Character Education in Islamic Perspective Insan Kamil

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Abstract

Character education is a fundamental pillar in shaping individual morality. In Islam, character education has a strong theological foundation derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the exemplary conduct of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Islam integrates character education into all aspects of life, aiming to shape individuals with balance in faith, deeds, and noble character. This concept is often called "*insan kamil*," which means a perfect human being in all aspects of life, especially in maintaining relationships with Allah, fellow human beings, and the environment. This study discusses the concept of Islamic character education, the character values it contains, and its application in the lives of individuals, families, and society. Using a qualitative approach based on literature review, this study shows that character education in Islam aims to shape individuals with noble character and enhance spiritual awareness as servants of Allah.

Keyword: character education; Islam; character values; morality; Tawheed

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1. Introduction

Character education is one of the essential components in the world of education, especially in facing increasingly complex moral challenges in the era of globalization (Samani & Hariyanto, 2011). Amidst the rapid flow of information and social change, strong character becomes the primary foundation for shaping intellectually intelligent individuals with good ethics and morals (Lickons, 1991). The Islamic perspective offers a solid foundation for character education, as Islam teaches knowledge and instills deep values of ethics and morality. These teachings can be seen in the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasizing the daily importance of forming noble character.

Islam integrates character education into all aspects of life, aiming to shape individuals with balance in faith, deeds, and noble character. This concept is often called "*insan kamil*," a perfect human being in all aspects of life, especially in maintaining relationships with Allah, fellow human beings, and the environment (Nasional, 2008). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character." (HR. Ahmad). Thus, character education in Islam teaches what should be done and how to do it with full awareness of morality and social responsibility. The inculcation of these values must be carried out comprehensively and consistently so that knowledgeable and virtuous individuals are formed (Lickona, 1999).

In Indonesia's education context, particularly in formal educational institutions, it is essential to integrate Islamic values into the character education curriculum. Several studies show that strengthening character education based on religion can enhance students' morals and shape positive attitudes toward the social and cultural environment. Therefore, implementing character education based on Islamic teachings can significantly contribute to shaping a young generation that is not only academically excellent but also highly integrative and socially responsible (Suryani et al., 2022).

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method. Data were collected from various sources, including the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic literature books,

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and scholarly journal articles (Majid & Andayani, 2013). The data analysis technique used is descriptive-analytical, aiming to explore the concepts and values of Islamic character education in-depth and research findings from previous studies (Hasan, 2002). In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the key instrument. Therefore, the researcher must possess a broad theoretical background and insight to ask questions, analyze, and construct a clearer understanding of the research subject. This research emphasizes meaning and is value-bound. Qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and is discovery-oriented. In general, library sources can be divided into two categories: general references and specific references. General references usually consist of theories and concepts found in textbooks, encyclopedias, monographs, and similar materials, while specific references include journals, research bulletins, theses, and others (Hafid, 2018). In this study, both sources examine the research focus, namely character education from an Islamic perspective and its implementation.

3. Result and Discussion

1. The Concept of Character Education in the Islamic Perspective

In Islam, character education is based on the principle of Tawheed, which is the belief that Allah SWT is the Creator, Sustainer, and the ultimate goal of human life. Tawheed establishes a solid moral foundation that guides individuals to live according to Islamic law (*shari'ah*). Allah says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

"I did not create jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (QS. Adz-Dzariyat: 56) (Depag RI, 1979)

Character education in Islam also builds good morals (*khuluq al-karim*). Morals are related to human relationships and involve a vertical relationship with Allah SWT and harmony with the natural world (Marzuki, 2009).

2. Islamic Character Values

Islamic character education includes various moral values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. The following are some essential Islamic character values:

a. Honesty (*Ash-Shidq*)

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Honesty is one of the main pillars of Islamic character. Allah commands His people to always speak the truth:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ

"O you who have believed! Fear Allah and be with those who are truthful." (QS. At-Taubah: 119)

Honesty, or *ash-said* in Arabic, is one of the fundamental values in Islam. It means speaking and acting in reality without lies or manipulation. Honesty is not limited to speech but includes intention, action, and relationships with Allah SWT and fellow humans (Mustafa, 2022).

