

## CONTRIBUTION TO THE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL CHARACTER BUILDING: A LITERATURAL REVIEW

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### Abstract

In an era of globalization and rapid technological development, challenges to moral values and the character of nations are becoming increasingly complex. This raises an urgent need for education that not only prioritizes intellectual aspects but also focuses on character formation. In the Indonesian context, Islamic education plays an important role in meeting these needs, given the majority of its inhabitants who embrace Islam. This paper aims to investigate the contribution of Islamic religion education to the development of Indonesian character. The method of research carried out was literature, which examined various relevant sources to gain an in-depth understanding of how Islamic religious education contributed to shaping the values, attitudes, and behaviors expected of good citizens. This analysis includes research into Islamic education components such as curricula, teaching methods, the role of teachers and the educational environment, as well as their implementation in the daily lives of students. The results of the survey show that Islamic education has a significant effect in strengthening fundamental values such as honesty, justice, patience, tolerance, and caring for one another. Through integrated learning between theory and practice, Islamic education is able to form individuals not only qualified in academic aspects but also noble morality. In addition, Islamic education also plays a role in developing the social awareness and interpersonal skills of the students, which are important aspects in the development of the character of the nation.

**Keywords:** Islamic Religious Education, Nation Character, Literature Review.

### Introduction

Character development is a systematic and continuous process in the education and development of individuals that prioritizes the cultivation of moral values, ethics, and good social behavior. (Farida, S. 2016). The goal of this process is to create individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also strong emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Those who succeed in developing a good character are expected to contribute positively to society and the nation (Salsabilah et al., 2021). Good character forms the foundation for a resilient, adaptive, and productive individual who will

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eventually form a healthy society. (Sitopu et al., 2024). Character development will also help nations face global challenges such as corruption, intolerance, and other social problems. (Insani et al., 2021). Thus, through character development, individuals are expected to make a positive contribution to the development of a more civilized and advanced nation.

Thus, the development of the character of a nation becomes an important and continuously developed topic in the field of education, one of which is in Indonesia by harmonizing the education of Islamic religion. In Indonesia, Islamic education has a significant role in sowing values that support the formation of individual character that not only noble morality but also can be the foundation for the integrity and progress of the nation. (Parhan, M., & Sutedja, B. 2019). Moreover, Islamic education serves as a holistic approach to education that aims to build individuals in spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects based on Islamic principles. This education focuses not only on knowledge and understanding of religion but also on the implementation of Islamic values in everyday life. (Sapitri, A., & Maryati, M. 2022).

As an important component of the education system, Islamic Religious Education plays a major role in the cultivation of moral and ethical values in the lives of individuals. (Afni et al., 2024). Focus on character and morality development helps in forming individuals who are not only knowledgeable about Islamic teachings, but also able to apply them in everyday life. (Amar, A. 2018). It becomes an important aspect in shaping a harmonious and tolerant society, which helps in advancing the nation and humanity as a whole. Therefore, it is important to evaluate how learning and values instilled through Islamic religious education can contribute to the development of the character of the Indonesian nation. (Salsabila et al., 2021).

The evaluation is very important to see success in the pupils who will later create a nation of character. Evaluation is a systematic process to determine the success, value, or significance of an object, project, program, or policy. (Astuti, M. 2022). This process involves collecting and analyzing data to make decisions or give feedback on what is being evaluated. The purpose is to correct, strengthen, or validate decisions, assist in planning, and facilitate improvement of performance or achievement of goals (Malawi, I., & Maruti, E. S. 2016).

In the context of education, evaluations are often designed to measure to what extent the learning objectives are achieved, identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, and provide a basis for recommendations for improvement. (Widodo, H. 2021). Meanwhile, in this connection, the evaluation of Islamic educational values is an important process in education that aims to measure the extent to which the understanding, internalization, and application of the Islamic values has taken place in individuals. (Guna et al., 2024). This evaluation process is not only related to theoretical knowledge but also the practice and implementation of agamistic values in everyday life. (Hidayat, T., & Asyafah, A. 2019).

Therefore, the evaluation of the values of Islamic education requires a comprehensive and sensitive approach, bearing in mind the importance of conducting evaluations in a manner that respects the diversity of religious understanding and practice. Through effective evaluation, Islamic religion education can be more effective in shaping character and improving the spiritual quality of students. Moreover, Indonesia has the largest Muslim majority population in the world and it provides a strategic position for Islamic religious education in the social and cultural context of the nation. (Darmadji, A. 2014; Suharna, A. 2016).

