



Islamic Character Education through Learning Aqidah Akhlak (Study on 7th Grade Students at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta)

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ABSTRACT

This study describes Islamic character education through learning aqidah akhlak. This study aims to reveal the strategy of Islamic character education in learning aqidah akhlak, how to build student character in learning aqidah akhlak, and what are the obstacles in the application of Islamic character education in learning aqidah akhlak for regular grade 7 students at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta. Data collection using observation and interview techniques. This data processing uses qualitative techniques. This technique is used to process data from observations and interviews. The results showed that the Islamic character education strategy in learning Aqidah Akhlak in students is a conscious effort from teachers to instill and form Islamic character. Lack of parental attention is also an inhibiting factor in the development of character education because they are busy with various kinds of work.

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INTRODUCTION

Character education is an educational system aimed at instilling certain personality values in students, which include components of knowledge, awareness or will, as well as actions to realize these values.

Education can be interpreted as a conscious and systematic effort to achieve a standard of living or to progress better. Simply put, the concept of education is a learning process for students to understand and make people think more critically. For education, the progress of the nation cannot be separated from the factor of educators playing an important role in the development of human resources (HR) This is an important factor in the development of the country.

Character education is education carried out to shape a person's personality to become a better person. Especially in the world of education is a mandatory task to

create a better character of the nation's children. In accordance with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education system.

In the functions and objectives of national education, it is clear that in learning it is certainly to create the character of students. Character education can also be interpreted as a system of instilling character values to school residents which includes components of knowledge, awareness, or will, and actions to implement these values both towards God Almighty, oneself, others, the environment, and nationality so that they become human beings (Samani and Haryanto, 2011: 46). Character education itself is not new because character education has an influence big in human life. Character education itself leads to the way of thinking and behavior of students who will later become the backbone of the nation. Without the cultivation of characters in students, destruction will be created, both self-destruction, the environment and the nation. The creation of a prosperous nation because of the character of the nation's children.

Based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 Chapter 1, Article 1 Paragraph 1 of 2003 concerning the national education system, education is a conscious and systematic effort to create an environment and learning process, helping students actively develop their potential religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character and noble skills needed by society, nation and state (Jannah, 2020).

The implementation and objectives of education in Indonesia are regulated by laws and regulations. The regulation is the Law on the National Education System (UU Sisdiknas) of the Republic of Indonesia (RI) No.: 20/2003, Chapter II, Article 3, which clearly states: The function of national education is to develop skills, shape the character and civilization of a decent nation, educate the nation's life, and develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in God almighty and compassionate. That person has a noble, healthy, capable, independent personality and is a responsible and democratic citizen. According to the National Education Law, in general, education is an attempt to create an environment for students that stimulates the development of their abilities and brings about the desired changes in their habits and character.(Agustinova, 2015)

The period from 13 to 16 years is a very important period for children, because they feel like seeking freedom and going through a period of rebellion. Try something new or challenging, children are easily influenced by their environment and Negative numbers are easier to give them examples, it happens Because feelings of independence and distance begin to appear in them from their most mature attachments. So this attention gets a lot of attention from your parents (Koesoemo, 2007: 196).

The position of aqidah and morals is very important in this life, especially for Muslims. Because Akidah and morals are the core goals of human life. If a person has good faith and morals, inner peace will be born. While. Of course, if this happens, society will experience a moral crisis in itself.(Rubini, 2021) The moral crisis that some countries are experiencing today and in the past affects not only countries with lower levels of education but also the student body. Indeed, man was created by God with wisdom and intelligence, able to adapt at all times to the changing times. Therefore, in order to avoid this, it is necessary to cultivate the beliefs that are the basis and principles of religion, and at the same time consider man's attitude or tendency to regulate man's relationship with God. and human relationships with other human beings.

The development of phenomena and events that show decadence and moral decline in society, especially among students, can be observed through the media, including social networks. This may indicate that the Indonesian education system has not succeeded in educating the nation's successors in terms of character and compassion. One of the hadiths also shows how important moral culture is for students: *"innama bu'itstu liutammima makaarimal akhlaaq"* Indeed, I was sent only to perfect human morals (HR. Malik).

