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The Role of Family Education in Forming Children's Morals: A Critical Review from an Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

Family education plays a pivotal role in children's moral development because the family functions as the primary and central locus of education from birth. This study aims to analyze the role of family education in shaping children's morals from an Islamic perspective, with a specific focus on its underlying concepts, educational methods, and developmental stages. Employing a library research methodology, the study reviews and synthesizes relevant books, journal articles, and scholarly works on family education and children's morals in Islam. The findings indicate that Islamic family education is grounded in Qur'anic and Hadith values, positioning parents as primary educators and role models in instilling faith, worship, and moral conduct. Moral formation is carried out through complementary educational approaches, including exemplification, habituation, advice, and educative rewards and punishments, which together support the internalization of moral and spiritual values. Furthermore, effective moral education in the family must be aligned with children's developmental stages to ensure that messages and practices are appropriate and impactful. The study concludes that conscious, directed, and continuous family education makes a substantial contribution to fostering faithful, morally upright, and socially responsible children, thereby reinforcing the central role of the family in

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Islamic education and highlighting the need for strengthening value-based parenting practices.

Keywords: Family Education; Children's Moral Development; Islamic Perspective; Role of Parents; Moral Internalization

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important thing in supporting human development in a country. Through education, a country or nation can experience progress as a sector of life. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, especially Article 31 paragraph (1) to paragraph (2), emphasizes the urgency of education as a fundamental aspect in the life of the nation and state, as reflected in the provisions regulated therein, namely: Every citizen has the right to receive education, namely: (1) Every citizen has the right to receive education, and (2) The government strives for and organizes a national education system, which is regulated by law (Hakim, 2016).

The implementation of the provisions stipulated in the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003, Article 3, emphasizes that national education functions to develop the potential and abilities of students while simultaneously shaping the character and civilization of the nation. National education is directed at realizing Indonesian people who believe in and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble morals, are physically and mentally healthy, are knowledgeable, have skills, are creative and independent, and can play a role as democratic and responsible citizens (Ichsan, 2018).

Islamic education occupies a very strategic position in guiding and fortifying the educational process in all aspects of life so that it always runs in harmony with Islamic faith. This high status of Islamic education is reflected in the many mentions and affirmations of the concept of education in the Qur'an and the Hadith, which demonstrate that education is a fundamental element in the formation of people who are faithful, knowledgeable, and have noble morals. Islamic education is an educational system whose philosophical foundation, objectives, and theoretical framework are formulated to direct educational practices guided by the fundamental values of Islam as embodied in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (Hendawi et al., 2024).

The family is the first educational environment a child experiences from birth. Therefore, the dynamics of family life have a significant influence on the educational process

and the formation of a child's personality in later stages (Ichsan & Samsudin, 2019). Based on this, it is necessary to provide education within the family based on Islamic values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. In line with this, Abdurrahman an-Nahlawi emphasized that Islamic education is a process of individual and social development that guides humans toward a perfect life, both in the personal and social dimensions (Noviyanty, 2011).

In the context of family education, parents are not only obliged to raise their children until they reach physical maturity, but also have the responsibility to mature the psychological and spiritual aspects of their children through providing a good education (Ichsan et al., 2023). These efforts are carried out by instilling true beliefs in life so that children grow into Muslims who believe in and fear Allah SWT, and by providing examples of noble moral values in daily life. The education children receive within the family environment serves as the primary foundation that determines the direction of their subsequent education, both in formal schooling and in interactions within society.

METHODS

The method used in this article is library research, which is a data collection method carried out by examining, understanding, and reviewing theories and concepts that are relevant to the research focus through various literature sources (Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2021). The literature review in this research was conducted in four stages: preparing the necessary equipment and tools, compiling a working bibliography, organizing research time, and reading and recording the library materials used. Data collection was conducted by tracing and constructing information from various sources, such as books, journal articles, and relevant previous research results (Sugiyono, 2019). All library materials obtained were then analyzed critically and in depth to support the arguments, propositions and ideas put forward in this research.

RESULTS

Basic Concepts of Family Education

The role of the family in educational discourse is inseparable and cannot be overlooked, as it constitutes the first social environment humans encounter. Within this setting, individuals begin learning communication patterns, social interactions, self-identity, and initial understandings of life's realities. Thus, the family serves as a foundational

reference shaping one's comprehensive worldview and life orientation. Family education occurs naturally as an integral part of human life, where the earliest and most fundamental socialization processes essentially root individual personality formation (Witt, 2012).

