



Implementation of Islamic Character in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah: Challenges and Opportunities Towards National Education Goals

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ABSTRACT

Character education in Indonesia is an important strategy in building a generation that is faithful, pious, has noble character, and has high integrity. This is in line with the goals of national education as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah plays a strategic role in integrating Islamic character values, such as honesty, responsibility, and compassion, into the curriculum and daily educational practices. The implementation of character education in madrasahs is carried out through formal learning, habituation programs, and an Islamic school culture, which are designed to help students internalize character values holistically. Character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah faces challenges such as limited resources, lack of family support, and the influence of globalization that can erode moral values. However, madrasahs also have great opportunities to overcome these challenges through the support of government policies, the role of teachers as role models, and collaboration with families and communities. The Islamic madrasah environment provides a strong foundation for the formation of student character that is relevant to the values of the nation. This study uses a qualitative method with a library research to analyze the challenges and opportunities of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The results of the study indicate that madrasahs can be an effective model of character education, producing a generation that excels academically and has an Islamic character. With synergy between schools, families, and communities, Islamic character education can contribute significantly to realizing national education goals, producing individuals who are intelligent, moral, and competitive in the global era.

Keywords: Character Education, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, National Education Goals

1. Introduction

Character education in Indonesia is a strategic effort to build a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has high morality and integrity. This is in line with the objectives of national education as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, namely to develop the potential of students to become people who are faithful, pious, have noble morals, and are knowledgeable (Masnu'ah et al., 2022). Character education is becoming increasingly relevant in facing the challenges of globalization, where national and cultural values are often eroded by the influence of foreign cultures.

Character education in Indonesia is implemented through the integration of moral and ethical values into the curriculum, learning activities, and daily life in schools (Hasan, 2024). Values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, tolerance, and love of the country are taught not only through subjects such as Civic Education, but also through extracurricular activities, habituation programs, and role models from teachers and school staff. In addition, policies such as the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) initiated by the government aim

to ensure that character education is at the core of the national education system (Dini, 2024). However, the implementation of character education in Indonesia still faces various challenges, such as the lack of harmony between education in schools and the family and community environment. In addition, limited resources, both in terms of facilities and teacher training, are also obstacles to the effective implementation of character education (Urfa et al., 2024). Therefore, synergy is needed between the government, schools, families, and communities to create a conducive environment for the formation of the character of the young generation of Indonesia (Fitrianti & Sirozi, 2024). With joint efforts, character education is expected to be able to produce individuals who not only excel academically but also have strong moral values to build the nation.

The implementation of character education in Indonesia is an important step in forming a generation with integrity, noble character, and able to face global challenges (Muharram, 2024). Character education is integrated into the national education system through the curriculum, as seen in the 2013 Curriculum, where moral, ethical, and social values are included in each subject (Subiyan & Salamah, 2021). In addition, programs such as Strengthening Character Education (PPK) launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture are the main framework to ensure that character education is implemented at all levels of education. This program aims to instill core values such as religiosity, nationalism, independence, mutual cooperation, and integrity (Yusuf, 2022).

The implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is carried out in an integrated manner through learning activities, habituation programs, and Islamic school culture. In learning, Islamic character values such as honesty, discipline, compassion, and responsibility are taught through religious subjects and general subjects. Teachers play an important role in linking lesson materials with Islamic teachings, so that students can understand how these values are relevant in everyday life. In addition, practical activities such as memorizing prayers, reading the Qur'an, and carrying out congregational prayers are a means to instill good habits consistently (Ahsanulkhaq, 2019).

In addition to classroom learning, the habituation program at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is designed to strengthen students' Islamic character. Examples include the habit of greeting, respecting each other, and participating in social activities such as charity and community service that reflect the values of mutual cooperation and empathy. The school environment also supports the implementation of character education by creating a strong Islamic culture, such as the application of clothing according to Islamic law and the use of polite language. With this approach, the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah not only educates students to become intelligent individuals, but also forms them into an Islamic generation with noble morals and is ready to face challenges in the future (Lubis, 2024).

Character education has a great opportunity in realizing the national education goals that aim to produce a generation of faithful, pious, and noble (Dharin, 2019). One of these opportunities is the increasing awareness from various parties, both government, educators, and society, of the importance of character education in building the nation. In addition, policy support such as the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) provides a clear framework for schools to integrate moral and ethical values into the learning process. The involvement of technology is also a great opportunity, where character education can be delivered through attractive digital media, making it easier for students to internalize these values in their daily lives.

