THE CONTRIBUTION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SHAPING THE MORAL CHARACTER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATION (PGSD) STUDENTS AT NUSANTARA UNIVERSITY PGRI KEDIRI IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract: This research aims to explain the contribution of Islamic religious education in shaping the moral character of students in the Primary School Teacher Education Study Program (PGSD) at Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri. This type of research is qualitative descriptive research. The results of data analysis were obtained from interviews and researcher observations from students and the campus environment. Islamic religious education contributes a lot to the student learning environment in higher education, such as attitudes towards self-adaptation, tolerance and Islamic brotherhood. As prospective future educators, students in the Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) study program are required to have good competencies, especially in terms of character. There are two factors that influence the formation of student character, namely internal factors that come from within the student. And secondly, external factors originating from the environment around students. In this case, lecturers have the same position as teachers in educating. Because it is a determinant of educational success and has a position at the forefront of nation-building efforts. Things that can be done are forming good habits in the campus environment, giving rewards and punishments, providing students with an understanding of character.

INTRODUCTION

Character education is very important to shape the future of the younger generation, especially in the increasingly advanced digital era. Character is a collection of traits within a person that determines his behavior and actions, especially in matters relating to good and bad values which can be a reflection of a person's self (Miftahul, *2024*). Discussions about character education in the digital era have developed in recent years. A deep understanding of how technology affects the morality and character of the younger generation is needed (Arifuddin

et.al., 2024). The Islamic religion views character education as having an important role in shaping a person's character. According to Islamic teachings, character education is the main goal that must be achieved through His messenger, the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In a hadith, the Prophet said, narrated by Imam Malik*: "Indeed, I was sent for nothing but to perfect (human) morals"* (HR. Bukhori)(Mukhid, 2016).

God has called people to the importance of character education found in Al-Qur'an Surat Luqman verses 12-14 as follows:

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا لُقْمَٰنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَن يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِۦ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيد. وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَٰنُ لِٱبْنِهِۦ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُۥ يَٰبُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ إِنَّ ٱلشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيم. وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُۥ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَٰلُهُۥ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ ٱشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَٰلِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ (لقمان : 12–14).

Meaning: "And indeed We have given wisdom to Lukman, namely: "Be thankful to Allah. And whoever is thankful (to Allah), then indeed he is thankful for himself; and whoever is not thankful, then indeed Allah is Rich. Most Praiseworthy". And (remember) when Lukman said to his son, when he was giving him a lesson: "O my son, do not associate (Allah) with others, indeed, associating (Allah) with others is really a great injustice". And We command man (to do good) to his two parents; his mother had conceived him in a state of increasing weakness, and weaned him in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your two parents, to Me alone you will return" (QS. Luqman: 12-14(Mardiah & Napratilora, 2021).

The verse above explains Luqman's personal aspect when viewed from an educational perspective, namely that human quality is not seen from the perspective of heredity or race. Luqman's figure as an educator has advantages in the quality of his personality, not advantages in the form of material possessions or offspring. Advantage in this context is wisdom. Luqman is seen as an educational figure who has characteristics and behavior that depict wisdom. In Ath-Thabari's interpretation, wisdom is defined as understanding in religion, strength of thinking, accuracy in speaking, and understanding in Islam even though he is not a prophet and it was not revealed to him (Kumparan, 2024).

Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) students have an important role in forming the nation's next generation. Considering that they act as educators for children aged 6 to 11 years, this age is an age that is very vulnerable to being carried away by the current of changing times. As future educators, students in this study program are required to have good competencies, especially in terms of character. Because teachers and students have a common thread in which whatever a teacher does will indirectly be imitated by their students. Professional teachers can make the learning process comfortable, safe and enjoyable. They will stimulate themselves to increase creativity in presenting various learning activities in class. The right learning model and approach is very important to determine students' tendencies and talents in learning so that goals are achieved as expected (Maullidina et.al., 2023).