The benefits of studying the ethics of Aqidah are spiritual progress, i.e. prejudice, attaining perfect faith, attaining perfection at the last day, and attaining harmony in the family. Every human being hopes to achieve happiness in the world and the hereafter, with moral aqida material that can lead him to that happiness. Given this, the aqidah akhlak document is very important for the younger generation because it is the foundation and guide of their lives towards a better future. Human morality can accept positive and negative changes, so that adolescent morality can certainly experience changes as well. (Az-Za'balawi, 2007).

Although children's education is the responsibility of parents, due to parental limitations, the help of educational institutions such as schools is needed to teach educational knowledge and skills. Teachers play an important role in the intellectual, spiritual and emotional growth of students.(Daulay & Tobroni, 2017) Although children's education is the responsibility of parents, due to parental limitations, the help of educational institutions such as schools is needed to teach educational knowledge and skills. Teachers play an important role in the intellectual, spiritual and emotional growth of students given well and effectively.

Learning aqidah akhlak also has objectives including character education, where this character education shapes the character of students to be loyal and fearful to God Almighty, have noble morals, and be able to maintain peace and harmony in interfaith and interreligious relations, and proven to develop students. Their ability to

understand, internalize, and practice religious values is aligned with their mastery of science, technology, and art.

This negative and deviant behavior is due to the fact that character education that takes place in the school environment is put aside so that it is less ingrained in students. If we observe the things above, of course there is something to do with the learning of Aqidah Akhlak which must be instilled in schools to produce generous students. (Jannah, 2020) Learning Aqidah Akhlak is a very useful aspect that helps in correcting different relationship patterns that should be applied in life. Because it is undeniable that every action, every human language must be based on the learning of Aqidah Akhlak. Without studying Aqidah Akhlak, life on this earth will spiral out of control and will lead to arbitrary actions in social life.

The problem is, the lesson of aqidah akhlak is only a subject that must be learned without understanding or experiencing anything else to apply the meaning it contains. So many things have happened, such as students disrespecting teachers, speaking rudely, not being disciplined, noisy in class, dressing modestly and getting low scores in exams. (Rubini, 2021) All of this happens because of the fragility of Aqida's moral foundation or the lack of success in the world of education in preparing the young generation of the country. Considering these conditions, it can be seen very clearly that the teaching materials are not in accordance with the existing reality of students, because there are many things behind it. This study looks at approximately the strategy of Islamic character education in learning aqidah akhlak, how to build student character in learning aqidah akhlak, and what are the obstacles in the application of Islamic character education in learning aqidah akhlak for regular grade 7 students at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the search that the author has done on several existing studies, the author found similarities with previous researchers related to Islamic character education. There are at least some studies presented by the author.

First, Yuniarweti, with the title "The Importance of Aqidah Akhlak Education in the Formation of Children's Character". The results of his research are aqidah akhlak education helps children gain a positive outlook on life, build good relationships with others, and develop noble qualities such as patience, tolerance, and compassion. This education also provides children with a strong moral foundation, so that they are able to face the challenges and negative temptations that exist in the surrounding environment. In the context of formal education, aqidah akhlak education can be integrated in the curriculum of religious education or character education. In addition, this education can also be done through a holistic approach, which involves families, communities, and educational institutions as partners in shaping children's character.

In conclusion, aqidah akhlak education has an important role in the formation of children's character. By strengthening aqidah and teaching good morals, children can grow into individuals who have strong moral values, are able to behave positively, and contribute to society.

Second, Muhammad Parhun, with the title "Implementation of Character Education in Aqidah Akhlak Subjects at Madrasah Aliyah Nahdlatul Wathan Samawa Sumbawa Besar for the 2020/2021 Academic Year". The results of his research are that the implementation of character education through Aqidah Akhlak lessons is as follows: through teaching carried out by Aqidah Akhlak educators through the implementation of character education in Aqidah Akhlak Subjects educators use 3 ways: explanation, behavior and attitude. Supporting factors are Facilities, Syllabus, RPP, Government Programs, Vision and Mission Structure and other Religious Teachers. The obstacle is the lack of creative learning innovation. The solution is that educators must determine selective topics and teaching media.

