

# The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Forming the Religious Character of Students

Susi Susilawati<sup>1</sup>, Devi Aprilianti<sup>2</sup>, Masduki Asbari<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Insan Pembangunan, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>STMIK Insan Pembangunan, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author email: [susi.uciuci@gmail.com](mailto:susi.uciuci@gmail.com)

**Abstract** - Islamic Religious Education is a subject that is considered effective in shaping the character of students, specifically religious character. Where this religious character has a big influence on the lives of students both in the world and in the hereafter. The results showed that Islamic religious education has an important role in character building, more specifically, the religious character which is rooted in the learning of faith.

**Keywords:** Character building, Islamic religious education, religious

## INTRODUCTION

The character of students is formed through their interaction with their environment, such as family, where they spend themselves learning and mingling. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the quality of education can determine the quality of a nation. The superior quality of education is guaranteed to be able to produce intelligent and competent people in their fields. From education, individuals are formed with character, but the impact of globalization is to make people forget character education while character education and moral values are the very urgent foundation of the nation, so it is important to have character education from an early age. Instilling character education from an early age in life makes a person aware that everything or actions are directed by God.

Character education is expected to be able to shape the character of students in a better direction. One of the efforts made is to apply the subject matter obtained at school. The subjects given to students should be able to apply them in everyday life. So it is the same with Islamic religious education material which should be applied in life so that students can have a religious character. Islamic religious education is expected to be able to produce humans who always strive to perfect faith and piety, and have a noble character, noble character includes ethics, character, or morals as the embodiment of education.

The term character is associated and interchanged with the term ethics, morals, or values and is related to moral strength, connoting "positive" not neutral. Therefore, broadly character education is the process of forming cultural values and national character, which can be applied in life, both as students and as members of productive, creative, nationalist, and religious society.

Education prioritizes the cognitive aspect, although the national education goals include character education, in reality, the graduation standards for elementary and secondary schools still give more presentation to the national exam than the results of a comprehensive evaluation of all subjects.

Character education is not in the form of material that can only be recorded and memorized and cannot be evaluated in a short period, but character education is a learning that is applied in all student activities both at school and in the community through a process of habituation, example, and carried out continuously. .

Therefore, the success of character education is a shared responsibility between schools, communities and parents.

To print the expected education, there needs to be a program that leads to behavior or character development that helps students have good morals and provides knowledge to avoid things that can damage students' morals.

Islamic religious education in schools is very important for students to understand the teachings of Islam more broadly and thoroughly. Islamic education also aims to strengthen faith, increase understanding, appreciation and practice of Islamic teachings for students.

Character formation through Islamic religious education can be carried out through formal and non-formal education channels. In the non-formal path occurs in the community and family environment, while the formal occurs in the school environment. The state prepares institutions to improve human quality through education, namely schools. Meanwhile, character building cannot be separated from the important role of parents, teachers and society.

Through parents, students can imitate good behavior directly that they usually get at home. Through teachers, students can gain knowledge about what and how to do good, while in society, students can apply what they have learned from parents and teachers.

Especially for Islamic religious education subjects, it has become a demand for teachers to shape the character of students who have religious values. One of the efforts to grow students' religious character is to get them used to doing activities that have religious values. However, it is undeniable that in shaping the character of students who are religious is not easy, all parties involved must support and cooperate. In addition, building and shaping character must be carried out continuously, of course with a short period of time. The character of a person cannot be easily changed but over a long period of time. Islamic religious education is one of the alternatives used in character building by optimizing PAI learning.

As a subject, Islamic Religious Education has an important role in raising the awareness of the values of Islamic teachings to students. The content of subjects that contain values, morals, and ethics places Islamic Religious Education in a leading position in the development of students' religious morals. The teacher's role is sometimes only trapped in the teaching function, while in the educational function it is not. Even though the function of teaching is one of the functions of educating. The educational function includes the transfer of knowledge, as well as the transfer of values into students, both in the form of cognitive, affective and psychomotor.

### DISCUSSION

#### **The Role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Student Life**

Education is an agent of significant change in character building and Islamic religious education is part of the process, but in reality, Islamic religious education is only a material in schools or is only limited to teaching materials without any application in everyday life. So that the function of Islamic religious education as a moral (religious) shaper does not work well.

Worse yet, PAI material which is not the standard for graduation creates a paradigm that PAI material is not so important. The allotment for PAI subjects is only two hours a week, which is considered as a complement to other subjects and the exam is limited to a written test.

The main purpose of PAI learning is the formation of personality in students which is reflected in their behavior and mindset in everyday life, so PAI learning is not only the responsibility of the PAI teacher alone, but it requires support from the whole community at school, society, and society. More importantly are parents. Schools must be able to coordinate and communicate PAI learning patterns to several parties who have been mentioned as a series of communities that support and care for each other for the sake of forming students with

noble character and character.

Starting from the learning process that prioritizes educating rather than teaching. Where educating has a broader realm, namely guiding and giving advice so that the values that are instilled can be applied in life. Furthermore, through the application of these values, it can be used as an evaluation for student changes to better direction. Don't forget that teacher appreciation is also expected.

