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THE HABITUATION METHOD AS A MEDIUM FOR CHARACTER FORMATION IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of the habituation method as an effective medium for developing students' Islamic character. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach by examining various relevant literature sources, such as books, journals, and educational documents. The findings indicate that the habituation method functions not only as a learning strategy but also as a process of internalizing moral, spiritual, and disciplinary values. This process involves consistency, teacher exemplification, and a supportive school environment. Thus, the habituation method can serve as an effective means of shaping a holistic Islamic character, encompassing aspects of faith, worship, and morality.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Character education plays a very important role in shaping children's personalities from an early age, particularly in creating a generation that is not only intellectually superior but also well-behaved. The success of implementing such education in institutions such as playgroups and elementary schools depends largely on the systems applied and the educational steps carried out consistently (Sujiono and Yuliani Nurani, 2011). In essence, education is not merely directed toward the ability to memorize exam materials, master test-taking strategies, or understand curriculum content. More than that, education needs to pay attention to developing students' attitudes and behavior so that they grow into individuals who are pious, knowledgeable, and noble in character. To achieve this goal, efforts to build character through a continuous habituation process are required (Ridwan Abdullah Sani and Muhammad Kadri, 2002).

In an era of globalization accompanied by various moral issues among the younger generation, the habituation method emerges as one of the strategic approaches in strengthening character education. Various problems such as declining honesty, diminishing ethical behavior, and weakening spiritual values demand an educational pattern that is practical and applicable, not merely theoretical.

One effective method for instilling these values is the habituation method. Habituation is an educational process carried out through the repeated practice of positive behavior consistently, so that it becomes an ingrained habit within the students. This method is highly relevant to be applied from an early age because children at this stage are in a phase of imitation and foundational character formation. Through habituation such as training children to greet others, recite prayers, perform prayers on time, act honestly, and speak politely Islamic values will be naturally embedded in their daily lives (Hasnida, 2014).

Therefore, it is important to examine more deeply how the habituation method can be used as a medium for forming Islamic character. With proper understanding, teachers, parents, and all educational stakeholders can apply this strategy effectively to create a generation that is not only intelligent but also noble in character, in accordance with Islamic values.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a library research method, which entails collecting data through the examination of various written sources, including books, scholarly journals, articles, and other relevant documents. In this type of research, data are obtained exclusively from literature review without involving field observations. This aligns with the view of Zed Mestika (2004), who states that library research consists of a series of scientific activities that involve gathering, reading, recording, and processing literature to obtain the data needed to address the research problem. The approach adopted in this study is a qualitative approach, which emphasizes understanding meaning, analyzing processes, and examining relationships among phenomena through systematic scientific reasoning. According to Saifuddin Azwar (2001), qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of written narratives about the object of study, rather than numerical data as found in quantitative

research. Since both primary and secondary data in this study are derived from various written works such as books, articles, and other academic literature the data collection process involves searching for relevant sources, reading them thoroughly, reviewing their content, connecting ideas across different references, and identifying key points relevant to the focus of the research. The data analysis technique utilized in this study is descriptive qualitative analysis. This analysis is carried out by organizing and classifying data systematically, then arranging them into specific patterns to uncover the meanings contained within. Referring to Sugiyono (2011), data analysis includes steps such as categorizing information, synthesizing ideas, identifying essential aspects to be examined, and drawing conclusions that correspond to the objectives of the study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Psychological and Theological Foundations of Habituation in Islamic Education

Habituation is a continuous process aimed at fostering discipline in Early Childhood. The application of discipline is not intended to create hostility, but rather to cultivate awareness within the child to shape good character and become an individual who benefits the nation and the state. Instilling disciplined behavior from an early age can form positive attitudes in learners. When children become accustomed to disciplined behavior, they tend to act in accordance with social norms that apply in their surroundings. Therefore, the habituation of disciplinary behavior needs to begin at an early age. This attitude can also become one of the determining factors for success in the learning process (Eva Maela Sofia et al., 2023).