In addition to opportunities, character education also faces various challenges in its implementation. One of the main challenges is the inconsistency in the application of character values in various student environments, such as schools, families, and communities (Ningsih et al., 2023). Many students receive character education at school, but do not get the same support at home or in their environment, so that these values are difficult to fully internalize. In addition, the influence of globalization and the flow of foreign cultures that are not in line with local values are also challenges in maintaining the integrity of character education in Indonesia. The lack of teacher training in implementing character education effectively is also a problem that needs to be addressed immediately. To overcome this challenge, strong synergy is needed between the government, schools, families, and communities. The government needs to ensure that character education programs run consistently by providing training for teachers and supporting facilities. Schools also need to create a conducive environment to instill character values, for example through habituation activities and school culture. Families and communities have an equally important role, namely by providing good examples to children and supporting character education taught in schools (Wisiyanti, 2024). With close cooperation from all parties, character education can become a solid foundation for realizing the national education goals of producing superior and characterful generations.

Based on this background, the author will examine the challenges and opportunities in realizing national education goals through character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. This research is important to understand the strategic role of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah as an educational institution that not only teaches knowledge, but also instills Islamic values in students. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is unique in the implementation of character education, where universal values such as discipline, honesty, and responsibility are taught simultaneously with Islamic values such as sincerity, trust, and compassion. This study aims to explore more deeply how Madrasah Ibtidaiyah faces challenges, such as limited resources or family support, while also utilizing opportunities to strengthen students' character.

Through this research, it is expected to find effective strategies that can be used by Madrasah Ibtidaiyah in overcoming challenges and maximizing existing opportunities. By understanding the dynamics that occur, the author hopes to contribute to the development of character education in Indonesia, especially in the madrasa environment. The results of this study are expected to be able to provide useful recommendations for the government, educators, and society in realizing national education goals through a character approach based on Islamic values. Thus, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah can continue to contribute to producing a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has noble morals in accordance with religious values (Aristiyanto, 2023).

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative research method with a library Research approach. This study focuses on literature reviews from various sources, such as books, scientific journals, articles, official reports, and relevant documents that discuss the implementation of Islamic character in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Abdullah, 2024). Data sources are analyzed to identify the challenges and opportunities faced by madrasahs in realizing national education goals. This approach allows researchers to understand in depth how the concept of Islamic character education is applied in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and how this institution plays a role as an educational institution that integrates Islamic values in the learning process.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively by connecting information from various literatures with conditions in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The collected data will be categorized based on main themes, such as methods of implementing Islamic values, challenges faced by madrasahs (for example, limited resources or family support), and opportunities that can be utilized to strengthen Islamic character education (Sholeha & Sofa, 2025). By linking literature studies with practices in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, this study aims to provide a clearer understanding of how madrasahs can become important pillars in producing generations with Islamic character while supporting the achievement of national education goals.

3. Findings and Discussions

3.1 Implementation of Character Education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

The implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is carried out through an integrated approach that involves all aspects of education, from formal learning, habituation, to school culture. In formal learning, Islamic character values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and tolerance are integrated into the curriculum and taught through various subjects. Teachers act as facilitators who not only deliver the material, but also link each topic to relevant Islamic values. For example, in Mathematics, students are taught the values of honesty when calculating, while in Indonesian, students are taught the importance of polite communication.

In addition to classroom learning, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah also implements character education through habituation programs that are carried out routinely. Activities such as reading the Qur'an before starting lessons, performing congregational prayers, and reading daily prayers are part of efforts to instill Islamic values in students. These programs are designed to create positive habits that support the development of student character. With this habituation, students not only learn to understand character values, but also practice them in everyday life consistently.

School culture is also an important element in the implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The madrasah environment is designed to reflect Islamic values, both through teacher attitudes, school regulations, and daily activities. Madrasah teachers and staff are role models in implementing Islamic values, such as sincerity, compassion, and respect for others. In addition, social activities such as community service, social service, and charity programs are also carried out to develop empathy and concern for the community in students. An Islamic school culture helps create an environment that is conducive to the formation of student character.