The moral character of students is decreasing day by day, as are the many problems that occur among students in real life and in cyberspace. This shows that the level of ethical awareness of students is decreasing. The challenges that students face inside and outside the tertiary environment are very varied, such as cultural hybridization, curriculum policies, personnel challenges, technological advances that can give rise to radicalism. According to Irfan Abu Bakar and Muhammad Nabil in their research, they argue that there are two factors that can influence student behavior and personality. First, cultural crossover. The cultural crossroads they experience from childhood to adolescence and in college open them to various new concepts, habits and even ideologies. Second, increasingly intensive contact. With the development of technology and globalization, all types of information can easily be accessed by all levels of society (Abu Bakar, et.al., 2018).

According to *Thomas Lickona* According to Heri Gunawan, character education is education to shape a person's personality through character education, the results of which can be seen in a person's real actions, namely good behavior, honest responsibility, respect for other people's rights, hard work, and so on (Heri Gunawan, 2024) . According to Masnur Muslih, in Revi's research, character education is education in human moral values that are realized and carried out in real actions. There is an element of the process of forming values and attitudes in character education which explains the reasons or knowledge why this must be done. This is what leads to the goal of helping humans become more complete humans. The values in question are relationships between people, oneself, life as a nation, the natural world and God (Fitriani, 2021).

From scientists' statements, it can be concluded that character education is education to shape personality and values through concrete actions. There are four main dimensions of character, including: moral dimension, ethical dimension, citizenship dimension, and spiritual dimension. Character education also has relevance to Islamic education, where the principles of Islamic education can provide a strong moral foundation for character education, such as the values of honesty, patience, mutual help and compassion (Iqbal et.al., 2024). In this case, learning methods for Islamic religious education courses are needed that are effective in shaping student character.

In the 21st century, humans experienced rapid developments in the field of technology. This is proven by the increasing human need for internet networks in everyday life. Technological developments also have positive and negative impacts on life. The positive impact is in the form of ease of accessing as much information as possible in a short time, being able to work together, and easily adapting to changes. On the other hand, there are negative impacts, such as internet addiction and decreased ability to socialize with others (Widiandari et.al., 2023). In this case, the role of educators is really needed in overcoming the impacts caused by the digital era. Digital literacy is one of the keys to character formation in the digital era (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023). Based on the data presented above, the aim of writing this article is 1) Analyze the contribution of PAI in shaping the religious character of PGSD students, 2) Identify factors that support and hinder the process of character formation, 3) Provide recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of PAI in shaping religious character student.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this research is qualitative using qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques. The subjects used in this research were students from the Primary School Teacher Education Study Program (PGSD) at Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri. This research uses instruments in the form of observations and interviews which use data, analysis and interpretation of the meaning and data obtained in the field to find an image to describe the contribution of Islamic religious education in shaping student character in this digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. **PAI Contribution in Forming Moral Character**

Islamic religious education is an important basis for cultivating and forming student character in higher education. Therefore, implementing methods to build students' character and morals through Islamic religious learning is important. In carrying out lectures at 6 meetings, researchers found Islamic values that were integrated with the learning culture on the Nusantara PGRI Kediri University campus environment which reflected Islamic values that deserved to be appreciated. These values include example, habituation, Islamic brotherhood, and tolerance.

a. Exemplary

According to Hergen and Olson in Ainul Yaqin, exemplary learning theory is often identified with the term *modeling*. Observing examples or models gives students the opportunity to learn more, confirm what they know, and increase their understanding. The learning outcomes from understanding and imitating the model can continue to higher cognitive levels, such as synthesis and evaluation. This will give students new innovation and creative abilities. It is very possible that innovative and creative students come from the process of imitating or modeling the innovative and creative attitudes of their teachers (Olson & Ramirez, 2020). An effective approach, exemplary or modeling, is recognized by experts, and many people embrace Islam because of the exemplary actions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In the Al-Quran, surah Al-Ahzab verse 21, it is explained that Muhammad is a good role model. This also provides a basis for Islamic education to build student character through exemplary methods (Yaqin, 2023).