From a psychological perspective, character formation in children can occur through several important stages. First, children need to be accustomed to positive behaviors from an early age, around the age of three, before they are able to distinguish between what is good and bad. Second, when children begin to understand the difference between good and bad behavior, parents or educators can guide them to understand the reasons behind such classifications why certain behaviors are considered good and others are considered bad. Third, after cognitive understanding is formed, children need to be introduced to the affective aspect, namely developing a liking for positive behavior and understanding why such behavior is appreciated by the social environment. Fourth, once children possess proper understanding and attitudes, the next step is to help them practice these behaviors through habituation that involves psychomotor skills. Fifth, when children are able to consistently practice these values, the exemplary conduct of parents and the surrounding environment becomes crucial as tangible reinforcement in the internalization process of character. Sixth, the positive behaviors that begin to form need to be strengthened continuously, including through consistent reminders and support so that these good habits become firmly rooted in the child (Nurussakinah Daulay, 2015).

From a theological perspective, the concept of habituation has a strong foundation in Islamic teachings. The Qur'an and Hadith provide extensive guidance on the importance of shaping character and positive behavior from an early age. The Qur'an presents educational content gradually, including in transforming negative behavior into better habits. Habit

occupies an important position in human life because it functions to conserve energy and focus, allowing individuals to direct their efforts toward productive, creative, and beneficial activities. If human beings were not granted the capacity for habituation by Allah, most of their time would be consumed merely by learning basic activities such as walking, speaking, and other fundamental tasks. The principle of habituation is also emphasized in the Qur'an as one of the methods applied in the educational process. Allah and His Messenger encourage actions to be carried out repeatedly so that they become ingrained habits (Heri Jauhari Muchtar, 2008).

However, habits can also become major obstacles when they are no longer driven by motivation, turning into passive and sluggish attitudes that weaken the spirit. In this regard, the Qur'an employs the method of habituation gradually to build character. This can be accomplished through several steps, as follows:

The first step is providing mental guidance and training, beginning with freeing oneself from irrational thinking or blind imitation of mere tradition (QS az-Zukhruf (43): 23). The Qur'an also criticizes the attitude of following baseless assumptions, as conjecture does not provide any real benefit (QS an-Najm (53): 28). After that, humans are commanded to verify and examine matters before believing, following, or making them habitual practices (QS al-Isra' (17): 36).

The second step is encouraging humans to reflect upon Allah's laws manifested in the orderliness of the universe. Observing this order encourages the development of scientific theories that not only broaden knowledge but also enhance spiritual awareness and strengthen faith and piety in Allah. This process simultaneously trains inner sensitivity to perceive the signs of divine greatness and power (Triyo Supriyatno, 2023).

Therefore, the concept of habituation in the Qur'an is not limited to the repetition of positive physical actions, but also encompasses habituation in the emotional and cognitive domains namely feelings and patterns of thought. In its implementation, this process must be aligned with the developmental stages of learners so that the habituation carried out can proceed effectively and achieve its intended purpose.

Habituation in Islamic Education ensure effective

Islam regards habituation as one of the approaches in the educational process. The values of goodness in Islam are not merely taught as moral concepts, but are also instilled repeatedly until they become habits embedded in the soul. In this way, individuals are able to carry out these good behaviors naturally, without feeling burdened, without expending excessive energy, and without experiencing significant difficulty (Muhammad Quthb, 1993).

In the educational context, habituation should ideally be applied from an early age, as this period constitutes a golden stage in the formation of character and positive habits (Atot Sugiri, 2024). Therefore, it becomes an obligation for educators and parents to give special attention to teaching and habituation from an early age in order to shape children's character so that they become accustomed to doing good. This is in accordance with the words of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in a hadith narrated by Abu Dawud: Command your children to perform prayer when they are seven years old, and discipline

them (if they do not pray) when they are ten years old, and separate their beds." (HR. Abu Dawud)

The hadith above indicates that Islam has applied the principle of gradual habituation in education, where children are directed and accustomed to performing religious obligations consistently from an early age so that these values become firmly embedded in their lives.

Referring to the main objective of developing habituation, the aim is to help children apply comprehensive understanding in their daily lives, both within the elementary school environment and in broader interactions such as at home, with friends, and in the wider community. Through the process of habituation, children are not only taught to understand concepts of right and wrong cognitively but are also guided to emotionally feel the values of good and bad (affective), and to develop the willingness to manifest them in real actions (psychomotor), starting from the family environment to the broader social community.

