecting the environment, this could be done by teaching children to dispose of trash where it was (Fadillah & Khorida , 2016).

Besides, children are also taught to always maintain cleanliness in any place, children are also taught to love animals, care for animals and care for plants through themes such as plants and herbs. As Allah says in QS. al-A’raf [7]: 56:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

“Do not spread corruption in the land after it has been set in order. And call upon Him with hope and fear. Indeed, Allah’s mercy is always close to the good-doers.”

Ramadhani (2018) said that the development of a caring character for the environment needs to be instilled in children from an early age, so that children can wisely manage the natural resources around them, and can foster a sense of responsibility in children as future generations, so that the character of loving the environment children have grown to be mentally strong, which will underlie a person's behavior in daily life.

According to Mahmud (2003), the purpose of moral education is to guide humanity on the principles of truth and the straight path, the way of Allah which can realize their happiness in the world and the hereafter. Good morals are the main goal of moral education and morals are not called good unless they are in accordance with the teachings of the Quran.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the concept of character education in Islam can be found in three moral goals that must be actualized in humans, namely morals towards Allah, morals towards fellow human beings, and morals towards other creatures. Moral development is very important, especially in early childhood education (Salsabilah, 2019), because at this time children are likened to white paper. Therefore, those who give good or bad colors are teachers themselves; if the child is in an educational environment, all behaviors and actions of teachers will be imitated by students.

Conclusion

Character education is carried out through the education of values or virtues, which are the basic values of the nation's character. In Islam, character education is better known as morality, which is a trait that is imprinted in the soul from which actions are born that are in harmony with the Quran and hadith easily without requiring prior thought and contemplation. Character education is the development of values, originating from the view of life or ideology of the Indonesian people, religion, culture, and values formulated in the goals of national education. In Islam, the concept of character education can be found in three moral goals that must be actualized in humans, namely morals to God, morals to fellow human beings, and morals to other creatures.

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