The word *shadaqa* means genuine, sincere, or following fact. In morality, honesty is a consistent attitude toward truth in heart, speech, and action .

The Prophet Muhammad SAW is the ultimate example of honesty. He was known as *Al-Amin* (the trustworthy) because of his honesty and integrity, even before being appointed a prophet. Some Hadiths that emphasize honesty are:

"Verily, honesty leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A person will continue to speak the truth until he is recorded with Allah as truthful. And verily, falsehood leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to Hell. A person will continue to lie until he is recorded with Allah as a liar."

This Hadith shows that honesty is the path to goodness and Paradise.

Dimensions of Honesty in Islam

Honesty in Islam includes several dimensions, such as:

1. Honesty to Allah SWT

Being honest to Allah means sincerity in worship and fulfilling His commands without seeking praise or reward. Allah says:

قُلْ اِنَّ صَلَاتِيْ وَنُسُكِيْ وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِيْ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَۙ

"Say, 'Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds.'" (QS. Al-An'am: 162)

2. Honesty to Oneself

Being honest with oneself means recognizing one's weaknesses and potential without self-deception. This is important for achieving a healthy and responsible personality.

3. Honesty in Speech

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Speaking truthfully and avoiding lies is a key aspect of honesty. The Prophet SAW said: *"Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent."* (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

4. Honesty in Action

One's actions must align with one's words. Allah criticizes those who speak without acting:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

"O you who have believed! Why do you say what you do not do?" (QS. As-Saff: 2)

5. Honesty in Social Relationships

Honesty in social interaction—such as in trade, contracts, and fulfilling responsibilities—reflects the character of a true believer (Ichsan, 2016).

From the explanation above, honesty (*ash-said*) is one of the most essential values in Islam that should be applied in all aspects of life. It involves speech, action, intention, and one's relationship with Allah and others. The Qur'an and Hadith provide theological and practical foundations for making honesty the core of a Muslim's character.

Honesty brings many benefits to both individual and community life. However, practicing it requires firm faith and awareness of Allah's watchfulness. By instilling the value of honesty, Muslims can create a more harmonious and blessed life.

b. Trustworthiness (*Amanah*)

Amanah comes from *Amina*, which means trust, responsibility, or loyalty. In the Islamic context, *Amanah* refers to a person's ability to safeguard and fulfill responsibilities entrusted to them—whether from Allah SWT, other people, or themselves. It encompasses many aspects of life, including obedience to Allah, protecting the rights of others, and fulfilling social obligations (Murphy, 2002).

Trustworthiness is one of the main characteristics of a true believer. Allah SWT says:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَن يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنسَٰنُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا

"Indeed, We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man undertook it..." (QS. Al-Ahzab: 72)

The Prophet SAW strongly emphasized the importance of *amanah* in life:

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"The signs of a hypocrite are three: when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he is entrusted, he betrays the trust." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This Hadith shows that betraying trust is a characteristic of hypocrisy.

Dimensions of Trustworthiness in Islam

Trustworthiness in Islam includes the following aspects:

1. Trustworthiness to Allah SWT

   Fulfilling all of His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. Examples include praying, giving zakat, and observing other religious duties (Hamzah, 1983).

2. Trustworthiness to Others

   This includes safeguarding others' rights in family life, work, or friendships. The Prophet SAW said:

"The most complete of the believers in faith are those with the best character and those who are most trustworthy toward others." (HR. Ahmad)

3. Trustworthiness to Oneself

   Every person is responsible for their well-being—physically, mentally, and morally.

4. Trustworthiness in Work

   Every job or responsibility entrusted to someone is a trust that must be fulfilled responsibly. The Prophet SAW said:

"When the trust is neglected, then await the Hour (of destruction)." (HR. Bukhari)

   Amanah is a core Islamic value that includes accountability to Allah, oneself, and others. It is a sign of faith and the foundation of a righteous personal, social, and professional life. Islam emphasizes the importance of fulfilling trust with justice and responsibility.

