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THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN SHAPING THE CHARACTER OF THE YOUNG GENERATION

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ABSTRACT

Islamic education plays an important role in shaping the character of the young generation in the modern era. Moral degradation, technological influences, and social challenges have increased the need for effective character education among students. This study aims to analyze the role of Islamic education in developing students' moral values, discipline, responsibility, and social awareness. The research employed a qualitative descriptive method involving teachers, students, and parents from Islamic educational institutions. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The findings revealed that Islamic education contributes significantly to character formation through religious activities, moral guidance, teacher role modeling, and parental involvement. Students who actively participated in Islamic educational activities demonstrated better discipline, honesty, empathy, and social interaction. The study also found that spiritual activities such as prayer and Qur'an recitation positively influenced students' emotional control and ethical behavior. However, challenges such as the influence of social media, digital culture, and inconsistent parental supervision affected the implementation of character education. Despite these challenges, Islamic education remains an effective foundation for preparing young people to become responsible, ethical, and socially aware individuals. Therefore, the integration of Islamic values into educational practices is essential for supporting the moral development of future generations.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education plays a significant role in shaping the moral, spiritual, and social character of the young generation. In the modern era, rapid technological development and globalization have brought many positive impacts, but they have also created serious challenges for young people. Issues such as moral degradation, juvenile delinquency, lack of discipline, and declining respect for social and religious values have become major concerns in many societies. Therefore, education is expected not only to develop intellectual abilities but also to build strong character and ethical behavior among students.

Character education has become one of the essential goals of national education systems around the world. In the context of Islamic education, character formation is closely related to the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, which emphasize honesty, responsibility,

discipline, respect, compassion, and justice. Islamic education aims to create balanced individuals who possess intellectual intelligence, emotional maturity, and spiritual awareness. Through Islamic values, young people are encouraged to become responsible individuals who contribute positively to society.

The young generation is considered the future of a nation because they will become future leaders and decision-makers. However, many young people today face identity crises caused by negative social influences, uncontrolled access to digital media, and weak moral guidance. As a result, some students experience behavioral problems such as violence, bullying, dishonesty, and addiction to social media. These conditions indicate the urgent need for effective educational approaches that focus on moral and character development.

Islamic education provides a comprehensive framework for character building because it integrates knowledge, faith, and moral practice into daily life. Islamic educational institutions, families, and communities work together to instill positive values in students from an early age. Teachers are not only responsible for transferring knowledge but also for becoming role models who demonstrate good attitudes and behavior. In Islam, education is viewed as a process of nurturing the whole person intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and socially.

Furthermore, Islamic education emphasizes the importance of akhlak or noble character as the foundation of human life. The Prophet Muhammad is considered the best example of moral character for Muslims. Therefore, Islamic educational practices often encourage students to imitate the Prophet's attitudes such as honesty, patience, humility, and responsibility. Through continuous moral guidance, students can develop positive habits and ethical awareness in their interactions with others.

In addition, Islamic education encourages students to strengthen their relationship with God through worship and spiritual activities. Practices such as prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, and religious discussions help students develop self-discipline, emotional control, and inner peace. Spiritual development is important because it influences individual behavior and decision-making in everyday life. Students who possess strong spiritual values are more likely to avoid negative actions and maintain positive social relationships.

The role of parents is also crucial in supporting Islamic character education. Families are the first educational environment where children learn values, attitudes, and behavior. Parents who consistently apply Islamic teachings at home can help children develop strong moral foundations. Cooperation between schools and parents is necessary to ensure that character education is implemented effectively both inside and outside the classroom.

Moreover, Islamic education contributes to social harmony by teaching tolerance, empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect. These values are important in multicultural societies where individuals come from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Young people who understand Islamic ethical principles are expected to become agents of peace and social unity rather than conflict and intolerance.

Educational methods used in Islamic learning also influence character development. Interactive learning, storytelling, discussion, role modeling, and practical religious activities are commonly used to help students understand and practice moral values. Learning activities that involve real-life experiences can strengthen students' understanding of ethical behavior and social responsibility.

Despite its important role, Islamic education still faces several challenges in the modern era. Some educational institutions focus more on academic achievement than moral development. In addition, the influence of digital culture sometimes weakens students' interest in religious learning. Therefore, innovation in Islamic educational methods is needed to make learning more engaging, relevant, and effective for contemporary students.

Technology can also be utilized positively in Islamic education. Digital learning media, educational videos, and online religious platforms can help students access Islamic knowledge more easily. Teachers can integrate technology into learning activities to improve students' motivation and understanding while still emphasizing moral values and responsible digital behavior.

