THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN INSTILLING ISLAMIC MORALS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH DAILY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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ABSTRAK: Pendidikan Akhlak merupakan komponen fundamental dalam pembentukan karakter anak usia dini, khususnya dalam pendidikan berbasis Islam. Penanaman nilai-nilai moral Islami di lembaga Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) penting untuk membangun pondasi karakter yang kokoh. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran guru dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai moral Islami melalui aktivitas harian di PAUD Padangsidimpuan. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, melalui observasi, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru berperan penting melalui keteladanan, pembiasaan, dan bercerita. Kegiatan seperti doa bersama, saling menyapa, dan membantu sesama dilakukan secara rutin untuk menanamkan nilai kesabaran, kejujuran, dan kasih sayang. Tantangan yang dihadapi meliputi keterbatasan waktu, bahan ajar, dan perlunya keterlibatan orang tua. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pelatihan guru berkelanjutan, penyediaan fasilitas yang memadai, serta penguatan kerjasama antara sekolah dan orang tua untuk mendukung pendidikan karakter Islami.
Kata Kunci: *Peran Guru, Pendidikan, Nilai Islami, Anak Usia Dini.*

ABSTRACT: Moral education is a fundamental component in the character formation of young children, especially in Islamic-based education. Instilling Islamic moral values in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) institutions is crucial to building a solid foundation of character. This study aims to explore the role of teachers in instilling Islamic moral values through daily activities at PAUD in Padangsidimpuan. A qualitative approach with a case study method was used, involving observation, interviews, and document analysis. The findings indicate that teachers play an important role through modeling, habituation, and storytelling. Activities such as collective prayers, greeting each other, and helping others are regularly conducted to instill values such as patience, honesty, and compassion. Challenges faced include time constraints, limited teaching materials, and the need for active involvement from parents. This study recommends continuous teacher training, provision of adequate facilities, and strengthening cooperation between schools and parents to support Islamic character education.
Keywords : Teacher's Role, Education, Islamic Values, Early Childhood

INTRODUCTION

Moral education is a crucial element in shaping a child's personality, especially during early childhood. Early childhood is a critical developmental phase where children begin to explore the outside world and learn from what they see and hear (Supriadi et al., 2023),This period is often referred to as the "golden age" because it is a crucial phase for character development that shapes a child's future life. Effective moral education will produce a generation with noble character, a sense of responsibility, and the ability to contribute positively to society (Hamdani et al., 2022).

In the context of an ever-advancing era, moral education faces increasingly complex challenges. Globalization and digital technology have a significant impact on children's lives, both positive and negative (Triyanto, 2020), On one hand, technological advancements facilitate access to information and broaden children's horizons. On the other

hand, children are also vulnerable to exposure to content that contradicts moral values. This situation requires serious attention from various parties, including educational institutions, to equip children with strong moral values from an early age (Nursiti Khodijah et al., 2023).

Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions play a strategic role in shaping children's character. ECE serves not only as a place for learning but also as a social space where children learn to interact with peers, teachers, and their environment (Ayuningtyas et al., 2022),This is where the importance of integrating moral education into all teaching and learning activities comes into play. Moral education should not be taught merely in theory but must be practiced in every daily activity at school (Nurhayati, 2022).

Teachers in Early Childhood Education (ECE) play a vital role in nurturing Islamic moral values in children by serving not only as educators but also as role models. Their actions, words, and behavior significantly influence children's character development. In Islam, moral education is regarded as a sacred trust (amanah) that must be carried out with responsibility and sincerity. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of exemplary conduct in teaching, as reflected in the hadith stating that he was sent to perfect noble character. This highlights that moral education goes beyond theoretical instruction, requiring teachers to demonstrate virtuous behavior in their daily interactions (Taabudillah, 2023).

In the realm of Islamic education, fostering noble character should not be limited to the formal curriculum. It must become an integral part of daily activities. Simple practices such as reciting prayers before studying, sharing food, helping others, and exchanging greetings are practical examples of moral education that can be applied in schools. These activities not only teach moral values but also encourage children to internalize them. Teachers play a significant role in embedding these values in students. Through consistent habit formation, teachers can guide children to embrace these principles. This creates a nurturing environment where character development thrives (Amri et al., 2019)

A teacher's exemplary conduct is a key element in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood. Children learn by imitating and observing the behavior of adults around them. Therefore, teachers must demonstrate attitudes aligned with Islamic values, such as patience, honesty, fairness, and compassion. A teacher's positive demeanor not only shapes children's behavior but also creates a comfortable learning environment that supports their moral development (Kuswanto et al., 2021)