By upholding *amanah*, individuals can build harmonious relationships with Allah SWT and others and attain life's blessings. On the contrary, neglecting *amanah* can lead to moral and social collapse.

c. Patience (Sabar)

   Sabar comes from the Arabic word shabara, which means to restrain oneself or to remain steadfast in facing trials, challenges, or temptations. In the context of Islam, sabar refers to the

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ability of a Muslim to remain firm in obedience to Allah SWT, to restrain oneself from committing sins, and to accept Allah's decree with an open heart (Gunawan, 2006).

Imam Al-Ghazali, in his Ihya Ulumuddin, explains that sabar is one of the highest morals in Islam (Al-Ghazali, 2007). Patience is the foundation of other virtues because, without it, a person can easily be tempted by desires and will struggle to carry out the commands of Allah.

Patience is an important characteristic that helps humans face life's tests. Allah promises blessings for those who are patient:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اسْتَعِيْنُوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ

"O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 153).

The Prophet Muhammad SAW emphasized the importance of patience in the life of a Muslim. Here are some hadiths that explain the virtue of *sabar*:

"How amazing is the affair of a believer! All his affairs are good for him, which is not the case except for the believer. He would be thankful if he were granted ease, which would benefit him. He is patient if he is afflicted with hardship, which is also good for him." (HR. Bukhari Muslim)

This Hadith shows that patience is an integral part of faith.

Dimensions of Patience in Islam

Patience in Islam encompasses several complementary dimensions, including:

1. Patience in Obedience to Allah SWT

Patience in obedience means consistently carrying out the commands of Allah SWT, even when faced with difficulties or temptations—for example, patience in performing prayers, fasting, and paying zakat (Syah, 2016).

2. Patience in Avoiding Sin

Patience in avoiding sin is the ability to restrain oneself from actions Allah prohibits. This includes guarding one's gaze, avoiding backbiting, and controlling desires.

3. Patience in Facing Life's Trials

Patience in facing calamities, loss, or trials is a manifestation of a servant's acknowledgment of Allah's will. As Allah says:

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وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوْعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرٰتِّ وَبَشِّرِ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ

"And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits. But give good tidings to the patient." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 155).

4. Patience in Dawah

The Prophet Muhammad SAW exemplified patience in delivering the message of Islam, even when facing resistance, insults, and threats from his people. Patience in da'wah is the key to the successful spread of truth.

Virtues of Patience

Patience has many virtues in Islam, both in this world and the hereafter, including:

1. Receiving the Love of Allah SWT

Allah says:

وَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ قٰتَلَ مَعَهٗ رِبِّيُّوْنَ كَثِيْرٌّ فَمَا وَهَنُوْا لِمَآ اَصَابَهُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوْا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوْا ۗوَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ

"And Allah loves those who are patient." (QS. Ali Imran: 146).

2. Receiving Peace of Heart

Patience brings peace and tranquility when facing various life challenges. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

"Patience brings tranquility, while haste is part of Satan." (HR. Ahmad).

3. Promised Paradise (*Jannah*)

In QS. Al-Insan: 12-13, Allah mentions that Paradise is the reward for those who are patient.

4. Becoming Leaders in Goodness

Allah says:

"We made them leaders guiding by Our command when they were patient." (QS. As-Sajdah: 24).

Thus, patience is one of the core traits in Islam, which includes patience in obedience, avoiding sin, facing trials, and in da'wah. Patience is a sign of strong faith and the key to attaining Allah's pleasure, peace in life, and great rewards in the hereafter.

In facing life's challenges, a Muslim is urged to make patience their guide. Patience brings peace and strengthens the relationship with Allah and fellow humans.

d. Responsibility

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Responsibility in Islam refers to the ability of a person to fulfill the trust, duties, and rights entrusted to them, whether towards Allah SWT, fellow humans, or themselves. Responsibility involves awareness, commitment, and tangible actions to perform obligations with complete dedication (Hafiduddin, 2002).

In Arabic, responsibility is known as al-mas'uliyyah, derived from the word *sa'ala* (to ask), which implies that every person will be asked for an account of their actions. Allah SWT says:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُوْلًا

"And do not follow that of which you do not know. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart – about all those [one] will be questioned." (QS. Al-Isra: 36).