In Islamic education, the habituation approach has proven effective, as behaviors consistently practiced tend to become part of a child's personality. Conversely, deviant behaviors should not be allowed to recur so that they do not become part of the child's routine. Educators need to understand that actions carried out continuously, even if they appear simple or are performed without full awareness, still have a significant potential to influence the formation of a child's character.

Habituation as a Medium for Character Formation in Islamic Education

Habituation is one of the methods that can be applied to train learners in forming patterns of thought, attitudes, and actions that align with Islamic teachings (Armai Arief, 2002). Habituation is also a process of developing new habits or improving existing ones. This process not only involves instruction, exemplary conduct, and certain experiences, but may also include the implementation of sanctions and rewards (Muhibbin Syah, 2000). In this regard, habituation serves as a highly strategic method for instilling good character in Islamic education.

Efforts to implement the habituation method require a series of routine activities carried out consistently to cultivate character values within children. Through routines such as waking up on time, performing acts of worship, maintaining personal and environmental cleanliness, respecting others, and completing tasks responsibly, children will naturally become accustomed to behaviors that reflect positive values such as discipline, honesty, hard work, and concern for others. In practice, habituation can be carried out through various activities that involve behavioral, spiritual, social, and emotional dimensions.

To realize habituation as a method of character formation in Islamic education, a set of strategic, well-planned, and systematic steps is required. These steps can be described as follows:

1. Habituation in moral conduct can be implemented through daily behaviors that reflect courtesy and respect. Children need to be accustomed to speaking politely, appreciating others, maintaining personal and environmental cleanliness, and

dressing neatly and properly. These habits form an essential foundation for cultivating noble character.

2. Habituation in worship is a vital part of moral education. Activities such as accustoming children to participate in congregational prayer, offering greetings when entering the classroom, reciting *basmalah* before beginning lessons (supplication), and reciting *hamdalah* upon completing them are simple yet meaningful examples. This habituation in worship not only fosters discipline but also strengthens the child's spiritual connection with God.
3. Habituation in faith should be instilled through reflective approaches. Children can be encouraged to observe and contemplate the beauty of Allah's creation in the universe as a means of reinforcing their belief. In this way, the values of faith are not merely taught verbally but are embedded through profound inner experiences (Ramayulis, 2001).

Through the above steps directed and repeated habits moral, spiritual, social, and emotional values can become naturally embedded within children. This habituation encompasses various aspects of life, including morality, worship, faith, responsibility, honesty, social awareness, and discipline. With a supportive environment, particularly within the family and school, everyday activities become not just routines but effective means for cultivating strong, upright, and virtuous character.

Thus, based on the descriptions and analyses presented, the habituation method plays a significant role in shaping and directing the character development of learners. Through a consistent and continuous habituation process, negative behaviors can gradually be reduced and replaced with positive traits. This demonstrates that habituation functions not only as a pedagogical strategy but also as an effective approach to internalizing moral and ethical values in daily life.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This section presents conclusions and recommendations. These may be separated into distinct subsections. Conclusions should address the research objectives rather than restating theories, and must describe the resulting findings. Based on the discussion above, the habituation method is one of the most effective approaches for instilling Islamic character values in students. Through practices carried out consistently and repeatedly, values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and noble character can be naturally embedded within the child. This habituation process encompasses various aspects of life, including behavior, worship, and spiritual attitudes, all of which play a crucial role in shaping Islamic character. When implemented from an early age and reinforced by positive role models within the surrounding environment, the resulting character formation will develop into an integral part of the child's overall personality.

Recommendations

1. Actions Practical

The implementation of the habituation method as a medium for character formation in Islamic education requires institutional support and the continuous execution of activities. Therefore, educational institutions and educators need to design systematic daily activities such as habituating students to greet, pray, maintain orderliness, and uphold responsibility, while ensuring consistency in their implementation. Strengthening teachers' capacity in classroom management and value internalization also becomes an essential step in ensuring the effectiveness of habituation in shaping learners' character.

2. Further Research

Further research is recommended to examine the effectiveness of the habituation method across various contexts of Islamic educational institutions, both formal and nonformal, in order to identify variations in its implementation and outcomes. In addition, quantitative studies may be developed to measure the influence of habituation on specific character aspects such as discipline, honesty, or responsibility, thereby producing a more measurable habituation model that can be replicated in other Islamic educational institutions.

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