However, the implementation of moral education in Early Childhood Education (ECE) often faces various challenges. One common obstacle is the limited understanding teachers have about effective methods and strategies for instilling moral values. Some teachers may have insufficient knowledge of character education and how to integrate it into the learning process. Therefore, professional training and development for teachers become an urgent necessity to enhance their competence in this field (Temli Durmuş, 2019)

Family support plays a crucial role in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood, as the values taught at school must be reinforced at home to ensure consistent character development. Parents act as primary role models, guiding children through daily interactions and demonstrating behaviors aligned with moral teachings. When school and home environments work together in promoting the same values, children are more likely to internalize and practice positive behavior. However, if parents fail to support or provide contradictory examples, the school's efforts in moral education may become less effective. Therefore, active collaboration between educators and parents through regular communication, parenting workshops, and joint moral programs is essential to create a supportive environment that nurtures children's moral development

In the context of Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim, Islamic moral education becomes an essential part of the national education system (Yenita Suatrina & Jamilus, 2023) The Ministry of Education in Indonesia incorporates moral values into the national curriculum, including early childhood education. Islamic-based schools hold a significant role in applying these principles.

Their responsibility extends to ensuring that moral teachings are effectively practiced. Schools are expected to instill core Islamic values in daily learning. This integration supports character development from a young age (Asma, 2024)

Research shows that children with good morals tend to adapt more easily to their social environment, possess better communication skills, and are more prepared for academic challenges. This proves that moral education is not only crucial for children's moral development but also has a positive impact on their social and intellectual growth. However, there is still a gap between theory and practice in the implementation of moral education in early childhood education institutions. Previous studies have shown that many educational institutions have not fully succeeded in integrating moral values into daily activities. This highlights the importance of conducting further research on how teachers can optimally play their role in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood (Wahyuni & Putra, 2020)

This research is highly relevant in providing a clearer picture of the practice of moral education in Early Childhood Islamic Education (PAUD), particularly those based on Islamic principles. This study will also explore various strategies used by teachers in instilling moral values through daily activities, as well as identify the challenges they face in the process. Through this research, it is expected that solutions and recommendations beneficial to the development of character education in PAUD institutions can be found. The results of this research are also expected to serve as a reference for teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in improving the quality of Islamic moral education in Indonesia.

Ultimately, moral education is not only the responsibility of teachers at school, but also involves all parties, including families, communities, and the government. With good cooperation, Islamic moral education can be instilled from an early age, creating a generation that is intelligent, morally upright, and ready to become dignified and responsible future leaders (Sya'bani et al., 2020).

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, aiming to explore the role of teachers in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood through daily activities at school (Royani et al., 2023),The research is conducted in Padangsidimpuan, focusing on Islamic-based early childhood education institutions. Primary data is collected through direct classroom observations, in-depth interviews with teachers, school principals, and parents, as well as document studies such as(Afriantoni et al., 2023) the curriculum and school activity records. The observations aim to examine the interactions between teachers and children in daily activities related to Islamic morals, while the interviews seek to uncover teachers' understanding and strategies for teaching these values. Secondary data in the form of school documents provide insights into the policies and educational structure implemented in PAUD institutions (Afendi et al., 2022).

Data analysis is carried out using thematic analysis, which allows the researcher to identify key themes related to the practice of instilling Islamic morals. Triangulation is used to enhance data validity by verifying findings from various sources, such as teachers, school principals, and parents. This method is expected to produce more accurate and comprehensive findings. The results of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for educational managers, teachers, and policymakers in designing more effective Islamic moral education programs in PAUD. Additionally, this research aims to contribute to the development of character education in Indonesia, particularly in Islamic-based early childhood education (Masykuroh, 2020)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study on The Role of Teachers in Instilling Islamic Morals in Early Childhood through Daily School Activities conducted in Padangsidimpuan shows that teachers play a crucial role in shaping the Islamic character of young children. Teachers not only serve as educators but also as role models who set real-life examples in their daily interactions. Their interactions with children, both inside and

outside the classroom, become essential moments for directly instilling Islamic values.

Observations in schools show that teachers consistently carry out daily activities such as reciting prayers together before and after lessons, greeting each other when entering and leaving the classroom, and teaching values such as mutual respect, sharing, and helping one another. These activities are performed regularly, allowing children to become accustomed to behaviors aligned with Islamic teachings.

Interviews with teachers revealed that the main methods used are role modeling, habituation, and moral reinforcement through Islamic stories. Teachers deliberately display courteous behavior, compassion, and patience in every interaction with the children. They also frequently use stories about prophets, tales of the companions, and educational games to convey moral values in an engaging manner that aligns with the children's level of understanding.

