

Islamic education as the foundation of character education at kalimanggis public elementary school, kaloran temanggung

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Received: 03-09-2024

Revised: 24-11-2024

Accepted: 13-12-2024

KEYWORDS

Islamic Education,
Educational Foundation,
Character

ABSTRACT

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with an interpretative approach that focuses on understanding the meanings behind data obtained from real-life contexts. This method aims to describe phenomena in depth without manipulating variables or field conditions. Data analysis is carried out through three main stages—data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing—all intended to gain a comprehensive and valid understanding. The findings indicate that Islamic education plays a crucial role as the primary foundation in shaping students' character. Islamic teachings emphasize not only the mastery of knowledge but also the strengthening of moral and spiritual values that serve as life guidance. This form of education fosters a balance between intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence, thereby shaping individuals who are faithful, noble in character, and responsible toward themselves and society. The values of exemplary conduct and religious moderation serve as essential principles in the character-building process, where teachers and the educational environment act as real-life role models for students. The implementation of Islamic education is realized through the integration of Islamic values into teaching and learning activities as well as school culture, ensuring that character values are not merely taught but also internalized in daily life. Thus, Islamic education proves to be a comprehensive educational system that is relevant to contemporary challenges and effective in shaping a generation of strong character, knowledge, and virtuous conduct.

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Introduction

Indonesia is a country rich in abundant and diverse natural resources (NR). This wealth includes forestry products, agriculture, fisheries, mining, and energy sources spread across the archipelago. Indonesia's biodiversity is also among the highest in the world, making it one of the megadiverse countries. In addition, Indonesia's strategic geographical location between two continents and two oceans provides great potential in the sectors of trade, tourism, and maritime transportation. These vast natural resources serve as a key asset for national economic development, provided they are managed sustainably and wisely (Kasman, 2020, p. 20).

Besides its abundant natural wealth, Indonesia is also blessed with a large and diverse

human resource (HR) base. With a population of more than 270 million people, Indonesia possesses a significant asset to support development in various sectors. The cultural, linguistic, and social diversity of the Indonesian people becomes a unique strength in fostering a national character that is creative, cooperative, and adaptive to global changes. Through improvements in education, training, and skills development, Indonesian human resources hold great potential to actively and innovatively utilize natural resources for the nation's progress (Hasid, 2022, pp. 10–12).

Education not only functions as a medium for transferring knowledge and skills but also serves as a platform for building morality, ethics, and human values. Through a planned and continuous educational process, it is expected to produce generations who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess integrity, responsibility, and the ability to appreciate differences while upholding national values (Wakit, 2024, p. 8).

Kalimanggis Public Elementary School is an institution that requires improvements in Islamic education as the foundational basis for character formation in children (Nurhasanah, Ai, Dian Indihadi, 2025, p. 2). As one of the educational institutions that play a significant role in shaping students' character and personality from an early age, this school still needs enhancement in the area of Islamic education as the core foundation of character development. Islamic education at the elementary school level holds a strategic function in instilling moral, spiritual, and social values that form the basis of students' behavior in daily life.

Through meaningful and contextual learning, values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and respect for others can be instilled early on, allowing them to become students' habits and life attitudes (Fitriani, 2020, p. 3)

Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, which is a multi-focused approach involving an interpretative and rigorous examination of each core issue (Bimbingan & Konseling, 2016, p. 2). This method does not only focus on data collection but also on understanding the meanings behind the data. In the context of this research, the descriptive qualitative approach enables the researcher to describe in detail the situations, behaviors, and perspectives of the research subjects according to their natural settings (Haki et al., 2024, p. 3).

This approach is used because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the studied situation without manipulating existing variables or conditions. The researcher seeks to capture the meanings behind events, behaviors, and experiences of the research subjects by emphasizing natural contexts and real conditions in the field (Wulan et al., 2025, p. 2).

In addition, this study adopts three complementary analytical approaches to obtain a thorough understanding of the collected data. The first approach is data reduction analysis, which involves simplifying, selecting, and focusing raw data so that it becomes information relevant to the research objectives. Next is data presentation analysis, where the reduced data is organized into narrative descriptions, tables, or diagrams to make it easier to understand and interpret, allowing researchers to identify patterns and relationships among components. The final stage is conclusion drawing or verification, which involves interpreting the analysis results to uncover meanings, patterns, and implications of the studied phenomena, as well as ensuring data validity through repeated verification. By applying these three analytical approaches, the study is expected to produce findings that are comprehensive, in-depth, and valid in accordance with the established objectives (Wulan et al., 2025, p. 4).