METHOD

In this study, data collection techniques were an important factor in the success of the study. How data is collected relates to the source of the data and the tools used. The data source type refers to where the data was obtained. Whether the data is obtained from direct sources (primary data) or indirect sources (secondary data).

This research is a field research or commonly known as Field Research, namely field research. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2013), research is one of the activities carried out to find answers to questions and problems through steps as well as data collection using scientific analysis of various situational factors. Therefore, it is necessary to have the right method to analyze the research topic. That is how to collect data by digging up information sourced from the field, the aim is to obtain the necessary information data thoroughly and in detail about the effectiveness of learning Aqidah akhlak on the religious behavior of regular grade 7 students at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta. In this study using a method, namely qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative data, is data whose presentation is in the form of verbal, not numbers. Qualitative research is research conducted directly with sources and researchers as the main tools. Qualitative research also focuses on processes rather than products or outcomes (Sugiyono, 2013).

The research design uses an approach from this study using a descriptive qualitative approach. With the methods used, namely observation, interviews, visual analysis, and literature studies. Meanwhile, according to Sugiyono (2019: 18) Qualitative research methods are research methods based on the philosophy of post-positivism, whose purpose is to study the state of natural objects (as opposed to experiments), where researchers are the main tool, data collection techniques are

carried out with (in combination with) triangulation methods. Analysis of inductive/qualitative data and qualitative research findings emphasize generalization. Therefore, it can be concluded that this approach is an approach that gives an overview of a phenomenon through description in the form of sentences and uses natural methods.

The focus of research that researchers mean here is limitations, namely so that researchers are able to make qualitative study boundaries so as not to fall out of the discussion in accordance with the researcher's theme. Thus, researchers can search for data according to the focus of the theme that the researcher chooses.

This type of research uses descriptive qualitative research. As the data in this study came from interviews with resource persons, as well as photos and other data data are the main data in this study. For data collection in this study through interviews. For qualitative data analysis this is done interactively. This analysis is supported by data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusions.

The data sources used in this study are primary data and secondary data. According to Sugiyono (2019: 296), it is stated that primary data is data extracted directly from the original source (without going through intermediaries). Primary data can be the opinions of many people, individually or in groups, as well as observations. The methods used to collect primary data are through interviews, practice and observation. Interviews can be conducted with public service teachers such as Aqidah akhlak teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah 8, ustadz or ustadzah teachers at SMP Muhammadiyah and our duties when teaching at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 and observation activities will then be processed by researchers. And secondary data is a source of data collected indirectly by researchers through intermediaries (collected and recorded by other parties). Secondary data is often in the form of evidence, records, or historical reports compiled in archives. For example, student grades, student learning reports, etc.

DISCUSSION

Islamic Character Education Strategy in Learning Aqidah Akhlak

The strategy of Islamic character education in learning Aqidah Akhlak for students is a conscious effort of teachers to instill and cultivate Islamic character. (Muzakkir Walad, 2021) This strategy is implemented consciously and responsibly by teachers to create stimulation for students so that integration seeps into them and can then be applied in everyday life.

The strategy of instilling Islamic character in learning Aqidah Akhlak is very important because implementing this strategy effectively and efficiently can lead to the desired learning. This strategy is applied by grade 7 teacher Aqidah Akhlak from SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta to equip students with Islamic characters. For example,

always speak politely to teachers and elders, always say hello when meeting teachers, always reach and maintain cleanliness in class before starting to study, get used to praying *dzuha*, *dhikr* and *tadarus* in the morning, always perform prayers on time and other things.

In going through carelessness and habituation, and the teacher's motivation also gives an example when speaking to fellow teachers using good and polite language, teachers are also required to dress quickly and modestly extend the hijab to the curve of the hands for women and are obliged to use *peci* for men, and when after prayer *dhuha*, *dhikr*, and *tadarus* the teacher gathers students to give instructions or stories of the prophet's negligence stories that may be emulated by the student. Not only giving direction, teachers also sometimes provide a motivation to students so that later students are moved to do good things so that later students have good character.