Islamic religious education is not only expected to form a religious individual, but also have a responsibility in the formation of an ethical, responsible, and qualified character. In the last few decades, there have been a number of social changes and challenges facing this nation, which has sparked a debate about the importance of strengthening character education through the Islamic religious education system. The study aims to analyze the concrete contribution of Islamic religious education to character development in the midst of the challenges of globalization as well as the shift in social values.

### **Research Method**

The method of literary research used in this study is an analytical descriptive approach, in which related literature is systematically identified, evaluated, and summarized to build a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of Islamic religious education to the development of the character of the nation. (Campbell, 2014; Boddy, 2016).

The steps taken by researchers are; 1) Identification of sources: Selection of relevant literary sources including books, journal articles, conference papers, theses, dissertations, and policy documents, with priority given to sources that have high validity and credibility. 2) Data extraction: Important data and information will be extracted from any source, including important definitions, methodologies used in previous studies, major findings, and contributions to the field of science. 3) Information synthesis: The information extracted will be synthesized to determine common themes, trends, and gaps in the literature. 4) Critical Analysis: Critical analysis of the findings and the extent to which existing research has explored and answered research questions about the contribution of Islamic education to the development of the character of the nation. 6) Writing and Presentation: Write conclusions and suggestions based on literature reviews that have been organized and analyzed (Christensen et al., 2011; Lancaster, 2007; Gliner et al., 2011; Bahn & Weatherill, 2013).

The literature search process will be concentrated on recognised databases and academic search engines such as Google Scholar, PubMed, JSTOR, and Scopus. The keywords to be used in the search include "Islamic religious education", "national character development", "Islamian ethics", "moral education", and other related. A

publication time limit will be set to ensure the relevance of the topic to the current context (Mayer, 2015; Oun & Bach, 2014).

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Development of Islamic Religion Education in Indonesia**

Education is a systematic process aimed at facilitating learning, or acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, ethics, and habits. (Hairiyanto et al., 2024). This process can take place in a variety of settings, such as in classrooms, in educational institutions, or through informal experience or training. Education is not only limited to academic knowledge, but also covers practical life learning and personal development (Tubagus et al., 2023).

Education is a key pillar in the development of individuals and societies, contributing not only to economic growth, but also to social development and justice. (Aslan & Shiong, 2023).

Meanwhile, Islamic education can be understood as a learning process designed to provide material about Islamic religion to individuals who want to deepen their knowledge, both in terms of academic material and daily practice. (Islam, D. A. 2001).

Islamic education (PAI) is an essential component of education systems in many countries, especially in countries with a significant Muslim population. PAI not only focuses on teaching religious doctrines, but also aims to shape Islamic character, ethics, and values. It covers various aspects, from studying the Quran and Hadith, to understanding the history of Islam, fiqh (Islamic law), akhlak (Ethics of Islam), and tassawuf (Spirituality of Islam). (Saihu, M. M., & Aziz, A. 2020).

The purpose of Islamic education is to increase the faith and fear of Allah, with the hope that a Muslim will be able to perform his duty as a servant of Allah well. It includes; 1) Faith and Taqwa: Understanding and internalizing the principles of faith and developing fear of Allah SWT. 2) Knowledge of Islam: Having a good understanding of the teachings of Islam, history, and the civilization of Islam. 3) Akhlaq Mulia: Building character and behavior that conforms to Islamic values. 4) Worship Skills: Practicing worship in accordance with Islamic Shariah. 5) Social Care: A person who contributes positively to society by actions that reflect Islamic Values. (Yusuf, W. F. 2018; Zukhrufin et al., 2021).

The Quran is the Bible of the prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and of the apostles of the Kingdom of Israel. The Qur'an is the Quran of the Prophet Muhammad. (Suparjo et al., 2021; Zukin, A., & Firdaus, M. 2022).

Islamic education uses a variety of methods to facilitate effective learning, such as: 1) Lectures and Discussions: To delineate material and encourage interaction. 2)

Hafalan: Special for the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as important prayers. 3) Case studies: Analyzing specific situations or events from an Islamic perspective. 4) Simulation and Practice: Especially in learning worship such as prayer and wudhu. 5) Project-based learning: Studying special issues or projects in the Islamic context. (Rahmat, M., & Yahya, M. W. B. H. M. 2022).

Overall, Islamic religious education plays an important role in the spiritual, moral, and intellectual development of Muslim individuals, preparing them to make a positive contribution to society at large. Notwithstanding all that, that Islamic education has a long history and from that history each has a different development with different periods of time. (Agustini, A. 2021).

