

Exploring The Islamic Based Character Education In Digital Era: A Case Of Private Islamic Boardings At Central Java Indonesia

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ABSTRACT:

Character building is oft-studied by many researchers. This study is about Islamic based character education which is very influential on student achievement in both academics and non-academics indicated by behavior that reflects Islamic values. This study is aimed at (1) revealing the implementation process of character education based on Islamic values, (2) revealing the approach taken in realizing the character education program. This study is qualitative. The subject of this study is the principal, vice-principal, teachers, students, parents of SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo, and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. The method of data collection is the interview, observation, and documentation. The data validity was tested using the triangulation method. The method of data analysis used the flow analysis technique. The result of this study is: (1) the implementation process of character education started from designing the concept of Islamic based character education which manages students' characters. Furthermore, teachers realized it in creating Islamic school's environment, fostering teachers and students through a mentoring model and being included in the curriculum integrated into all subjects; (2) the approach taken in realizing the character education program is curriculum and learning approach, the exemplary approach and the habituation approach. These approaches are packaged in Islamic frames according to Islamic values.

Keywords: *character education, Islamic values, character*

1. INTRODUCTION

The word "character" is associated with the general values of human behavior concerning God, oneself, among humans, and with an environment in which all of these based on the norms of religion, law, manners, culture, and customs (Ann et al., 2014; Suyadi, 2013; Tarman, 2012). Connecting characters with Islam is closely related and even impossible to separate because Islam is a moral religion and character education in Islam is education that includes moral knowledge, feeling of morals and moral actions. These morals are developed based on Islamic values (Muhsinin, 2013; Perdana, 2015).

Character education cannot be separated from religious values. In the Islamic perspective, a religious character is a reflection of human obedience to Allah SWT, manifested in the attitude and behavior of carrying out Islamic law, tolerate other religions consists of three aspects, they are the relationship between individual and Allah SWT, among humans, and

with the universe. The manifestation of the values is in the form of a love of peace, tolerance, respect for religious differences, firm, confidence, cross religion cooperation, antibullying and nonviolence, relationship, sincerity, do not impose on others, and protect marginal people (Was et al., 2006; Anshori, 2017; Haryanto & Akhirin, 2018).

Indonesia is a country with a lot of diversity. Central Bureau of Statistics of BPS (Statistic, 2019) states that the largest population of Indonesia is inhabited by Javanese around 40,05% of the total population of Indonesia. The second-largest population is the Sundanese tribe around 15,50%. The rest are under 5% inhabited by other tribes. Indonesia has various natural aspects and social aspects. It is an extraordinary challenge to manifest national harmony through character education (Budiharso & Tarman, 2020). The differences in ethnicity, language, environment, even in Islam cannot be separated from the difference of madhhab, groups, and organization.

The complexity of the Indonesian nation plurality has a significant impact on social life. Therefore, a complete concept of character education is needed so that the Indonesian nation with the largest Muslim population in the world can live in harmony and peace (Budiharso, 2017). Whereas, Muslims are not fully yet make efforts to form Islamic characters due to there is still violence, brawl, exclusivity, the weakness of tolerance, and increasing respect for others are indicators that the function of Islamic education so far has not been effective (Gündoğdu et al., 2017; Zain, 2013). Thus, there must be a serious effort from Islamic education institutions to form Islamic character education to create peace for the nation and state.

The location used in this study is SMA CT Arsyia Foundation Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. The students are Muslims with the economic condition of their parents in the middle or lower class. These schools are chosen as the research location due to: (1) the locations of these schools are side by side where SMA CT Arsyia Foundation is in Sukoharjo district represents urban and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah is in Wonogiri district represents the rural or suburban area with a system of boarding system; (2) these schools constitute non-profit school with the application of free school and many achievements; (3) the students in these schools have unique applications of character used in school as well as in society. SMA CT Arsyia Foundation represents Nationalist with the religious approach and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah represents a religious circle with a Nationalist approach.

Some researchers have researched character education. Bodenhorn (2006) in his research entitled "Relationship Between Implementing character Education, Student Behavior, and Student Achievement" stated that data collection of student behavior systematically and consistently will be beneficial to character education achievements. It describes the importance of administration to the character education held to be traced in the future (Budiharso, 2016). The school especially class teachers will be easier to trace students with problems. However, it is not conducted quickly but it requires time and consistency to manifest character education. Revell & Arthur (2007) presented the result that character education included in curriculum assist teachers in the teaching-learning process. Hoon (2010) investigated a study entitled "An Appraisal on the Implementation of Moral Education for Schools in Malaysia". It revealed the actual goal of moral education is to build the character of a responsible, democratic society, and civil society (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020a). The result of his study is that learning about moral education is a must for Muslim students to be the noble values of Malaysian society from religious values, tradition, and culture of various ethnic groups in Malaysia with universal moral values.