Additionally, teachers take advantage of certain situations to provide moral guidance. For example, when a child has a disagreement with a friend, the teacher immediately offers guidance on the importance of forgiveness, patience, and mutual respect. Teachers deliver advice using gentle and compassionate language, ensuring that children feel comfortable and are receptive to the messages being conveyed.

The research findings also highlight the importance of parental involvement in supporting Islamic moral education at school. Teachers frequently communicate with parents to share children's progress and emphasize the importance of practicing Islamic values at home. Several teachers stated that the success of instilling Islamic morals is greatly influenced by the continuity between education provided at school and that practiced at home.

However, the study also identified several challenges faced by teachers in instilling Islamic values. The main challenge includes the limited time available to carry out habituation activities due to the dense curriculum. Additionally, the diverse social and cultural backgrounds of the children also affect their acceptance of the values taught at school.

Insufficient educational facilities also present a significant challenge in facilitating effective learning. Several schools lack essential resources such as Islamic storybooks, teaching aids, and appropriate learning media, which are crucial for engaging students and reinforcing the moral lessons. As a result, teachers must rely on their resourcefulness and creativity to create their own materials and teaching tools that are suitable for delivering the content of Islamic moral education. This situation demands that teachers not only innovate in terms of instructional strategies but also invest extra effort in developing teaching resources to ensure that the values being taught are effectively communicated to the students. Without proper resources, the process of instilling Islamic morals may be less impactful, and teachers are often left with limited options to enhance the learning experience.

Teachers in Padangsidimpuan exhibit strong enthusiasm in overcoming these limitations. They frequently create their own teaching materials using simple, locally available resources. Additionally, some schools organize extracurricular activities, such as mosque visits, social events, and celebrations of Islamic holidays. These activities help reinforce the children's understanding of religious values. By doing so, teachers ensure that the children continue to learn and practice Islamic morals in an engaging and meaningful way.

The study also found that teachers who received additional training in character education possess better skills in teaching Islamic values. This training helps teachers understand effective teaching methods and how to handle various child personalities with appropriate approaches. Teachers with these skills are able to create a more interactive learning environment, which supports the development of Islamic character in children.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes that teachers play a crucial role in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood in Padangsidimpuan. Through role modeling, habituation, effective communication with parents, and creative teaching approaches, teachers successfully create a learning environment that supports the development of Islamic character in children.

To improve the effectiveness of Islamic moral education, this study recommends

continuous training for teachers, the provision of adequate educational facilities, and enhanced cooperation between schools and parents. The government should also support this program with policies that promote the systematic and sustainable implementation of character education at the early childhood education level. With these steps, it is hoped that Islamic moral education can be more effective and provide a lasting positive impact on the younger generation.

This study reveals that teachers play a very important role in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood in Padangsidimpuan. Teachers not only serve as educators who deliver academic content but also as role models who provide real-life examples in daily life. The interaction between teachers and children, both inside and outside the classroom, has a significant impact on the formation of children's character. As explained by (Kandiri & Arfandi, 2021) The role of the teacher as a guide and role model is crucial in character education for children. The example set by the teacher serves as the main foundation in shaping behavior that aligns with Islamic values.

The methods used by teachers in Padangsidimpuan to instill Islamic morals include role modeling, habituation, and reinforcement through Islamic stories. According to (Ajriahmuazimah et al., 2022)Role modeling is the most effective method in educating children because they tend to imitate the behavior of adults they consider as role models. Habituation, when done regularly, also plays a significant role in forming good habits. In this case, activities such as reciting prayers together, greeting each other, and showing mutual respect between teachers and students help establish behavioral patterns that align with Islamic teachings.

In addition, moral reinforcement through Islamic stories, such as the tales of the prophets and companions, has proven to be an effective tool in conveying Islamic values. Research by (Jamilah, 2023) shows that the use of stories in character education can have a deeper impact because children are more likely to accept moral messages through engaging narratives. Therefore, teachers in Padangsidimpuan actively use Islamic stories to instill important moral values for the development of children's character.

However, the challenges faced in the implementation of Islamic moral education cannot be overlooked. One of the main challenges is the limited time available for habituation activities. As is well known, the dense curriculum often restricts the time that can be allocated for non-academic activities, including those focused on character building. According to (Raharjo et al., 2018) limited time can be a significant barrier in implementing character education comprehensively. Therefore, it is important for schools to balance academic achievement with the character development of children.

