

SHAPING CHILDREN'S PERSONALITIES FROM AN EARLY AGE THROUGH FAITH AND MORAL EDUCATION AT SEMARANG CITY KINDERGARTEN

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ABSTRACT

In the modern era filled with the influence of less educational media, moral problems in early childhood are increasing. Many children exhibit behavior that deviates from Islamic values such as honesty, helpfulness, and politeness. Therefore, faith and moral education from childhood is very important to build children's character based on Islamic teachings. This study aims to examine the application of faith and moral learning in Husna Jaya Kindergarten, Semarang City and assess its influence on the formation of Islamic character in children. The method used is qualitative descriptive research with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The results of the study revealed that learning faith and morals through daily routines, teacher examples, Islamic stories, and parental involvement were effective in fostering positive attitudes such as honesty, mutual help, forgiveness, and good use of language. With a fun and consistent approach, moral education has proven to be the main foundation in shaping Islamic personality from an early age.

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INTRODUCTION

Education at an early age plays an important role in the formation of children's personalities and character to provide for their future lives. In the golden period of development, which is the age of 0 to 6 years, children experience significant growth acceleration, covering physical, cognitive, and emotional aspects. Therefore, the education provided during this period will have a great influence on children's mindsets, attitudes, and behaviors when they grow up. In the context of Islam, the formation of solid and noble faith and morals from an early age is very important in children's education (H. Ginanjar and Kurniawati 2020).

Faith is the basis of a Muslim's faith which includes belief in Allah, His Messenger, books, angels, the last days, and destiny. Meanwhile, morality reflects the implementation of faith in daily life through good attitudes, words, and deeds. With the cultivation of these values, children have spiritual and moral strength. Moral faith education is the main provision in forming a complete and balanced Islamic personality (Suryawati 2016).

Success in shaping children's character is greatly influenced by the active role of parents, educators, and the surrounding environment. Children have very high imitation skills; They absorb learning through what they observe and hear in their daily lives. Therefore, providing a good example, conveying religious teachings in a pleasant way,

and creating an environment that supports Islamic values is an important step in the process of moral faith education. Thus, it is not only part of the formal learning curriculum in educational institutions, but also a process of habituation and character formation in children's daily lives. (O. M. H. Ginanjar 2022)

Several studies have shown the importance of faith and moral education in the formation of early childhood character. Rohmah (2018) stated that faith education that is applied consistently at home and early childhood education institutions is able to shape children's religious attitudes from an early age, such as the habit of praying, knowing Allah, and loving others.

Furthermore, Wulandari (2020) in his research entitled *The Influence of Habituation of Moral Values on Children's Behavior in Integrated Islamic Kindergarten* shows that the habituation of moral values such as honesty, discipline, and good manners has a positive correlation with children's social behavior. The results of this study emphasize the importance of teacher role models and learning approaches that are fun and appropriate to the stage of child development.

In addition, Yusuf and Anwar (2019) revealed that the method of storytelling and singing is an effective strategy in conveying the values of faith to children. This research reinforces the idea that interactive and contextual methods are needed to effectively instill Islamic values in early childhood.

Based on various research findings, it can be concluded that faith and moral education not only has high urgency, but also needs to be designed in harmony with the stages of early childhood development. This principle is the foundation for designing a learning model that integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects in an integrated manner. Therefore, this study aims to illustrate the importance of instilling character values from an early age, where learning faith and morals is considered as one of the effective alternatives in forming Islamic personality in children.

This research was conducted at Husna Jaya Kindergarten which was chosen because this institution has implemented moral and religious faith learning to instill moral and religious values for the formation of Islamic personality in children.

METHOD

This research applies a qualitative approach with a field study method. Data collection with observation during learning activities, with the main focus on habituation activities, children's social interaction, and the application of moral values in daily life. Observations are carried out in a specific manner and recorded in the observation log sheet. interviews and field documentation in the form of photos of children's activities by validating data using triangulation techniques from several data used, data analysis and drawing conclusions from data that are considered valid. Data analysis uses interactive analysis. This approach was chosen to illustrate how learning moral beliefs is used as a means to instill Islamic personality or commendable behavior in early childhood. The subject of the study is a student at Husna Jaya Kindergarten class B. This research was carried out at Husna Jaya Kindergarten which has applied moral creed learning to its learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Personality development from an early age is a strategic step to produce a generation of morals and noble character for the country. Moral education has developed in the midst of the development of the times marked by globalization and technological advances (Scott, Scott, and Scott, 2021). Moral education helps children protect themselves from things that harm their environment. Faith and morals are an important foundation in Islamic education, and they are not only introduced but also instilled from an early age, for example with kindergarten education (Ayu and Junaidah 2019).

In Semarang City, one of the educational institutions that consistently develops character education through moral faith learning is Husna Jaya Kindergarten. This institution places moral values as a priority in its learning curriculum. Not only in formal learning in the classroom, but also through daily activities, habituation, and social interactions that shape the child's Islamic personality as a whole.