According to the results of observations, researchers found that Elementary School Teacher Education class students have shaped their environment by imitating each other's students who are competent in certain subjects, in lectures and in activities outside of lectures, especially in religious matters. So it involves an exchange of values from one student to another.

b. Habituation

Students of the Primary School Teacher Education Study Program at Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri have implemented habits in the form of good practices in each lecture. These activities include reading prayers before starting lectures, closing lectures with prayers, getting used to being polite and courteous when meeting face to face with

lecturers, carrying out worship according to the time. This can be seen in the campus mosque environment which is never quiet when it is time for fardlu or Friday prayers.

c. Islamic Brotherhood

Ukhwah is a word that means brotherhood. it means a feeling of empathy between two or more people. Each party has the same feelings both happy and sad, both happy and sad. The interweaving of feelings creates a reciprocal attitude to help each other when the other party experiences difficulties, and an attitude to give pleasure to the other party. The ukhuwah and brotherhood that applies to fellow Muslims is called ukhuwah Islamiyah. Muslim brotherhood is a brotherhood based on aqidah and beliefs rather than family, tribe, nation, or skin color. The Prophet likened the Muslim community to one body (Bakhtiar, 2018). Referring to the results of observations, researchers found that students in the elementary school teacher education study program have a high sense of family. This is proven by the cohesiveness in discussions, problem solving, and also the harmony that appears during lectures.

d. Tolerance

Because this nation consists of many differences who live together and must continue to maintain harmony, tolerance is one of the keys to preserving nature (Averoezy, 2021). Forms of implementing tolerance that can be felt by PGSD Nusantara University PGRI students include respecting opinions and not imposing their will, providing time to worship for each religion, providing lessons for every existing religion to develop their religious knowledge, mentioning various greetings from religious communities in the opening of a events, arranging the time of the event so that it does not clash with each religion's worship schedule, reminding each other and respecting friends who are praying, donating some of their assets in social service activities, helping with other religions' religious activities, and not offending other religions.

2. **Factors That Influence the Formation of Moral Character**

Apart from matters related to Islamic religious education, there are also factors that shape the moral character of students in this digital era. Which will be explained as follows:

a. Internal Factors

Internal factors include the student's own condition, including cognitive background (religious understanding, intelligence), affective background (motivation, interests, attitudes, independence). Because humans cannot be separated from religious teachings in everyday life, a person's religious knowledge will influence the formation of morals. Apart from intelligence, students must also have a mature self-concept.

b. External Factors

Environmental factors include external factors, which are one of the factors that influence a person's attitudes and behavior. It is recognized that there are three educational environments: family, school, and community. If a student's internal factors are felt to be good but the external factors are bad, it will also have an influence on the student himself, either a little or a lot (Mannan, 2015).

3. **The Role of PAI Lecturers in the Formation of Moral Character**

The role of lecturers in higher education is one of the factors that influences the formation of student character. Like teachers in schools, lecturers have the same position as teachers in educating. Because it is a determinant of educational success and has a position at the forefront of nation-building efforts. It is the lecturer's personality that is the fulcrum for balancing knowledge and skills (Amelia, 2021).

According to Sudrajat in Akhtim, the methods that lecturers can use in teaching are as follows:

a. Habituation

In lecture activities that take place in class, lecturers can train students by getting used to good behavior. So students will get used to it and can apply it in everyday life. This habituation activity can be in the form of routine activities carried out in lectures, such as praying before and after learning.

b. Improve Understanding

To increase understanding, lecturers can provide advice regarding student character values. According to Syarbani, methods of character formation can take the form of advice, habituation, stories and example.

c. Reward and Punishment

A lecturer is someone who has the most influence in forming student character. Therefore, lecturers must pay attention to instilling the value of character education. One example is by giving awards to students who have completed their assignments and behaved well in accordance with what they were instructed to do. However, lecturers should also have the right to punish students who do something bad or do not obey their orders (Jannah, 2023).

From the explanation above, it can be seen that lecturers have a role in helping students understand the social values and worship demonstrated in daily life at school and in society. Lecturers must be able to be role models or role models by remaining trustworthy, wise and wise. This will make it easier for students to imitate lecturers who have good personalities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The Islamic religion views character education as having an important role in shaping a person's character. According to Islamic teachings, character education is the main goal that must be achieved through His messenger, the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In carrying out lectures at 6 meetings, researchers found Islamic values that were integrated with the learning culture on the Nusantara PGRI Kediri University campus environment which reflected Islamic values that deserved to be appreciated. These values include example, habituation, Islamic brotherhood, and tolerance. The role of lecturers in higher education is one of the factors that influences the formation of student character. The methods that lecturers can use in teaching according to Sudrajat in Akhtim include the habit of good attitudes, rewards and punishments, and increasing understanding of character education in the digital era.

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