

Character Formation Through Islamic Religious Education In Early Childhood

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Abstract: The article discusses the role of Islamic religious education and character building through Islamic religious education in early childhood (PAUD). Therefore, the main goal of PAI learning is the formation of personality in students which is reflected in their behavior and mindset in everyday life. Besides that, one of the successes of PAI learning in schools is also determined by the application of appropriate learning methods.

Keywords: Character, Islamic Religious Education, Early Childhood

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Abstrak: Tulisan membahas tentang peran pendidikan agama Islam dan pembentukan karakter melalui pendidikan agama Islam pada anak usia dini (PAUD). Oleh sebab itu, tujuan utama dari Pembelajaran PAI adalah pembentukan kepribadian pada diri siswa yang tercermin dalam tingkah laku dan pola pikirnya dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Disamping itu, keberhasilan pembelajaran PAI disekolah salah satunya juga ditentukan oleh penerapan metode pembelajaran yang tepat.

Kata Kunci: Karakter, Pendidikan Agama Islam, Anak Usia Dini

A. Introduction

Character education has become an important issue in the world of education lately, this is related to the phenomenon of moral decadence (decrease) that occurs in the midst of society and in the government environment which is increasing and various (Maunah, 2015). Noble character, politeness, and religiosity which are upheld and have become the culture of the Indonesian nation so far seem to feel foreign and are rarely found in society (Fathul Amin 2019).

In this era of globalization which is full of challenges, it seems that education is getting harder with the increasingly complex demands of modern society. The impact is that educators must keep up with the pace of developments that are increasingly creative and dynamic, but still maintain Islamic values. Instilling Islamic values through education is very necessary for early childhood. Seeing the phenomenon of today's social life, most parents have introduced early childhood to life that is not in accordance with their world (Wantah, 2005). A luxurious lifestyle makes simplicity seem to disappear. Games, gadgets, malls and television are children's daily consumption. This creates a spoiled, selfish, weak attitude, even disrespect for parents.

Character education is the right answer to the problems mentioned above and schools as education providers are expected to be places capable of realizing the mission of character education (Harfiani et al., 2021). One alternative that can be done in carrying out character education in schools is to optimize the learning of Islamic religious education (PAI) materials.

The term character is connected and exchanged with the terms ethics, morals, and or values and is related to moral strength, has a "positive" not neutral connotation. Therefore character education more broadly can be interpreted as education that develops cultural values and national character in students so that they have values and character as their own character, apply these values in their own lives as members of society, and citizens who are religious, nationalist, productive, and creative.

Education is a form of embodiment of human culture that is dynamic and full of development (Majid & Azizurahman, 2022). Therefore changes or developments in education are things that are supposed to happen in line with changes in the culture of life. Changes in the sense of improving education at all levels need to be continuously carried out in anticipation of future interests and demands of modern society (Sitompul & Hayati, 2019).

Islamic Religious Education is expected to be able to produce human beings who are always trying to perfect their faith, piety, and noble character, noble character includes ethics, character, or morals as the embodiment of education. Education is part of future

investment, community investment as well as state investment in the framework of advancing and educate the life of the nation.

B. Method

The method is a series of ways that are arranged in a structured manner that is used to achieve a certain goal. The method used in this research is to use a qualitative descriptive approach in the form of observation. This research was carried out in one of the Kindergartens (TK) in the Bangun Purba sub-district, Deli Serdang Regency. And those who are the subject of research are teachers and students in the Kindergarten (TK).

Education for preschool-age children in the form of Kindergarten (TK) is intended as a mentoring, teaching, and training program in order to help children develop all aspects of their development and optimize their potential in children. In Kindergarten education, the main object of learning is children, so that the implementation must be adapted to the characteristics of child development, both in terms of learning methods, learning media, and infrastructure that support learning and the learning environment at school (Sugiyono, 2010).

C. Results and Discussion

From the results of our research, we made direct observations in one of the kindergartens (kindergartens) in the Bangun Purba sub-district. We can see how Islamic religious education is implemented in PAUD. As we know that early childhood is very active and responsive in thinking, remembering, memorizing what people around them say.

1. Learning Outside Class

In the kindergarten that we observed, we saw a very positive habit taught by the teacher so that children get used to good habits. Before the children entered the class, all the children were told to line up in front of the class neatly. Then they read a prayer and sing before going to class.

2. Learning in Class

a. Praying

Once in class before starting the lesson that will be taught by their teacher they read a prayer before studying.

b. Mention Asmaul Husnah (names of Allah) & Short Du'a

After that they were also taught to mention the 20 names of Asmaul Husna sequentially from the child sitting at the very front to the very back. As well as the children there are taught other prayers such as prayers before going to bed, wake-up prayers, and other prayers.

c. Play and Learn

And on that day we were given the opportunity to give one game. Usually early childhood is synonymous with "playing", whether it's in the classroom or outside the classroom. Playing alone has a very big influence on the development of a child. Sometimes a child doesn't care whether his physical and psychological condition is good or not, everything is done happily, because basically playing is a necessity for children. Therefore, the role of parents and teachers is needed in providing direction and supervision. Parents and teachers also play a role in choosing games that are appropriate to the level of development and not just for reasons that children like (Setiawan & Harfiani, 2019).