Scholars offer diverse definitions of family education. Mansur views it as the internalization of positive values supporting child growth and serving as a foundation for subsequent education. Abdullah emphasizes parental efforts through habituation and creative parenting to foster child personality development. Meanwhile, Abdurrahman an-Nahlawi and Hasan Langgulung assert it as a conscious process by parents as primary trustees, aimed at instilling faith, noble morals, role modeling, and optimally nurturing children's innate potentials.

Ki Hajar Dewantara underscores the urgency of family education in character building, positioning the family as the primary educational environment (Ajid et al., 2025). Parents hold a central role as guides, educators, teachers, and initial mentors in children's development. These expert views indicate that family education transcends normative concepts, manifesting in concrete practices through daily value implantation within family life (Johnson-Hanks et al., 2011). The 1993 United Nations Convention further affirms the family's essential functions, including strengthening spousal bonds, legitimate procreation and sexual relations, child socialization and education, legal identity provision, fulfillment of basic needs and childcare, family protection, emotional and recreational needs, and economic functions via goods and services exchange.

The Concept of Family Education in Islam

In the realities of modern life, characterized by social complexity and diverse challenges, the implementation of family education requires appropriate strategies to ensure optimal success. One of the main problems faced today is the low level of understanding and awareness among some families of the importance of family education from an Islamic perspective. Many families are not yet fully aware of their strategic role in the process of shaping children's character based on Islamic values (Fatul et al., 2024). Furthermore, the pressures of modern life, which emphasize material needs and the busyness of daily activities, often result in the marginalization of religious education within the family environment.

In Islam, family education plays a central role in developing a generation with Islamic character and a strong personality. With a comprehensive understanding of the strategies and implementation of religious education within the family, Islamic values can be effectively internalized from an early age. This process is expected to shape individuals with noble

morals, responsibility, and a strong religious awareness in community life (Mahmud, 2013). It is as explained in the Al-Qur'an, Surah At-Tahrim Verse 6, which reads, "O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families from the fire of hell whose fuel is people and stones; whose guardians are rough and tough angels, who do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and always do what they are ordered to do."

This verse contains a profound message regarding the obligation of education within the family environment. The use of the word قُوا(qū), meaning "protect" or "guard," indicates a direct command from Allah SWT to parents to protect themselves and their families from the torments of hell. This command is not interpreted merely physically, but rather requires comprehensive educational efforts, particularly through instilling values of faith, cultivating habits of worship, and developing noble morals as the foundation of the family's spiritual safety (Ashoumi & Ilyas, 2019).

Ali bin Abi Talib RA interpreted the verse as: "Educate them and teach them manners." (HR. Ath-Tabari). This hadith emphasizes that education is the main means of protecting the family from the evils of this world and the hereafter.

In accordance with Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 21 of 1994, Article 1, paragraph (2), the family bears an essential function of affection as the primary foundation for building harmonious relationships among family members. This function encompasses sibling relations, spousal bonds, parent-child interactions, and cross-generational kinship ties, collectively forging healthy and sustainable emotional connections. Through this dynamic of affection, the family emerges as the primary space for holistic individual growth, where love not only fulfills affective needs but also catalyzes the early internalization of moral values (Abubakar et al., 2023). Contemporary developmental psychology research, such as Bowlby's attachment theory, further substantiates that secure emotional bonds within the family significantly contribute to psychological resilience and child character formation in adulthood.

Additionally, the family fulfills a protection function by creating a safe, comfortable, and supportive environment for all members, thereby optimizing physical, psychological, and spiritual development. It includes mitigating external risks, meeting basic needs, and providing protected spaces for self-exploration. In the context of family education, this responsibility is collaborative between husband and wife, divided proportionally according to each party's capacity and role. This approach ensures balanced caregiving burdens while modeling gender justice principles in modern family dynamics, as supported by sociological

studies showing positive correlations between equitable parental responsibility sharing and child development quality (Oláh et al., 2018).

This principle of shared responsibility is reinforced by the authentic hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Umar RA in Sahih al-Bukhari, wherein the Prophet Muhammad Saw affirmed that every individual is a leader accountable for their entrusted domain. The hadith specifies: a state leader for their people, a man for his family, a woman for her husband's household, and a servant for their master's property (Salaudeen, 2019). In contemporary Islamic perspectives, this hadith implies hierarchical yet complementary moral-social responsibilities, where family leadership orients toward child moral education through collective exemplification and supervision. Integrating national legal frameworks with Islamic teachings offers an adaptive family education model resilient to globalization challenges, ensuring the continuity of responsible generational formation.