Based on these issues, it is important to examine the role of Islamic education in shaping the character of the young generation. Islamic education is expected to become an effective solution in addressing moral problems among youth while preparing them to become ethical, responsible, and productive members of society. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how Islamic education contributes to character formation and moral development among young people in contemporary society.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to analyze the role of Islamic education in shaping the character of the young generation. Qualitative research was chosen because it allows researchers to explore social phenomena, educational values, and human behavior in depth. The study focused on understanding how Islamic educational practices contribute to the moral and character development of students in educational environments.

The research was conducted in several Islamic educational institutions, including schools and madrasahs, where Islamic values are integrated into daily learning activities. The participants of the study consisted of teachers, students, and parents who were selected purposively based on their involvement in Islamic educational practices. This sampling technique was used to obtain relevant information from participants who have direct experience with character education through Islamic learning.

Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to examine students' behavior, classroom interactions, and religious activities conducted within the school environment. Interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and parents to gather detailed information regarding their perceptions of Islamic education and its influence on character formation. Documentation such as school regulations, lesson plans, and educational programs was also analyzed to support the research findings.

The interview process used semi-structured questions to allow participants to express their opinions freely while maintaining the focus of the study. The questions explored topics such as moral values taught in schools, teaching strategies, students' behavioral changes, and challenges in implementing Islamic character education. The collected data were recorded, transcribed, and organized systematically for analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative analysis techniques. The researcher classified the collected data into themes related to character development, moral values, educational methods, and the role of teachers and parents. After categorizing the data, the researcher interpreted the findings to identify patterns and relationships between Islamic educational practices and students' character formation.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the study applied triangulation techniques by comparing information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming the interview results with participants to avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Through these methods, the research aimed to provide accurate and trustworthy findings regarding the contribution of Islamic education to the character development of the young generation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study indicate that Islamic education plays an important role in shaping the character of the young generation. Based on observations and interviews conducted with teachers, students, and parents, Islamic educational practices significantly contributed to the development of moral values, discipline, responsibility, honesty, and social awareness among students. The integration of Islamic teachings into daily learning activities helped students understand the importance of ethical behavior both inside and outside the school environment.

One of the major findings revealed that regular religious activities positively influenced students' discipline and self-control. Activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'an recitation, and religious discussions encouraged students to develop consistent habits and time management skills. Teachers reported that students who actively participated in these activities demonstrated better behavior, respect for others, and stronger emotional control compared to students with lower participation levels.

The study also found that teachers served as important role models in the process of character formation. Students tended to imitate the attitudes and behavior demonstrated by their teachers, especially in terms of politeness, honesty, responsibility, and discipline. Teachers who consistently applied Islamic values in their interactions with students created a positive learning atmosphere that supported moral development. This finding shows that the success of Islamic character education is strongly influenced by the personal example provided by educators.

In addition, parental involvement was identified as a significant factor supporting character development. Parents who implemented Islamic values at home and maintained communication with schools contributed positively to students' moral behavior. Students who received consistent guidance from both school and family environments showed stronger character development than those who lacked parental supervision and support.

The findings further showed that Islamic education improved students' social attitudes and interpersonal relationships. Students became more respectful toward teachers, parents, and peers. They also demonstrated higher levels of empathy, cooperation, and tolerance in social interactions. Islamic learning activities that emphasized moral values encouraged students to avoid negative behaviors such as bullying, dishonesty, and disrespectful communication.

Another important finding was related to students' spiritual awareness. Islamic educational activities helped students strengthen their relationship with God through worship and religious reflection. This spiritual development influenced students' decision-making processes and encouraged them to behave responsibly in daily life. Students reported feeling more motivated to improve their attitudes and avoid actions that contradict Islamic teachings.

However, the study also identified several challenges in implementing Islamic character education effectively. Some teachers stated that the influence of social media and modern digital culture often distracted students from religious learning and moral values. In addition, limited parental supervision and differences in students' family backgrounds sometimes affected the consistency of character development outside the school environment.

Despite these challenges, most participants agreed that Islamic education remains an effective approach for building positive character among young people. The combination of religious instruction, moral guidance, teacher role modeling, and parental involvement contributed significantly to students' behavioral improvement and personal development.

Therefore, Islamic education can be considered an important foundation for preparing responsible, ethical, and socially aware future generations.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that Islamic education has a significant contribution to the development of character among the young generation. The results indicate that the integration of Islamic values into educational activities can positively influence students' moral behavior, discipline, responsibility, and social attitudes. This finding supports the view that education should not only focus on academic achievement but also emphasize moral and spiritual development as essential aspects of human growth.