One of the games we gave at that time was guessing the surah. At that time one of us recited the sura al-Fatihah and all of the children knew and even memorized the recitation of al-Fatihah even though they had to learn and fix how to read it. After that I trying again to read one of the most recent surahs in juz 30, namely An-Nash, and some of them memorized some of them not too well.

d. Adab and Morals

The children also look polite and well-mannered because they are taught about religion in the kindergarten, so about 60-70% of the rest is for general matters. As far as we observed while we were in the Kindergarten there were many positive things that we encountered both in the learning system and in

everyday life. This politeness can be seen when they meet older people, or other guardians of students who come to the kindergarten, they swiftly greet by greeting and shaking hands with these older people, from this it can be seen that the upbringing at the school is very good.

In order to keep and restore children as the hope of the family and nation, they need to be educated properly and correctly. And the most important place to educate children is parents. Because the child's character is usually influenced by heredity. A child's behavior is often not far from the behavior of his father or mother. In the Javanese language, there is the term "Peanut ora ninggal lanjaran" (Long bean trees never leave the wood or bamboo where they twine and spread). In addition, both the social environment and the natural environment also shape children's character (Triuliana, Dhieni, and Hapidin 2019).

According to Muklas, in a harsh social environment, children tend to behave anti-socially, violently, violently, like to be hostile, and the like. Meanwhile, in an arid, hot and barren environment, children tend to be violent and dare to die. Referring to the various meanings and definitions of character mentioned above, as well as the factors that can influence character, character can be interpreted as a basic value that builds a person's personality, formed both due to heredity and environmental influences, which distinguishes him from other people, and is manifested in attitude and behavior in everyday life (Muklas 2012). And usually the character of children at school is inseparable from the influence of each family's upbringing. Prasanti and Fitriani (2018) state that character formation begins with the influence of the family, followed by schools and communities. Based on this opinion, family is the first and main factor in building children's character. Because before children get education from the school environment, children first get education from their parents.

The way parents treat children influences the formation of character and this character can be seen from the child's behavior. Another opinion also says that parents

are the main factor in forming children's character. Hsin and Chen (2014) state that parents are the main factor in forming children's character. The rules applied at school must be in line with the rules applied by parents while the child is at home. This rule can be done naturally by applying it in everyday life through habituation. This opinion confirms that parents are the main factor in forming children's character, one of which is religious behavior. Based on the description above it can be synthesized that parents and family are the main roles in shaping children's religious behavior so that parents must teach good behavior to children and adjust and familiarize the rules at school with the rules at home so that children remain in an environment that has religious behavior values.

The future of the nation's children is now very concerning. Crimes committed by children of reproductive age indicate that schools and other educational institutions face serious challenges. Because besides shaping children to be ready to compete in the global arena, it also prepares them to excel in building Islamic values in every aspect of life. Because of this, serious attention is needed to maintain children's character so that they are on the right track. So it is a necessity that we must unite to educate children's morals.

In order for the classroom atmosphere to be conducive, the expected positive behavior from children increases and unwanted behavior can be minimized, the teacher needs to manage the class professionally with the knowledge and teaching experience the teacher has in managing the class. As a manager or manager the teacher is responsible for maintaining the physical environment of the class so that it is always enjoyable for learning activities and provides a sense of security and satisfaction in achieving the expected goals.

By instilling and teaching education to early childhood in the golden age when a lot of knowledge is absorbed, it is possible that children's knowledge and understanding of religion will increase. A good seed in every child will have an impact on the personality of the nation. The high character of the people of a nation will bring it to civilization and progress and peace. If the characteristics/morals of the people are low, then a nation is unable to develop itself towards progress and civilization that is good and respected. Even

low morals and damage to individual character in society has the potential to cause the destruction of a nation.

To know that character education can be said to be successful is to see the extent to which a person's actions and deeds can give birth and bring benefits to himself and also to others. As the hadith of the Prophet SAW "The best human beings are those who have the best morals and are beneficial to others". The group that has the greatest potential to be able to spread goodness and benefits to others are those who are faithful and pious.

D. Conclusion

Education is a form of embodiment of human culture that is dynamic and full of development. Therefore changes or developments in education are things that are supposed to happen in line with changes in the culture of life. With the existence of Islamic religious education, it is hoped that it will be able to produce human beings who always strive to perfect their faith, piety, and have noble character. Noble character includes ethics, manners, or morals as an embodiment of education.

Instilling character in children from an early age means participating in preparing the nation's generation with character, they are candidates for the nation's generation who are expected to be able to lead the nation and make the country civilized, uphold the nation's noble values with good morals and manners and become a knowledgeable generation. high and adorn himself with faith and piety. The term character is interchangeably associated with the terms ethics, morals, and values related to moral strength, with a "positive" not neutral connotation.

Education for preschool-age children in the form of Kindergarten (TK) is intended as a mentoring, teaching, and training program in order to help children develop all aspects of their development and optimize their potential in children.

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