Every individual in the family, both husband and wife, has a mandate for which they will be held accountable. Parents play a primary role and responsibility in instilling religious values, including faith, worship, morals, and etiquette, in their children. In this context, parents serve not only as educators but also as primary role models in the practice of these values. The husband has a responsibility towards his wife and children. At the same time, the wife also bears the responsibility of ensuring her husband's well-being and educating and caring for the children within the family (N. Azizah & Nurzannah, 2024). In Islamic family education, families develop a focused educational program, including fostering affectionate relationships, being gentle with children, and building productive communication with children, educating children creatively and recreationally, meeting their learning needs, providing guidance and direction, safeguarding their rights and obligations, and avoiding disputes that can lead to heated and tense situations.

The Concept of the Role of Children's Morals from an Islamic Perspective

Moral education is an educational process oriented towards instilling basic ethical principles and the formation of behavioral and character virtues that children should possess and practice from an early age until they reach the *mukallaf* stage. The main goal of moral education is to shape children to grow and develop based on a strong faith in Allah SWT, so that their ethical values are not only understood conceptually, but also consciously internalized and reflected in their daily behavior (Rohayati, 2017). The sources of Islamic teachings, which are the main reference in determining moral values, behavior and temperament as guidelines for the life of Muslims, are the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. These two

sources are the fundamental basis for Islamic teachings as a whole in regulating human life patterns and determining the measure of good and bad actions.

Islamic education is understood as a directed and continuous educational process, systematically implemented based on Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, as well as authentic exemplars and interpretations from the Companions, scholars, philosophers, and Muslim intellectuals. Essentially, Islamic education manifests concretely through the practical application of Islamic doctrines in daily life. Consequently, all components of the Islamic education system must be constructed upon the foundational principles of Islamic values, including the establishment of core educational values. This foundation ensures that education is not merely transmissive but transformative, aligning individual development with divine guidance and communal harmony.

In its implementation, Islamic education is underpinned by at least four primary core values: faith and piety toward Allah the Almighty, respect for human existence and its inherent potentials, responsible freedom and independence, and social responsibility within communal life. These values integrate spiritual, psychological, and societal dimensions, fostering holistic human development (*tarbiyah*). Faith and piety serve as the spiritual anchor, guiding ethical decision-making; human dignity emphasizes nurturing intellectual, emotional, and physical potentials as trusts from God (*amanah*); responsible freedom balances autonomy with accountability to prevent moral relativism; and social responsibility promotes justice (*'adl*) and welfare (*maslahah*) in society. This quadripartite framework draws from Qur'anic imperatives and prophetic traditions, ensuring education produces not only knowledgeable individuals but also morally upright contributors to civilization.

The Qur'an stands as the primary and foremost source of Islamic teachings, serving as the fundamental reference for Muslims in establishing values and life norms. Structurally, it comprises 30 juz', 114 surahs, over 6,000 verses, tens of thousands of words, and hundreds of thousands of letters, underscoring its linguistic richness and profound depth as a comprehensive life guide. Beyond its textual structure, the Qur'an actively encourages humanity to master knowledge and technology for welfare (*falah*), as evidenced by the first revelation in Surah Al-Alaq (96:1-5), which mandates reading, reflection, and observation of the universe as Allah's creation. This dual emphasis—textual (*naqli*) and contextual (*aqli*)—positions Islamic pursuit of knowledge as integrative, bridging revelation with

empirical inquiry and countering dichotomies between faith and reason prevalent in modern secular paradigms.

Islamic teachings underscore the urgency of moral education (tarbiyat al-akhlaq) in human life, with a key foundation in Qur'an 33:21 (Surah Al-Ahzab): "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever hopes in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much." According to M. Quraish Shihab, this verse establishes moral education on the principle of exemplary modeling (*uswah hasanah*), positioning the Prophet Muhammad Saw as the ideal moral archetype who not only normatively conveys values but also embodies them in everyday conduct. This principle holds strong relevance in family education, where parents act as primary educators; thus, moral inculcation transcends verbal admonition, requiring consistent lived examples for effective internalization. The Qur'an al-Karim, as Allah's book revealed in harmony with spatiotemporal realities, functions not merely as a normative text but as a constructive and educative revelation, offering a comprehensive life methodology (*manhaj al-hayah*). It formulates an educational system aimed at soul cultivation, ummah strengthening, and civilized social ordering, transforming defeats into lessons (*'ibrah*), victories into reflections, and all circumstances into analytical objects (Ibrahim, 2014). Therefore, Islamic education must be Qur'anically grounded, with contextual interpretation attuned to contemporary dynamics, ensuring perennial relevance.