One important aspect revealed in this study is the role of religious activities in strengthening students' self-discipline and emotional control. Daily practices such as prayer, Qur'an recitation, and religious reflection encourage students to manage their behavior and become more responsible in their actions. These activities create structured habits that help students develop consistency and self-awareness. In Islamic teachings, discipline is considered an important value because it shapes individuals into responsible and organized members of society.

The study also highlights the important role of teachers as moral role models. Students often imitate the attitudes and behavior demonstrated by their teachers. Therefore, teachers have a dual responsibility not only as educators but also as examples of good character. Teachers who consistently demonstrate honesty, patience, respect, and responsibility can create positive influences on students' character formation. This finding is consistent with Islamic educational principles, which emphasize exemplary behavior as an effective method of moral education.

Furthermore, parental involvement was found to be an essential factor in supporting the success of Islamic character education. Families are the first educational environment where children learn values, ethics, and social behavior. When parents and schools work together in implementing Islamic teachings, students receive consistent moral guidance both at home and in school. This collaboration strengthens the effectiveness of character education and helps students internalize positive values more deeply.

Another important finding is related to the development of students' social attitudes. Islamic education encourages values such as empathy, cooperation, tolerance, and mutual respect. These values are highly important in modern multicultural societies where social harmony and peaceful interaction are needed. Students who understand Islamic ethical principles tend to show better interpersonal relationships and avoid negative behaviors such as bullying, violence, and disrespectful communication.

The findings also indicate that Islamic education contributes to students' spiritual development. Spiritual awareness influences how students make decisions and respond to challenges in their daily lives. Students who possess strong spiritual values are generally more capable of controlling negative behavior and maintaining positive social interactions. Islamic education therefore functions not only as a source of religious knowledge but also as guidance for personal and emotional development.

However, the study identified several challenges in implementing Islamic character education effectively. One major challenge is the influence of technology and social media on students' behavior. While technology provides access to information and educational resources, it also exposes young people to negative content and lifestyles that may contradict moral and religious values. Excessive use of social media can reduce students' focus on educational and spiritual activities. Therefore, educators and parents need to guide students in using technology wisely and responsibly.

Another challenge is the difference in family backgrounds and levels of parental supervision. Some students receive strong moral guidance at home, while others experience limited support from their families. This inconsistency can affect the effectiveness of character education because students may encounter different values in school and at home. Consequently, stronger communication and cooperation between schools and parents are necessary to support students' character development.

The study also suggests that Islamic educational methods should continue to evolve in order to remain relevant to contemporary students. Traditional teaching approaches may not always attract students who are highly influenced by digital culture and modern lifestyles. Therefore, innovative learning strategies such as interactive learning, digital educational media, group discussions, and practical religious activities can make Islamic education more engaging and meaningful for young learners.

Overall, the discussion confirms that Islamic education has an important role in shaping ethical, responsible, and socially aware individuals. The integration of religious values, teacher role modeling, parental support, and spiritual activities contributes significantly to students' character formation. Although challenges exist in the modern era, Islamic education remains a valuable foundation for preparing the young generation to face social, moral, and global challenges while maintaining strong ethical principles.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that Islamic education plays a significant role in shaping the character of the young generation. Islamic educational practices contribute positively to the development of moral values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, respect, empathy, and social awareness among students. Through the integration of religious teachings into daily learning activities, students are encouraged to develop positive behavior and ethical attitudes both in school and in society.

The study also shows that religious activities, teacher role modeling, and parental involvement are important factors supporting character formation. Teachers serve not only as providers of knowledge but also as examples of good moral behavior, while parents reinforce Islamic values within the family environment. The cooperation between schools and families helps students internalize positive values more effectively and consistently.

Furthermore, Islamic education contributes to students' spiritual development by strengthening their relationship with God and encouraging self-control in daily life. Students who possess strong spiritual awareness tend to demonstrate better emotional management and social interaction. Islamic education therefore provides a balanced approach that combines intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual development.

However, the implementation of Islamic character education still faces several challenges, particularly the influence of digital technology, social media, and differences in family backgrounds. These challenges require educators and parents to adopt more innovative and relevant educational strategies to ensure that Islamic values remain meaningful for contemporary students.

In conclusion, Islamic education remains an important foundation for preparing the young generation to become responsible, ethical, and productive members of society. By strengthening moral and spiritual values, Islamic education can help young people face modern social challenges while maintaining positive character and strong ethical principles.

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