Subsequently, Zubaidi (2011) explored theoretically two approaches to character implementation at schools. They are character education as a separate subject and character education as integrated material subjects. Noor (2020) presented his research result that the

students take every advantage of the education process as the character learning process formed through a curriculum and school surrounding to create character education culture. Revell (2007) explained in his study that the success of character education is the result of a good concept and is contextually flexible and involves all components of education. The results of this study have similarities with the author's research at SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri that the two schools have prepared the concept of character education well and involve all components. The difference between these studies is that they are based on the Islamic values concept of Al Qur'an and hadith as the basis and guidelines for the conceptual development of character education based on Islamic values in terms of curriculum, human resource development, and school environment.

The difference of this study with previous ones is that the other researches more focused on general character education implemented from community values, while the writer's study was conducted at two different schools, namely SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri, focusing on Islamic values. However, both studies have similarities in the goal of character education for students to be people with the good character of moral values. This study is aimed at revealing the process of implementation of character education based on Islamic values and to reveal the approach of character education carried out in the digital era.

2. METHODS

This study used qualitative research which started from assumptions and theoretic study frame. Hence, both bases of this study relate to problems used as research (Creswell, 2009). Besides, the qualitative method constitutes the evolution process to examine phenomena researched and to show the relations to the question exploring (Silverman, 1998; Ward, Comer, & Stone, 2018). Qualitative research has the main role in problems and contextual (Cohen, 1999; Russell, Berney, Stansfeld, Lanz, & Chandola, 2016).

The location used in this study is SMA CT Arsyia Foundation Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. The students are Muslims with the economic condition of their parents in the middle or lower class. The object of this study is the implementation of Islamic based character education in the digital era. The main instrument of this study is the researcher himself. The subjects are principal, vice-principal, teachers, students, parents of SMA Foundation Sukoharjo, and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. The methods of data collection are interview, observation, and documentation. The data validity test used source triangulation. The data validity will lead to the truth and accuracy of the information presented (Parker, 2004; Cozby, 2009). This study is conducted by the process of data analysis through the component of interactive data analysis (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020a). The data analysis is conducted progressively from the beginning to the end of research because data study cannot be conducted without analysis and interpretation to study the meaning (Fryer, 2006; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Besides, data analysis was carried out for data-based development (Nasution, 1996; Parker, 2004). The data analysis method used the flow analysis technique.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The achievements of students of both schools in SMA CT Arsyia and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah provide challenges and opportunities for the schools to continue to present works and further improve their achievements through character education. However, the real challenge faced by schools is the presence of underachieving or minority students. Therefore, the education system must meet the needs of minority students to provide equal opportunities. Thus, it takes concrete steps so that students need is met with a well-conceptualized character education

approach. The process of organizing Islamic based character education in SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri begins with the basics of the initial foundation applied into vision, mission, and goals. Every activity in school must be in line with Islamic values. Every learning process from start to finish is packed with Islamic values.

The aim of organizing Islamic based character education in SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri, in general, is at forming a pious personality based on Islamic values implemented based on school's atmosphere by accommodating local culture without violating Islamic values. The difference between these two schools is that SMA SMA CT Arsyia Foundation with the theme of religious-nationalist values, while SMA Ulya Al-Fatah has the theme of religious values.

3.1. The Implementation Process of Character Education based on Islamic Value

The implementation of character education at SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri used a curriculum with an emphasis on the integration of character education into material subjects including syllabus and lesson plans. The curriculum is an initial concern in the process of character education at SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. A special team was formed to deal with Islamic subjects and to study intensively by experienced experts. SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri implement the second model to integrate it into every material subject.

SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri have prepared the concept of character education consequently into an annual program evaluated progressively. Through the curriculum process, SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri hold Islamic-based character education involved teachers, employees, students, parents, and all parties in the internal school environment. The concept of Islamic based character education at SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri is linked each other from initial preparation to implementation to create Islamic culture in SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri.

Both SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri in the initial process of character education conduct human resource development through a different model. SMA CT Arsyia Foundation through a professional human resource development management model begins with recruitment development, while SMA Ulya Al-Fatah uses a student regeneration model with a monitoring system. The two models give maximum results which can be seen from a daily culture of school established harmoniously by teachers, students, and parents. It is hoped that the professional teacher coaching model through gradual and well-managed training and the regeneration of the mentoring system create Islamic culture among students and teachers as a good role model for students.

SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri try to involve school elements include teachers with mentoring and parents as well. Parents are involved in various activities to support the Islamic based character education program through joint activities. For example, when students violate the school rule, the classroom teachers immediately inform parents through parent class to discuss students' problems. Sometimes, parenting is carried out in students' houses so that parents can monitor and investigate it.