Learning moral beliefs at Husna Jaya Kindergarten is designed to blend with the children's daily thematic activities. The material taught includes the introduction of Allah and the Messenger, attitudes towards parents and teachers, as well as moral values such as honesty, politeness, helpfulness, patience, forgiveness, and not speaking harshly. These values are not given verbally alone, but are integrated into all children's learning activities and plays.

One of the approaches applied is positive habituation (Ulya 2020). Every morning, the children are accustomed to greeting, kissing the teacher's hand, praying together, and saying *thayyibah* sentences such as

*bismillah, alhamdulillah, and astaghfirullah. This activity not only forms a routine, but internalizes spiritual values in children's daily lives.

In play activities, children are guided to show honest behavior (Rochmawati 2018). For example, when a child takes a friend's toy, the teacher does not necessarily scold, but guides the child to be honest and apologize. Children are encouraged to understand that honesty is part of the morals of a Muslim. Teachers also give appreciation to children who are willing to admit their mistakes, so that they do not feel afraid but are proud when they are honest.

The value of helping each other is also emphasized in group activities, such as tidying up toys, distributing food during breaks, and helping friends who are struggling. Teachers form small work teams, such as "cleaning teams" or "relief teams," which work in turn. This fosters a sense of responsibility, care, and empathy from an early age. In direct observation, the children look enthusiastic when given the responsibility and support each other.

Storytelling activities are a very effective method in conveying moral values (Kartini, Darmiyanti, and Riana 2022). Islamic stories such as the story of the honest and loving Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the story of Abu Bakr's generous companion, or the story of the forgiving Prophet Yusuf, are conveyed in simple language that is easy for children to understand. Stories are presented with puppet media, images, or even short videos that are designed interactively. Children not only listen, but are also invited to dialogue and reflect on the values contained in the story.

Teachers at Husna Jaya Kindergarten also use the role play method (Economics et al. 2025) as a means of instilling moral values. Children act out scenes such as "an honest child at home", "a child who apologizes after a mistake", or "a child who helps his friend who has fallen". This activity is not only fun, but also builds the child's social and emotional understanding. Children learn how to put themselves in certain situations and make decisions based on good values.

In the aspect of forgiving and not saying rudely, teachers build a classroom environment that is free from verbal violence. If there is an argument or misunderstanding between children, the teacher becomes a mediator who calms and directs. Children are encouraged to recognize their own feelings, for example, by asking: "How do you feel when your friend says something rude?" or "How do you feel when you are forgiven?" The child is then given time to think and asked to express his feelings. Through this approach, children learn the importance of forgiving each other and guarding speech.

Parental involvement plays a crucial role in the process of forming children's character (Hasanah 2016). Husna Jaya Kindergarten holds regular meetings with parents to teach Islamic parenting and adjust parenting at home with at school. Parents are asked to create a daily communication book that contains information about how the child's attitude develops at home. They are also asked to practice prayer and polite behavior in their families. Therefore, learning about morality must also be applied in children's daily lives wherever they are.

The results of documentation and observations show that the children of Husna Jaya Kindergarten have experienced significant development since they learned the moral beliefs thoroughly. Some of the changes seen are as follows: Children find it easier to say sorry and thank you without being asked. They became more aware not to take friends' belongings without permission. They learn to calm down when angry and ask the teacher for help if they can't solve the problem on their own. They are also able to reprimand friends who speak rudely in a good way. They also show empathy when their friend is sick or sad.

Figure 1.1 documentation of moral faith learning activities

This change occurs through an iterative process, the teacher said. Character education takes time, but if done in the right way, the results will be noticeable in the long run. Overall, it can be concluded that the cultivation of



Islamic personality in early childhood is influenced by moral education, especially in terms of behaving honestly, forgiving, forgiving, and not saying rude things to others. Husna Jaya Kindergarten has shown how incorporating moral faith education into all children's activities can build a firm personality and based on Islamic values.

The results of the study show that the introduction of Islamic values from an early age can be a strong foundation in forming a generation that is not only academically intelligent, but also has strong moral and spiritual integrity. This success depends heavily on the use of methods that are appropriate to the child's developmental stage, a pleasant learning atmosphere, and the active involvement between parents and educators. The values of faith and morals are key elements in building children's character in a complete and sustainable manner. Therefore, the approach applied by Husna Jaya Semarang Kindergarten has the potential to be used as a model in designing character education based on Islamic values in various early childhood education units in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Learning moral beliefs at Husna Jaya Kindergarten Semarang greatly influences the formation of children's personalities from an early age. Values that are successfully instilled, such as honesty, helpfulness, forgiveness, and polite speaking, through habituation, example, storytelling, and role-playing. Children exhibit positive behaviors in social interactions and personal responsibility. In addition, success in shaping children's character is the fruit of close collaboration between educators and parents in providing continuous guidance, wherever the child is. It is evident that the formation of a strong Islamic character depends on the practice of morals applied in daily life.

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