Character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah also involves the active role of families and communities. Parents are encouraged to continue the character education taught in the madrasah by providing good examples at home. Meanwhile, the community around the madrasah is also invited to support character education programs carried out by the madrasah, such as religious or social activities. With close collaboration between the madrasah, family, and community, the implementation of character education can run holistically and continuously, thus producing a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has noble morals.

3.2 Challenges in implementing character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

The relationship between the implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and the objectives of the national education system in

Indonesia is very close, because Islamic character education is one way to create a generation that is faithful, pious, and has noble character as mandated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, with an approach based on Islamic values, has a strategic role in internalizing moral and spiritual values in students from an early age. This process is in line with the objectives of national education which want to produce Indonesian people who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have a strong character foundation.

Character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, despite facing various challenges such as limited resources and the influence of globalization, still provides a great opportunity to support national education goals. By integrating Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline into the curriculum and daily practices, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah helps students not only understand the theory, but also practice these values in real life. This makes students more prepared to face challenges in the modern era without losing their identity and morality as a generation with noble character.

The development of globalization has a significant influence on the formation of children's character, both in positive and negative aspects. On the one hand, globalization opens up wide access to information, technology, and culture that can enrich children's insights and encourage them to be more creative and innovative. However, on the other hand, globalization also brings major challenges, such as the entry of values that are not always in line with local culture and moral norms. Exposure to less educational content through social media, online games, and television can influence children's behavior and habits, which if not properly controlled, can weaken character values such as discipline, honesty, and a sense of responsibility. Therefore, it is important for parents, teachers, and the community to work together in guiding children to face the era of globalization by equipping them with strong character values so that they are able to filter the influence of globalization wisely.

Lack of adequate human resources is one of the factors that greatly influences the development of character education in schools. Teachers, as the spearhead of education, often face limitations in both quantity and quality. Not all teachers receive sufficient training to integrate character values into the learning process effectively. This results in character education often only being taught theoretically, without real and consistent application in students' daily lives. In addition, the less than ideal ratio of teachers to students makes character development difficult to carry out personally and in depth. On the other hand, the lack of supporting staff such as educational counselors or character activity facilitators also adds to the workload of teachers, so that the focus on developing students' character values is neglected. Therefore, the procurement and development of competent and trained human resources is very important to ensure that character education in schools can run optimally and sustainably.

Overcoming existing challenges and utilizing available opportunities, character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah can be a relevant learning model to achieve the goals of the national education system in Indonesia. The successful implementation of Islamic character education in madrasahs can have a significant impact on creating a superior generation of Indonesia, both in academic and moral aspects. This makes Madrasah Ibtidaiyah one of the educational institutions that is able to answer the nation's needs for a generation that is intelligent, faithful, and has character in accordance with the ideals of national education.

3.3 Opportunities in implementing character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

In addition to the above challenges, character education also has great opportunities to be developed, especially in educational environments such as Madrasah Ibtidaiyah which have a strong basis in Islamic values. These opportunities include: First, Character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has great opportunities to be implemented effectively because this institution naturally integrates Islamic values in every aspect of its education. The religious and Islamic-oriented madrasah environment provides a strong foundation for the formation of students' character. Activities such as the habit of praying in congregation, reading the Qur'an, and practicing daily prayers are an inseparable part of the madrasah routine. This provides an opportunity for students to not only learn about character values, but also practice them directly in their daily lives.

Second, the implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah lies in the role of teachers who not only function as educators, but also as role models. Teachers in madrasahs have a great opportunity to become role models for students in terms of morals, discipline, and integrity. By providing real examples of Islamic behavior, teachers can help students understand and internalize character values more easily. This makes the character education process more effective because students get direct learning from the daily behavior of their educators.

Third, government policy support through programs such as Strengthening Character Education (PPK) is an important opportunity for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah to strengthen the implementation of character education. This program provides a clear framework for madrasahs in integrating character education with the existing curriculum. By utilizing this policy, madrasahs can design more systematic and focused character education programs, so that they are able to produce students who are not only academically intelligent, but also have noble morals in accordance with national education goals.