Islamic education in Indonesia began in pre-colonial times, when Islam began to spread in Nusantara through traders, scholars, and Sufi who came mainly through trade routes. One of the first Islamic empires in Indonesia was the Pasai Ocean Kingdom in Aceh, which became the center of Islamic spread in the region. (Nasir et al., 2021).

During the Dutch colonial period, the Islamic religious education system experienced considerable growth. Due to segregation policies and the lack of interest of the colonial government in education for the indigenous peoples, various Islamic educational institutions such as banquets, madrasas, and Islamic religious schools flourished. These institutions were pioneered by the Islamic community itself as an attempt to preserve its identity and religious teachings. (Daulay, H. P., & Tobroni, T. 2017; Hashim, C. N., & Langgulang, H. 2008).

After the independence of Indonesia, there was institutionalization of Islamic religious education by the state. Massive reforms have been undertaken, including the standardization of curricula and the formation of adequate educational staff. Islamic education is also integrated into the national education system, with the establishment of educational institutions such as the State Islamic University (UIN), the State Institute of Islamic Religion (IAIN), and the State School of Religion Islamic (STAIN) in various regions of Indonesia. (Arifin, S. 2016).

The latest developments in Islamic education in Indonesia involve digitization and modernization of curricula to align with the needs of the present and future, without abandoning the basic values of Islamic teaching.

### **Structure and curriculum of Islamic Religion education**

The curriculum can generally be defined as a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and materials of the lesson and the manner used as guidelines for the conduct of learning activities to a particular educational objective (Muharrom et al., 2023; Aslan, 2023). It is intended to guide and guide the educational process in both formal and non-formal educational institutions. In the broader context, the curricula is also designed to meet the needs of the community and prepare students

to face future challenges both at the personal and professional levels. (Astuti et al., 2023; Suhardi et al., 2020; Aslan & Wahyudin, 2020).

The structure and curriculum of Islamic religion education in Indonesia includes a blend of various Islamic disciplines that focus on religious understanding, moral and ethical development, as well as their application in the real world. (Masturin, M. 2015).

At this level, students are taught the basics of Islamic teachings that include the Quran, hadiths, and akhlak (moral values). The focus is on forming the character and basic understanding of religion. 2) Islamic Religion Education in Primary School (SMP) or Madrasah Tsanaw (MTs): At the secondary level, the curriculum is deepened by adding more material about Islamic history, the more detailed teachings of the Quran and hadiths, Islamic laws (fiqh), and lessons in Arabic. 3) Islamic religion education in High School (SMA) or madrasah Aliyah (MA): At educational levels, students receive further experience in Islamic studies, including the science of kalam, tairfs, hadiths and advanced, the history of Islam, and more about the history and fiqh. (Azhari et al., 2023; Azmiyah et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the Islamic Education Curriculum in Indonesia generally contains several components that focus on teaching the values, beliefs, history, and practices of Islam. The curriculum is designed to shape the student's character in accordance with Islamic teachings, as well as equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to be a good and productive member of society (Sobandi et al., 2022). The main components of the Islamism education curricula in Indonesia include: 1) Aqidah: Trees of Faith in Islam, including concepts of God, angels, books, apostles, the day of the Resurrection, and qada and dhada. 2) Ibadah: Practical learning about Islamic worship, including prayer, fasting, zakat, Hajj, and prayer and zikir recommended. (seperti kebohongan, iri, dan kemalasan). The Qur'an and Hadiths: Understanding the content of the Quran and how to read, understand, and interpret the Quran, as well as studying the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Arabic: Arabic is taught as the language of the Koran and to help the understanding of the original texts of the Islamic sources. (Juliанти et al., 2023; Wahyudi, M. F., & Dewi, R. A. 2023).

With the enactment of the Law on the National Education System in Indonesia, the curriculum of Islamic Religion education continues to be adjusted to align with the developments of the times and the needs of students. To this, the Ministry of Religion and the Ministries of Education and Culture collaborated in drawing up a comprehensive and relevant curriculum. These curricula are normally subject to periodic evaluation and refinement. (Rahayu et al., 2023).

The curriculum of Islamic education in Indonesia is implemented in various levels of education, ranging from basic education (SD/MI), secondary education (SMP/MTs), to higher education (SMA/MA, and colleges). In general schools, Islamic lessons become compulsory subjects for Muslim students, while in madrasas or religious schools, the Islamic religion education is the principal curricular director. (Gofur et al., 2022).