The Prophet Muhammad SAW emphasized the importance of responsibility in human life:

"Every one of you is a shepherd, and every one of you will be asked about his flock." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim).

The Prophet Muhammad SAW comprehensively explained responsibility, including its implications and scope. Some relevant hadiths are:

"Every one of you is a leader, and every one of you will be asked about his leadership. A leader is responsible for his people and will be asked about them. A husband is a family leader and will be asked about his family. A wife is a leader in her husband's house and will be asked about her household." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This Hadith emphasizes that responsibility is an obligation attached to every individual's position, whether in leadership, family, or daily life.

Dimensions of Responsibility in Islam

Responsibility in Islam includes three main dimensions:

1. Responsibility to Allah SWT

A Muslim is responsible for carrying out the commands of Allah and avoiding His prohibitions. Examples include performing prayers, fasting, and paying zakat. Allah says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (QS. Adz-Dzariyat: 56).

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2. Responsibility to Oneself

Each individual has to protect themselves from sin and evil. This responsibility includes personal development, maintaining health, and improving character. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

"Indeed, your body has a right over you." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim).

3. Responsibility to Others

Islam emphasizes social responsibility, such as fulfilling the rights of parents, educating children, maintaining good relations with neighbors, and upholding justice in society. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

"The best of people are those most beneficial to others." (HR. Ahmad).

Thus, responsibility is one of the core values in Islam that reflects a Muslim's faith and noble character. Every individual has a responsibility towards Allah SWT, themselves, and others. Fulfilling these responsibilities brings many benefits, including obtaining Allah's pleasure, creating social harmony, and gaining the trust of others.

Neglecting responsibilities, on the other hand, can lead to harm in this world and the hereafter. Islam encourages every Muslim to be constantly aware of their duties, as every deed will be questioned on the Day of Judgment.

e. Humility (*Tawadhu'*)

Tawadhu' comes from the Arabic word *tawadha'a*, meaning humility or lowering oneself. In the context of Islam, *tawadhu'* is the humble attitude that reflects a servant's awareness of the greatness of Allah SWT and their helplessness as a creation. *Tawadhu* also means placing oneself in a proper position without feeling superior to others, whether in terms of status, wealth, or knowledge.

Tawadhu' is one of the noble character traits highly recommended in Islam, as it reflects the perfection of a person's faith. This attitude is different from *tazallul* (humbling oneself in a demeaning way) because *tawadhu'* is a noble act that arises from strong faith and self-awareness, not weakness (Ahmad, 2010).

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Tawadhu' is a humble attitude that prevents humans from arrogance. Allah praises those who exhibit humility:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِيْنَ يَمْشُوْنَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَّاِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجٰهِلُوْنَ قَالُوْا سَلٰمًا

"And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace." (QS. Al-Furqan: 63).

3. Implementation of Character Education in Life

Islamic character education can be applied in various ways, including:

a. Formal Education

Schools and educational institutions should integrate Islamic values into their curriculum. For example, Islamic education subjects that include lessons on morals, Islamic history, and fiqh can be used as media to shape students' Islamic character (Yusuf, 2015).

b. Family Education

The family is the first and primary place for character formation. Parents, as role models, must instill Islamic values in daily life. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

"Every child is born in a state of fitrah (natural disposition). Then, his parents make him a Jew, Christian, or Magian." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim).

c. Community Education

The social environment also influences character development. An Islamic society can create a conducive atmosphere for forming noble character. This includes religious activities like study circles, *da'wah*, and beneficial social activities.

d. Utilization of Technology

In the digital era, technology can be a tool for instilling character education. Through social media, applications, or da'wah videos, Islamic content can help spread Islamic values widely.

4. Conclusion

From an Islamic perspective, character education is oriented towards forming an *insan kamil* (a perfect human being) with strong faith, noble character, and behavior following the

Sharia. Islamic character values, such as honesty, trustworthiness, patience, and responsibility, are the main pillars of character education. Character education can be implemented through formal education, family, society, and media technology.

By integrating these values into daily life, Muslims can face moral and spiritual challenges in the modern era.

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