DISCUSSION

Methods and Role of Moral Education in the Family Environment

Moral education for children is a fundamental aspect of Islamic education, as morality is the primary foundation for shaping a Muslim's personality and character. The Prophet Muhammad Saw, as an exemplary educator (*uswah ḥasanah*), provided concrete examples of effective and relevant moral education methods throughout the ages. These methods are not only normative but also practical, as they were directly applied in the Prophet's interactions with children, family, and society. In his book Ihya' Ulumuddin, Al-Ghazali explains several methods of moral education, including:

1. Exemplary Method

The exemplary method (*uswah hasanah*) occupies a strategic position in moral education (*tarbiyat al-akhlaq*) due to its proven efficacy in delivering observable, imitable,

concrete models that learners can internalize through direct emulation. Unlike didactic verbal transmission, which often remains at the cognitive level, this method demands tangible congruence between the educator's attitudes, speech, and actions in everyday life, aligning with Bandura's social learning theory adapted to Islamic contexts where modeling fosters vicarious reinforcement (Khan, 2024). In family education settings, parental exemplarity manifests through consistent behaviors rooted in Islamic values, enabling children not only to comprehend moral teachings intellectually but also to internalize them affectively and habitually via sustained processes of observation, imitation, and habituation (*ta'wid*). Empirical studies in Islamic pedagogy, such as those on pesantren environments, corroborate that such modeling enhances moral resilience, as children replicate observed virtues like patience (*sabr*) and compassion (*rahmah*), transforming abstract norms into lived dispositions (Handayani et al., 2025).

The success of the exemplary method hinges critically on the moral integrity of parents as primary role models, serving as the child's foundational reference for character formation (*takhalli, tahalli, tajalli*). This integrity mitigates cognitive dissonance, ensuring that discrepancies between preached values and practiced behaviors do not undermine trust or lead to moral disengagement, a risk highlighted in contemporary developmental psychology. In Islamic tradition, drawing from Qur'an 33:21 and prophetic Sunnah, parents emulate the Prophet Muhammad Saw as the ultimate *uswah hasanah*, thereby cultivating intergenerational transmission of *akhlaq* that withstands modern challenges like digital influences or secular individualism. Consequently, family-based moral education via exemplarity not only builds individual piety but also fortifies communal ethics, contributing to a cohesive ummah grounded in authentic Islamic praxis.

2. Habituation Method

The habituation method (*ta'wid*) represents a systematic educational approach executed through consistent training and repetition of positive behaviors, enabling gradual internalization and transformation into ingrained habits within the child. In moral education (*tarbiyat al-akhlaq*), this method aligns with neuroscientific principles of neuroplasticity, where repeated actions strengthen neural pathways, converting deliberate efforts into automatic dispositions (*malakah*), as articulated in classical Islamic thought by scholars like Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*. Key stipulations for its effective implementation include continuity to embed values deeply, akin to the Qur'anic emphasis on steadfastness (*istiqamah*); consistent

supervision coupled with firm guidance to prevent deviation and ensure alignment with educational objectives; and a phased progression—from initial mechanistic repetition to conscious, volitional integration driven by inner awareness (*basirah*) and conscience (*damir*). This structured process not only fosters behavioral compliance but cultivates authentic moral agency, mitigating superficial adherence often seen in rote learning paradigms (Waugh, 2019).

Successful application of habituation demands contextual adaptation, particularly in family and pesantren settings, where parental or *kyai* oversight transforms routine practices—such as daily prayers (*salat*) or acts of charity (*sadaqah*)—into lifelong virtues resilient to external pressures. Empirical evidence from developmental psychology, including Duhigg's habit loop model (cue-routine-reward), supports this, showing that supervised repetition enhances self-regulation and reduces impulsivity. At the same time, Islamic sources like Hadith narratives on prophetic child-rearing underscore the method's efficacy in building character (*takhalli wa tahalli*). Over time, as mechanical habits evolve into reflective ones, children develop intrinsic motivation, bridging cognitive understanding with affective commitment and behavioral consistency. Thus, habituation not only equips individuals for personal piety but also sustains communal harmony (*ummah* cohesion) by producing morally disciplined generations capable of navigating contemporary ethical dilemmas (Adityas, 2022).