Fourth, no less important is the involvement of families and communities in supporting character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. As an institution that teaches Islamic values, madrasahs have the potential to become centers of collaboration between schools, families, and the surrounding environment. With this synergy, students can obtain consistent character education at school, home, and community. This not only strengthens the internalization of character values, but also creates an ecosystem that supports the formation of an Islamic generation that has noble morals and contributes positively to the nation.

3.4 Character education in national education goals

The goal of national education in Indonesia as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. National education not only aims to improve students' intellectual abilities, but also to form a strong character, in accordance with the noble values of the nation. With this goal, the education system in Indonesia is designed to produce a generation that is not only able to compete globally, but also has a personality rooted in the nation's culture and morals, so that it can contribute positively to the development of society, the nation, and the state.

The goal of national education that emphasizes the formation of individuals who are faithful, pious, and have noble character is closely related to character education. Character education is one of the strategic efforts in realizing this goal, because its focus is on instilling moral and ethical values in students. Values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, and love of the country are in line with the goal of producing a generation that has a strong personality and contributes positively to society. With character education, students are not only taught to excel academically, but also to become individuals who have integrity and are able to maintain cultural identity and national values amidst the challenges of globalization.

Character education is also an important foundation in shaping students to be able to face the modern era while still upholding the noble values that are the guidelines for life. The implementation of character education in schools plays a role in helping students understand and internalize the values contained in the goals of national education. For example, through the habituation of Islamic behavior in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah or the integration of Pancasila values in learning, character education becomes a tool to achieve holistic educational goals. With strong character education, students are expected to not only grow into intelligent and competent individuals, but also have high morality, so that the goals of national education can be achieved in their entirety.

The relationship between the implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and the objectives of the national education system in Indonesia is very close, because Islamic character education is one way to create a generation that is faithful, pious, and has noble character as mandated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, with an approach based on Islamic values, has a strategic role in internalizing moral and spiritual values in students from an early age. This process is in line with the objectives of national education which want to produce Indonesian people who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have a strong character foundation.

Character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, despite facing various challenges such as limited resources and the influence of globalization, still provides a great opportunity to support national education goals. By integrating Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline into the curriculum and daily practices, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah helps students not only understand the theory, but also practice these values in real life. This makes students more prepared to face challenges in the modern era without losing their identity and morality as a generation with noble character.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah also contributes to the aspect of forming national insight which is part of the national education goals. By instilling values such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and love of the homeland through an Islamic approach, students are not only guided to become religious individuals, but also citizens who have social responsibility and nationalism. Islamic character education in madrasahs helps students to understand that religious values and national values can go hand in hand, forming a generation that has high morality while contributing positively to national development.

Overcoming existing challenges and utilizing available opportunities, character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah can be a relevant learning model to achieve the goals of the national education system in Indonesia. The successful implementation of Islamic character education in madrasahs can have a significant impact on creating a superior generation of Indonesia, both in academic and moral aspects. This makes Madrasah Ibtidaiyah one of the educational institutions that

is able to answer the nation's needs for a generation that is intelligent, faithful, and has character in accordance with the ideals of national education.

4. Conclusion

Islamic character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has a strategic role in supporting the goals of national education, namely to produce a generation that is faithful, pious, and has noble character. Islamic values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and compassion are integrated into formal learning, habituation, and school culture, so that students not only learn theoretically but also practice these values in everyday life. With a comprehensive approach, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is able to form a generation that is intellectually intelligent and has high morals.

Challenges in implementing character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah include limited resources, lack of support from the family environment, and the negative influence of globalization. These problems hinder the consistency of implementing Islamic character values in students' lives. However, efforts to overcome these challenges can be done through teacher training, provision of adequate facilities, and collaboration between schools, families, and communities to create a conducive environment for the formation of students' character.

Islamic character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah has great potential to develop. The madrasah environment based on Islamic values, the role of teachers as role models, and the support of government policies such as the Character Education Strengthening Program (PPK) are supporting factors that can be utilized to strengthen the implementation of character education. By utilizing technology and collaboration with families and communities, character education in madrasahs can be implemented more effectively and comprehensively.

Overcoming challenges and utilizing existing opportunities, Islamic character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah can be a relevant learning model in achieving national education goals. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is able to produce a generation that is not only academically superior, but also has a strong Islamic character, which will contribute to national development and answer the challenges of globalization without losing moral and cultural identity. This shows that Islamic character education in madrasah is an important pillar in realizing the ideals of national education.

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