Result and Discussion

Islamic education holds a strategic role in shaping students' character because its teachings

emphasize not only knowledge but also moral and spiritual values (Yusri et al., 2024, p. 5). This form of education aims to develop human potential holistically—including the mind, heart, and actions—so that they align with Islamic values. Through learning that is oriented toward faith and piety, students are guided to become *insan kamil*, or complete human beings who possess noble character and contribute positively to society (Hawari et al., 2024, p. 4).

As the foundation of character education, Islamic education places morality (*akhlak*) at the core of the entire educational process. These moral values are derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, which provide guidance on how humans should behave toward God, themselves, others, and the environment (Sholihah, Abdah Munfaridatus, 2020, p. 3). In this context, character education is not merely understood as the formation of polite behavior, but as an effort to build deep and consistent moral awareness in daily life (Judrah et al., 2024, p. 5).

In addition, Islamic education promotes balance among cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. This means that education does not focus solely on intellectual intelligence but also on emotional and spiritual intelligence (Sulaiman et al., 2018, p. 5). This holistic approach is essential for developing well-rounded character because humans are required not only to think intelligently but also to control themselves and act wisely toward others (Acetylena & Akhmad Sirojuddin, 2025, p. 4). Thus, Islamic education functions as a system of personality development grounded in universal Islamic values (Permadi, Hilalludin, et al., 2025, p. 37).

Character education from an Islamic perspective also emphasizes the importance of exemplary behavior (*uswah hasanah*). Teachers, parents, and community leaders serve as significant role models for students (Abdurrahman Annahlawi, 1996, p. 4). The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself is the ultimate model for character formation, as stated in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21, which mentions that the Prophet is a noble example for those who believe (Aini Nurwulandari, 2020, p. 8). Therefore, role modeling becomes the most effective method for instilling character values in students.

Furthermore, Islamic education nurtures the principle of religious moderation (*wasathiyah*) as an expression of balance and tolerance in practicing religion. This value is important amidst the challenges of globalization and the rise of radicalism that may erode the morals of younger generations (Sintiya, 2025, p. 8). Through moderate Islamic education, students learn to think critically, appreciate differences, and practice religious teachings wisely and contextually (Tremblay et al., 2016, p. 5). In this way, character education does not only produce morally upright individuals but also individuals with broad insight and strong social awareness (Teguh et al., 2025, p. 10).

In practice, Islamic education can be implemented through the integration of Islamic values across all school subjects and activities (Martatiyana & Novita, 2022, p. 6). Education does not occur only in the classroom but also in daily life through habituation, school culture, and religious activities such as congregational prayer, study sessions, and social programs (Kurniawan, 2017, p. 3). This integration aims to ensure that character values are not merely taught theoretically but are truly internalized within students (Permadi et al., 2025, p.25).

Thus, Islamic education holds a vital position as the primary foundation of character education (Sholihah, Abdah Munfaridatus, 2020, p. 5). Through the integrated teaching of faith, worship, and moral values, Islamic education is able to produce a generation that is knowledgeable, faithful, and noble in character (Tinggi Agama Islam Ibnu Sina Batam & Tryas Nur Rochbani, 2024, p. 8). Amid the challenges of modernity and the ongoing moral crisis in society, strengthening Islamic education becomes an urgent necessity to ensure that the nation's character remains preserved and develops harmoniously in accordance with Islamic noble values .

Conclusion

Overall, it can be concluded that Islamic education plays a fundamental role in shaping students' character because it is able to integrate intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions in a balanced way. This form of education is not only oriented toward the mastery of knowledge but also instills ethical values, exemplary behavior, and humanitarian principles derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. Through a comprehensive approach to the development of the mind, heart, and behavior, Islamic education encourages the formation of individuals who possess noble character, tolerance, and the ability to face contemporary challenges without abandoning their Islamic identity. By applying Islamic values across all aspects of educational activities, both in the classroom and in daily life, Islamic education plays an essential role in producing a generation with strong character, broad thinking, and active contribution in creating a harmonious and civilized society.

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