3. Advice Method

According to Imam Al-Ghazali in *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, the effective method of exhortation (*maw'izah*) in moral education (*tarbiyat al-akhlaq*) relies on delivering counsel with wisdom (*hikmah*), gentleness (*rifq*), and exemplary modeling (*uswah*), as these elements penetrate the heart (*qalb*) and foster gradual moral awareness rather than superficial compliance. *Nasihat* (advice) must eschew coercion or judgmental tones, which risk defensiveness and resentment (Liljenquist, 2010), aligning instead with Qur'anic directives like Surah An-Nahl (16:125): "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best." This approach leverages affective resonance, akin to modern therapeutic models like Rogers' person-centered therapy, where empathy builds intrinsic motivation; in Islamic pedagogy, it transforms counsel from mere verbal instruction into a catalyst for self-reflection (muhasabah) and voluntary virtue adoption. Thus, Al-Ghazali positions *nasihat* as a non-confrontational instrument that nurtures the soul's purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), essential for authentic character formation.

In family-based Islamic moral education, the exhortation method gains paramount importance as parents embody the primary conduits of *hikmah*-laden guidance, modeling virtues like patience (*sabr*) and compassion (*rahmah*) to internalize *akhlaq* within children. Al-Ghazali warns that harsh rebukes erode trust and provoke rebellion. In contrast, gentle, timely counsel—delivered during moments of receptivity—cultivates conscience (*damir*) and emotional intelligence, supported by empirical studies on authoritative parenting styles that balance warmth with structure. This method's efficacy lies in its phased impact: initial heart-softening leads to cognitive assimilation, eventual habituation, and ultimate spiritual elevation (*tajalli*), fortifying children against moral relativism in contemporary settings like digital media influences. Consequently, *nasihat* not only equips families for personal piety but also perpetuates intergenerational transmission of Islamic ethics, ensuring resilient ummah cohesion amid modern challenges.

4. Punishment and Reward Method

The method of reward and punishment (*ta'shir wa ta'dib*) constitutes a complementary strategy within Islamic moral education (*tarbiyat al-akhlaq*), prioritizing positive reinforcement to cultivate intrinsic motivation and moral awareness while employing punitive measures sparingly, progressively, and constructively. Rewards, such as praise (*hamd*) or tangible incentives, align with Qur'anic exhortations like Surah Ash-Shura (42:40)—"The recompense for an injury is an injury equal to it; but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah"—fostering voluntary virtue (*ihsan*) over coerced compliance. Punishments, conversely, must remain educational, eschewing vengeance or humiliation; they function as corrective tools (*tadbir*) to deter deviance, administered with mercy (*rahmah*) and proportionality to preserve dignity *(karamah al-insan*). This balanced approach reflects neuroscientific understandings of operant conditioning (Skinner), where positive reinforcement strengthens neural reward circuits more enduringly than aversive stimuli, ensuring moral growth transcends behavioral control (Saputri & Widyasari, 2021).

In practice, Islamic pedagogy subordinates reward-punishment to soul cultivation (*tazkiyat al-nafs*), distinguishing it from secular behaviorism by embedding it within spiritual accountability (*hisab*) and prophetic exemplarity, as seen in Hadith where the Prophet Muhammad saw favored gentle correction for children. Rewards nurture self-efficacy and conscience (*damir*), transforming external motivators into internalized dispositions

(*malakah*), while graduated punishments—from verbal admonition to temporary restrictions—teach consequence awareness without fostering resentment, mitigating risks like learned helplessness documented in developmental psychology. Family and pesantren applications demonstrate efficacy: consistent praise for salat adherence builds piety, while measured discipline for dishonesty instills justice (*'adl*), yielding resilient akhlaq capable of withstanding contemporary moral relativism. Thus, this method not only refines individual character but sustains ummah ethics, prioritizing holistic human development over mere compliance (Putri & Mukhlas, 2023).

In the process of moral education, the Prophet Muhammad Saw prioritized a humanistic, compassionate approach that was appropriate to the child's developmental stage. Moral education was not delivered through coercion, but rather through role models, habituation, wise advice, and educational dialogue (Henderson, 2020). This approach demonstrates that moral education in Islam aims not only to shape good outward behavior but also to instill values of faith and moral awareness that grow from within the child. Therefore, examining the methods of moral education practiced by the Prophet Muhammad Saw is important as a primary reference in developing children's moral education, both within the family environment and in formal educational institutions.