Student Character Building

Basically, education is one of the important factors in forming quality human resources. Quality human resources, among others, are characterized by ethics, intelligent, competent, tough, independent, loyal to colleagues, hardworking, innovative, productive, disciplined and forward-looking (Astuti, 2011).

According to Wyne, character marks how or technically to focus on the application of good values into actions or behaviors. Growing character in someone is not easy, character itself can grow from a habituation, or environmental impulse. If the child grows up in a good environment, an environment that implements good habits also has opportunities to be good. In SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta, especially in religious subjects such as (Aqidah akhlak, kemuhammadiyah, thaharah) teachers emphasize more on learning attitudes or behaviors. Learning activities at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 take place very quickly, namely 1 hour of lessons teachers are given teaching time of about 30 minutes while 2 hours, 60 minutes. "Here, I put more emphasis on MBA self-habituation. Like before lessons, I always remind students of small things, such as wearing socks and shoes before learning, preparing a classroom atmosphere that is ready to learn and others, because I want such things to be good habits for students," said Mrs. Nazmah as a teacher of Aqidah akhlak. With a small teaching estimate, sometimes the delivery of material related to learning only lasts about 10-15 minutes, the rest of the teacher only focuses on the neatness of students, and the application of character. Students, especially junior high school, may still be almost equivalent to elementary school because it can be said to be a transitional period, so the focus of teachers to students must be optimal so that what teachers expect can be embedded in their students.

Character building at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 is also applied through the habit of praying *dhuha* in the morning. So, student learning activities at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta start at 10 o'clock while in the morning, the school conducts character

building activities through *dhuha* prayers, approaches between teachers and students, and also TTQ activities. In the morning, students are already aware of the habituation of school activities, namely *dhuha* prayers which from this habituation, it is hoped that students can apply other sunnah prayers that can be used as a form of self-habitation. Then, at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 students and teachers for men are required to always wear *peci*, because through small things (*peci*) students can show character according to the napa they wear, and also for female students and female teachers, are required to wear a headscarf that is shoulder length. From this we can conclude, that this school is very maintaining the commendable morals of a student and teacher, which can reflect a school with charity. These habits, always applied to students to always be obeyed, and if they violate it will be subject to consequences. From here, students have grown that awareness because the teacher participates in reflecting good behavior. So that without being told students already know their obligations, such as morning has gone down to the ground floor to perform *dhuha* prayers (students bring the Qur'an, *rukukh* and wear *peci*), followed by teacher and student approach sessions, and also TTQ activities in class.

Obstacles in the application of Islamic character education.

According to Piaget, students of all ages actively participate in the process of absorption of information and the construction of their own knowledge. Knowledge is not static but rather constantly grows and changes as students encounter new experiences that force them to build and modify their initial knowledge. Piaget explained that young children are naturally curious and constantly seek to understand the world around them (Agustinova, 2015).

According to Piaget, this curiosity motivates children to actively develop an understanding of the environment in which they live. Children will learn better if they can deal with their environment well. Educators should assist children in interacting with their environment as best as possible. What is meant here is, the best learning is by discovery. That is, in order for child-centered learning to be more effective, teachers do not allow children to learn independently but teachers give them special tasks that have been provided and designed to help them find and solve problems on their own. With long learning hours at school, children will also lose a lot of time at home and learn about life with family. In the afternoon, the children come home tired and may no longer want to talk to their families. Then, with the attitude of parents who believe that they have paid a high price to send their children to school full-time, it seems "resigned" completely to school. In fact, parents are also very influential, such as the lack of synchronization between the habits formed at school and family habits.

In general, attention can be obtained from three environments: the family environment, the school environment and the community environment. The family environment is a very important environment for child development, because children

get attention, affection, warmth, openness from parents and children spend more time at home. The school environment can also affect whether children behave well or badly. If he hangs out with friends who have bad morals, he is likely to be influenced by his friends as well. However, if he spends time with good friends, he will also be impressed.

The environmental influence of society can also be positive and negative. We say something positive if it has a better impact on children's development. But if it is not delivered in a positive way, it can have a negative impact. High school is a time of great emotions and a desire to try something new. The time it takes to get to know or interact with others is getting longer, especially between people of the opposite sex.