Extracurricular activities at SMA CT Arsyia Sukoharjo dan SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri are very various. Cadet and scouting activities in SMA Ulya Al-Fatah lead to Islamic student character building. By Islamic values, students show their discipline, orderly, and obedient to school rules as well as self-discipline to perform the 5 shala worship on time. The students also learn to respect teachers, hang out with friends, and socialize with Islamic norms as well.

Mentoring students at SMA Ulya Alfatah is done once a week, while intensive student coaching at SMA CT Arsyia is conducted with a counselor as the teacher coordinator. Not only the material of learning thought but also subject materials related to spiritual

improvement was discussed between teachers and students. The atmosphere of reality becomes the main attraction for students. The intensive coaching or mentoring to students at SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri was very effective to increase Islamic based character education. Teachers understand the condition of students in-depth because the mentoring model provides an opportunity for students to talk heart-to-heart whatever problems they face both problems related to personality and lessons.

The process of Islamic-based character education at SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri has run well in line with the vision, mission, and goals of the school. It requires data collection systematically and consistently though. Nevertheless, achieving systematically and consistently will be required to address student behavior in the future if a violation occurs. Archiving manuals at SMA Ulya Al-Fatah needs to be improved, while at SMA CT Arsyah is good enough and needs to be improved as well.

3.2. The Approaches in realizing the Character Education Program

There are four approaches of Islamic based character education at SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. These approaches are very influential to manifest character education. Both SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri used a curriculum and learning approach, exemplary approach, and habituation.

(1) The Curriculum and Learning Approach

Islamic based character education cannot be separated with curriculum, integrated into subjects through lesson plans and syllabus to be applied to the learning process (Revell, 2007). Meanwhile, several approaches were used by teachers of SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri to achieve goals, namely; first, knowledge. The process of learning was started by Islamic knowledge from surah of Al-Qur'an as well as hadith relates to the subject materials and Tarikh (Islam history) to motivate students to live based on shari'ah and to engage nationalism spirit.

The motivation of Islami spirit is effective to convey in every preliminary before the teaching-learning process. Then, it has become a habit in every process of teaching-learning. The second approach is to allow students to respond to Islamic knowledge. By responding from students, the next model of approach is stimulating discussion and teachers follow up students' responses. These approaches used three steps of moral reasoning, namely: (1) the phase of moral knowledge, (2) the moral feeling phase, and (3) the phase of acting morally. Moral reasoning is a systematic process of evaluating personal virtues and developing a consistent and impartial set of moral principles for a life (Zubaidi, 2011). The first step is moral knowledge called cognitive phase learning which studies moral issues and the way to overcome them. The second step is a moral feeling of respecting considered as the basis of what is believed by the individual's self and others. The third step is to act morally. It means how people act based on values and what is known.

(2) Exemplary Approach

An exemplary approach was carried out to implement Islamic character education at SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri. It is needed for students to know the real world of Islamic character deeds. Exemplary is important for students at SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri to be realized as Islamic based character education. All members of schools including teachers and staff were provided intensive coaching to support the program. The mentoring was required to all teachers and staffs once a week, monthly recitation, and several routine agendas that support the process of building Islamic

Besides, an evaluation of human resources development was conducted to focus on aspects of the daily behavior of teachers and staff through an established mechanism to be Islamic figures for students (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020b). Exemplary provides a big contribution to character education. It orients to an aspect of actions, morals, and attitudes from teachers as role figures to students. In other words, put forwards behavior aspects rather than talking a lot without action (Furqon, 2010). The exemplary characters in character education constitute teachers' role model to students (Koesuma, 2011, p. 215). It impacts students' character so that they understand virtue values closely and deeply.

(3) *Habituation Approach*

The habituation conducted in SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri is shala, recite Al Qur'an, wear Islamic dress, and behave in an Islamic manner. Students are accustomed to behaving with good manners between students and teachers, among students, and to school (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2019). Obedience to the rules in SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah was applied as habituation to school rules with honor systems of reward and punishment to form students' character. The spontaneous habituation such as greeting, doing good to friends and teachers was carried out in SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri (Furqon, 2010, p. 52). Cleanliness was the main spirit in these schools conducted by reforestation, recycling, school campaign without plastic, etc (Mustakim, 2011, p. 96). These programs will form the character culture school. Also, the honesty of honor system is implemented in SMA CT Arsyah Sukoharjo and SMA Ulya Al-Fatah Wonogiri as well in all activities including school exams by putting up a regulatory banner to grow habituation as a part of character education.

4. CONCLUSION

The process of Islamic-based character education process is attached to the vision, mission, goal, and output profile of the student. Furthermore, schools realized it into Islamic schools by mentoring teachers and students through a curriculum integrated with the subject. The approaches realized in character education programs are curriculum and learning approach, exemplary approach, and habituation approach. These approaches are packed in the Islamic frame of Semua Al Qur'an and hadith.

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