Islamic religious education through aqidah learning can form religious character in students. With a good understanding, students are expected to be able to apply them in their daily lives which will lead to the formation of students who are personality, religious and highly knowledgeable. Obviously this is a very good impact for students if they are able to apply Islamic religious education materials in their lives.

### **The Existence of Islamic Religious Education in the National Education System**

The curriculum is part of the learning system that functions to realize the goals of national education. Therefore, in Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 36, the curriculum in Indonesia is structured within the framework of increasing faith and piety, increasing noble character, increasing the potential, intelligence and interest of students, diversity of potential, regional and environmental, regional and national development demands, the demands of the world of work, the demands of science and technology and the arts, religion, the dynamics of global development, national unity and national values.

To support the implementation of the curriculum framework mentioned above, then in the next article (Law No. 20 of 2003 article 37) it is explained that the curriculum must contain: religious education, civic education, language, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, arts and culture, physical education and sports, skills / vocational, local content.

Religious education is one of the materials that aims to improve noble character and spiritual values in children. This shows that religious education has an important role in carrying out character education in schools. Therefore, religious education is one of the compulsory subjects for elementary, secondary and tertiary levels. So schools must be able to organize religious education optimally by applying religious values in the school environment which is carried out by all teachers and students together and continuously.

It is also very interesting if the school is able to develop a curriculum by applying religious values that are reflected in each subject. Basically, religious education focuses on inculcating attitudes and personalities based on religious teachings in all aspects of students' future lives. So that the cultivation of religious values should be listed in all subjects and become the shared responsibility of all teachers.

The content of the religious education curriculum is described in the Appendix of Law No. 22 of 2006, including the Islamic religious education curriculum with the aim of learning is to produce humans who always strive to perfect faith, piety, and morals, and actively build civilization and harmony of life, especially in advancing the civilization of a nation that dignified. Such people are expected to be strong in facing challenges, obstacles, and changes that arise in community interactions both in the local, national, regional and global scope. Furthermore, the scope of Islamic religious education includes the following aspects: Al-Qur'an and Hadith, Aqidah, Morals, Fiqh, Dates and Islamic Culture.

Religious education, especially Islamic religious education (PAI) has an important position in the national education system. Religious education is a material that must be taught in every school. Islamic religious education in principle provides learning that instills spiritual values in students so that they become human beings with morals, ethics and culture as part of the goals of national education. While the implementation of religious education learning in schools can be internalized in intra and extra school activities and prioritize the application of religious teachings in everyday life.

### **The Process of Forming Religious Character**

Islamic religious education is a pillar of character education, because from Islamic religious education there is knowledge about faith, where faith is the basis for moral cultivation. It is this morality that leads students to become religious.

However, the process of forming a religious character is not easy and not in an instant. In addition to the environment, there are also influencing factors such as internal factors (instinct, custom, will, conscience, heredity) and external (education and environment). To foster religious character in students, PAI teachers can implement their strategies effectively and efficiently through Islamic religious education learning that is adapted to the curriculum, the strategies used include:

1. Habituation: Something that is deliberately done repeatedly to become a habit.
2. Exemplary: Putting forward the form of behavioral aspects in the form of concrete actions, rather than just talking without action.
3. Enforcement of rules

Ki Hajar Dewantara in interpreting education as a process of giving demands to develop students' potential, these demands are illustrated that the purpose of education leads to assisting students in the process of improving the orderliness of their behavior. Continuous enforcement of rules of habituation that emphasize students to proceed first, so that they are used to which then all forms of rules can be implemented and obeyed.

According to Al-Ghazali, there are two ways of educating: the first is mujahadah and getting used to practicing with good deeds. Second, the act is done repeatedly. Besides that, it is taken by asking for divine gifts.

### **The Role of Islamic Religious Education in the Formation of Religious Character**

According to Asmaun Sahlan, strategies for cultivating a religious culture include: creating a religious atmosphere, internalizing values which include: providing understanding and advice, exemplary and habituation as well as civilizing. While the aspects that become religious culture include: greeting, tawadhu, istighasah, dhuha prayer, tadarrus al-Quran.

Islamic religious education is an important foundation in the cultivation and formation of student character in schools, therefore the implementation of the strategy of forming students' religious character through learning Islamic religious education is relevant. In this case, creating an atmosphere of effective and efficient learning activities and application in an environment outside the classroom is one of the strategies of an education in achieving educational goals and outputs with good character and personality.

In addition to delivering learning about Islamic religious education theoretically, it can also be done by carrying out various activities such as congregational prayers, Yasinan, clean Fridays, congregational sunnah prayers, charity activities, practical exams, applying the 4S (smile, greeting, politeness, courtesy), carry out the birthday of the prophet and so on.

### CONCLUSION

Islamic religious education is the pillar of character education. This character education is formed from moral creed material found in PAI subjects. Faith forms a religious character. The teacher's effort is to form a religious character through Islamic religious education. But in reality, PAI is a subject that is seen as no more important than other subjects. The reason is because it is not included in the graduation standard. Besides that, it is more directed towards theoretical guidance, while PAI is best done with practice so that it can be applied in life. The most basic is changing the mindset that PAI is not more important than any subject. Islamic religious education can be included in all subjects. Even the impact is real in life. By applying Islamic religious education material, it can form a good, productive, effective and efficient person and can be useful for the life of the community, nation and state.

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