The curriculum can be changed and adapted according to local needs and conditions, including adapted to changing times and new knowledge developments.

### **Islamic Religion Education and Character Development**

Character can be defined as a set of attributes, attitudes, and values that characterize individuals and determine the way they think, feel, and act in different situations. Character is a combination of behavior, motivation, and habits formed over time through experience and learning acquired by a person. (Farida, S. 2016).

Character is not only limited to moral aspects such as honesty, discipline, or empathy, but also includes personality traits such as courage, perseverance, and hard work. Good character is often associated with a person's ability to make ethical and moral decisions, build healthy interpersonal relationships, and demonstrate social responsibility and commitment to mutual well-being. (Salsabilah et al., 2021).

In the context of education, character formation is one of the main objectives, which involves teaching and practicing positive values in schools and learning environments. This is because character is considered very important in forming individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also ethical, integrity, and the ability to adapt to their social environment. (Insani et al., 2021).

Islamic education plays an important role in the development of character for its embrace, especially in Indonesia. In the context of formal education, the lessons of Islam became a compulsory component of the curriculum in schools in Indonesia, from elementary to secondary levels. (Imamah et al., 2021).

Character development through Islamic education focuses not only on theoretical knowledge of religion but also on its application to everyday life. Here are some important principles: 1) Basic Islamic Values: Emphasizing the application of basic values such as tauhid, honesty, justice, compassion, simplicity, and responsibility. 2) Implementation of worship: Encourage students to practice worships such as prayer, fasting, and zakat that encourage discipline, patience, and charity. 3) Moral development: Cultivate noble morals such as courtesy, hospitality, and fellowship that form the basis of healthy social interaction. 4) Education of the Quran and the Hadith: Education consisting of reading, understanding, and implementing the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith in real life. 5) Social awareness: Teaching the importance of peaceful coexistence, interreligious tolerance, and concern for social issues in society. (Ainiyah, N. 2013; Hartati, Y. 2021).

Implementation of character education in the Islamic Religion education curriculum in Indonesia includes a number of methods, such as: 1) Integration in the Eye of Teaching: Character values are integrated in all aspects of learning, for example in the fiqh lessons students are taught about responsibility and in the interpretation of

honesty. 2) Co-Curricular activities: Activities outside the classroom such as study, social activities, and worship practices conducted jointly also form the character of students. 3) Teacher's example: Teacher of Islamic Religion also serves as a model for students in showing behavior that reflects Islamic values. 4) Positive Environment: Create a school environment that supports the development of faith and fear, as well as appreciating and encouraging good practice in everyday life (Choli, I. 2019; Novita, A., & Bakar, M. Y. A. 2021).

Islamic education forms a strong foundation of character by combining spiritual practice, love of science, and an ethical way of life. It helps form individuals who not only perform in academic fields, but also make a positive contribution to their society and their environment.

## **Conclusion**

The contribution of Islamic education to the development of the character of a nation is very significant and complex, considering that it is not only formed by the factors of formal education but also by the social, cultural, and religious environment. From the review of literature, it can be concluded that Islamic religion education has an important and strategic role in shaping the values, ethics, and attitudes that form the foundation of a strong character of the nation. This is done through a number of key aspects: 1) Strengthening Moral and Ethical Values: Islamic Education strengthens universal moral and ethical values, such as justice, honesty, equality, compassion, and charity. These values are essential foundations in building an ethical and responsible individual and collective character of a nation. 2) Character-Based Learning: Islamic Religious Education integrates character-based learning into its curriculum, which not only focuses on religious knowledge but also its practice and implementation in everyday life. It helps to strengthen the student's character in a comprehensive way, covering intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. 3) Spiritual development: Islamic education emphasizes the development of spirituality through worship activities and in-depth understanding of religious doctrines. Strong spirituality guides and underpins a person's ethical behaviour in interacting with his environment. 4) Positive Behavior Model: Islamic Religious Education also includes character education through the example or model of positive behavior of teachers and religious figures. It helps shape attitudes and behaviors of students through real examples that can be imitated in their lives. 5) Social and Community Awareness: Islamic education promotes the formation of social and communal awareness through teachings that teach the importance of living side by side, tolerance, and caring for one another. It is essential in building the character of a united and harmonious nation.

From this information, it can be concluded that Islamic education makes a major contribution to the development of the character of a nation through the strengthening of moral and ethical values, the growth of spirituality, positive behavior models, and the

formation of social awareness. It becomes essential in preparing future generations that are not only intelligent and competent in their fields, but also have a strong character and integrity.

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