In some cases, in the field that the author observed, children in school are accustomed to eating according to the recommendations ordered by Rosululloh when eating at home, children receive less attention, another example is that children are required to wear Muslim clothes and Muslim clothes at school, but when at home children's clothes receive less attention from their parents and many other clothes in daily life are only allowed at school. Education at home is also an inhibiting factor in learning Aqidah Akhlak at SMP Muhammadiyah 8 Surakarta because when at school teachers always accustom children when they want to drink or eat must sit down first but if at home their own parents eat and drink standing which is seen by students and they imitate it at home, it will make something that is exemplified and can even be used as a basis for doing negative things even though the example was just small things. However, these small things will become habits and have a negative impact on the formation of students' personalities. The lack of parenting (attention) of parents also makes the point of trouble one of the inhibiting factors for the development of character education, because then they are busy with various types of work so they do not have time to pay attention to the growth and development of children, even in carrying out character education there should be cooperation and care between teachers and parents. They fully trust the school about their children's future, without having to bother thinking about what they should do with their children. They believe that if a child is in school all day, it is the responsibility of the school. They want to be naughty or submissive, it's not the parents' business. Fully let the school find out about it. In fact, the best school is in the house with family.

From the activities and tips carried out by schools it is impossible if there are no obstacles, here are the obstacles in the application of Islamic character education in junior high school students.

First, education level. In junior high school students, there are 3 levels of education, namely grade 7 students, grade 8 students, and also grade 9 students. At each level is not the same in providing the application of Islamic education, and also, the way of receiving each level of education must be different. In grade 7 students or

we can call students transitioning from elementary to junior high school, the thinking is still very similar to elementary school and the way the teacher manages still has to be extra. Because grade 7 students still want to play, don't know manners and still need a lot of guidance about character habituation. Unlike grade 8, which can be called the puberty period of students, grade 8 students already understand which is good and which is bad, but at this level, students just want to play and can already correct if the teacher is wrong. Grade 9 students should already understand manners and good and bad behavior, but students come from different environmental backgrounds and family backgrounds, so it is undeniable that grade 9 students still have less than optimal character habituation.

Second, the ability and character of teachers are less supportive. Until recently, teachers had little awareness of the fact that the personalities they present in front of their students had a great influence on the development of their own personalities. Teachers tend to simply carry out their primary teaching duties without worrying about whether what they are doing is seen, heard, and imitated by students. (Sutrisna & Artajaya, 2022) This is what negatively affects the development of student diversity. The teachers who are supposed to protect and guide their students to a better future become the individuals who push them into the valley of darkness. The personality of teachers who do not conform to these standards will only set a bad example for students and tarnish the turn of teachers as moral builders of the nation's generation. As a character who plays a role in producing a generation with extraordinary intelligence and personality, teachers must be able to hone personal abilities to become role models and role models for students. Therefore, efforts must always be made to improve the ability to master personality skills more optimally for the development and progress of students so that they can contribute to the progress of their families, schools and the world of education.

CONCLUSION

The degree or position of creed and morals is very important for this life, especially for a Muslim. Akidah and morals are the main things which play a role in guiding the purpose of human life. If a person instills good faith and morals, then his body and soul will be at peace. But, quite the opposite. If this happens, of course man will experience a moral crisis in himself. The moral crisis that many countries are experiencing today and in the past has not only impacted the poorly educated but also the student group.

The Islamic character education strategy of learning Aqidah Akhlak for students is one of the teacher's conscious efforts to instill, hone and shape Islamic character. This strategy is consciously and responsibly applied by teachers to stimulate students to instill character in them and can then be applied in everyday life.

The lack of parenting (attention) of parents is also one of the factors that hinder the development of children's personality education, because they are busy with various types of work and do not have time to pay attention to the growth and development of their children, Even when they carry out the character of education for their children, there should be cooperation and care between teachers and parents.

Character marks how or technically to focus on the application of good values into actions or behaviors. Growing character in someone is not easy, character itself can grow from a habituation, or environmental impulse.

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