The diverse social and cultural backgrounds among children also become factors that influence the effectiveness of Islamic moral education. Each child brings values and habits from home, which sometimes do not always align with the values taught at school. As stated by (Trommsdorff, 2020)cultural and social diversity can affect the way children receive and internalize moral values. Therefore, teachers must be more sensitive in teaching Islamic values and strive to understand these differences so that education can be well received by all children.

In addition, inadequate educational facilities also present a real obstacle in supporting effective learning. Some schools in Padangsidimpuan lack Islamic storybooks, teaching aids, and appropriate learning media. The shortage of proper facilities can limit the creativity of teachers in delivering learning materials. In this situation, teachers in Padangsidimpuan must be more creative in using simple materials available around them to create effective and engaging learning media for the children (Arafat, 2020)

The diversity of social and cultural backgrounds also influences how children respond to the Islamic values taught at school. Some children may face difficulties in adopting these values due to the influence of their home environment. Therefore, parental involvement is crucial to reinforcing the moral education provided at school. As stated by (Puspitasari et al., 2021)good cooperation between the school and parents is essential to creating an environment that supports the holistic development of children's character.

This study also found that teachers who received additional training in character education have better skills in teaching Islamic values. According to (Tuhuteru et al., 2023)training for teachers in character education can enhance their understanding of effective strategies for instilling moral values. This training helps teachers master teaching methods that are appropriate for children's development and also ways to address various behavioral issues that arise with children.

Well-trained teachers in character education can create a more interactive learning environment that supports the development of Islamic character in children. As explained by (Rochim & Amal Khayati, 2023), interactive teaching can enhance student engagement and make it easier for them to understand the values being taught. Therefore, teacher training is essential to ensure that Islamic moral education can be implemented effectively.

In addition, the success of Islamic moral education is also influenced by support from existing educational policies (Darlis, 2018)This study recommends that the government provide greater support for character education programs at the early childhood education level. As stated by (Muzakkir et al., 2024),policies that systematically support character education will facilitate the implementation of these programs in schools. Such support can include the provision of adequate facilities, the development of a curriculum focused on character education, and continuous teacher training.

It is also important to recognize that Islamic moral education is not only implemented in schools but must also be reinforced at home (Labaso, 2018) Therefore, collaboration between schools and parents is essential to create continuity in children's moral education. As stated by (Saleh, 2022) the values taught at home should align with those taught at school so that children can understand and practice them well in their daily lives.

This study also found that extracurricular activities, such as visits to mosques and celebrations of Islamic holy days, can strengthen children's understanding of Islamic values. Such activities provide children with hands-on experiences and deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings. Therefore, schools in Padangsidimpuan should continue to develop extracurricular activities that support Islamic moral education.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the crucial role of teachers in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood. Through role modeling, habituation, effective communication with parents, and creative teaching approaches, teachers can create an environment that supports the development of Islamic character in children. To enhance the effectiveness of Islamic moral education, continuous teacher training, adequate educational facilities, and supportive policies for implementing character education at the early childhood education level are essential.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that teachers play a crucial role in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood through daily school activities in Padangsidimpuan. Teachers are not only educators but also role models who demonstrate Islamic values through their actions and behavior. The interaction between teachers and children, both inside and outside the classroom, has proven to be essential in directly imparting Islamic values. Through daily activities such as reciting prayers, greeting one another, and teaching values such as respect, sharing, and helping, teachers successfully create an environment that supports the formation of children's character in line with Islamic teachings.

The methods employed by teachers, such as role modeling, habituation, and reinforcement through Islamic stories, have been found to be effective in instilling moral values in children. Teachers in Padangsidimpuan consistently demonstrate politeness, compassion, and patience in their interactions with children, which further strengthens the development of these values. Additionally, the involvement of parents in supporting Islamic moral education is crucial, with effective communication between schools and homes reinforcing the values taught.

However, the study also identified several challenges faced by teachers, such as time constraints due to the heavy curriculum,

cultural and social diversity among children, and limited educational facilities. These challenges hinder the full implementation of Islamic moral education. Despite these obstacles, teachers in Padangsidimpuan exhibit high levels of creativity and dedication, utilizing available resources to create effective learning materials and engaging children in extracurricular activities that reinforce their understanding of Islamic values.

Overall, this study emphasizes the important role of teachers in instilling Islamic morals in early childhood and highlights the need for continuous professional development, adequate educational facilities, and improved cooperation between schools and parents. By addressing these challenges and supporting teachers through training and sufficient resources, the effectiveness of Islamic moral education can be significantly enhanced, bringing positive long-term impacts for future generations.

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