1. Educational Stages at Age 0-10 Years

In education for children aged 0-10, the first thing to consider from birth is giving a good name. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encouraged Muslims to choose names with positive meanings, particularly the names of the prophets. A hadith narrated by Abu Dawud states that the names most beloved by Allah SWT are Abdullah and Abdurrahman, while names that reflect honesty and a sense of purpose are Harith and Hammam. Conversely, the use of names with negative connotations, such as Harb (meaning war) and Murrah (meaning bitter), is discouraged. This assertion is reinforced by the Prophet's statement that on the Day of Judgment, humans will be called by their own names and their fathers' names. Therefore, choosing a good name is not merely symbolic but has long-term moral and spiritual implications. Thus, naming becomes the initial part of the Islamic educational process, instilling values and hopes for a child's future personality (Minarni, 2020).

Second, the recommendation to shave a baby's hair, as narrated by Imam Malik, explains that Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), weighed

the hair of Hasan, Husayn, Zainab, and Umm Kulthum after shaving it, and then gave the weight of the hair in charity equal to the weight. In his commentary on this hadith on silver charity, Asy-Shaykh ad-Dahlawi emphasized that this practice reflects the Islamic view of the birth of a child as a great blessing worthy of gratitude. This expression of appreciation is not only ritualistic but also has social and educational dimensions, as it encourages parents to express gratitude through care and generosity from the very beginning of their child's life (Darna, 2023).

A child's transition from the fetal phase to life as a baby is a gift from God, and the ultimate expression of gratitude for this blessing is through charity. In this context, charity is not only a form of social worship but also a means of early moral education, as parents are taught to cultivate empathy, caring, and spiritual awareness in welcoming their child.

Furthermore, *aqiqah* constitutes a recommended method of moral education (*tarbiyat al-akhlaq*) in Islam, as evidenced by the Hadith narrated by Abu Dawud: "Every child is in pledge of his *aqiqah*, which is to be sacrificed for him on the seventh day, along with naming and shaving the head." Normatively and jurisprudentially (*syariat*), *aqiqah* is understood as a ritual sacrifice of an animal performed on the seventh postnatal day, symbolizing redemption from potential jinn influence and profound gratitude (*syukr*) to Allah the Almighty for the divine gift of progeny. This practice transcends mere ritualism, embedding profound educative and social dimensions that underscore parental responsibilities in religiously welcoming the child, thereby initiating lifelong moral formation from birth.

Aqiqah encapsulates spiritual, social, and moral educational values through its constituent elements: sacrificial devotion (*qurban*) instills selflessness and submission (*tawadu'*); communal feasting fosters social care (*ta'awun*) and interdependence (*ta'akhi*); and naming (*tasmiyah*) alongside head-shaving affirms the child's identity (*huwiyyah*) and covenant (*mithaq*) with Allah, as per Qur'anic paradigms like Surah Al-A'raf (7:172). Classical scholars such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah in *Tuhfat al-Mawdud* emphasize its role in habituating gratitude and generosity from infancy, aligning with developmental psychology's imprinting theory where early rituals shape ethical schemas (Bori & Holtzman, 2010). In family contexts, particularly Indonesian *pesantren* traditions, *aqiqah* reinforces intergenerational akhlaq transmission, cultivating piety (*takwa*), justice (*'adl*), and communal harmony (*ukhuwwah*), thus serving as a foundational rite for holistic character development.

The subsequent method of moral education is breastfeeding the child. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) affirmed that no food is superior for a child than a mother's milk. The Qur'an reinforces this principle in QS. Al-Baqarah (2:233), which instructs mothers to breastfeed their children for two full years for those who wish to complete the nursing period. The verse also underscores the father's responsibility to *provide* for the mother's needs during the breastfeeding period. Thus, breastfeeding serves not only as fulfillment of the child's biological requirements but also carries profound educative and spiritual value, as mother's milk fosters emotional bonding, compassion, and the foundational basis for the child's physical health and moral character development (Music, 2024).

Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad Saw emphasized the importance of guiding children to internalize obedience to their parents as a moral value, while simultaneously fostering character based on noble morals in their daily lives. Children's obedience to their parents is a form of noble morality that needs to be instilled from an early age. In this regard, parents play a strategic role in internalizing these values through providing advice, implementing habits, and especially through leading by example in daily behavior. Children who are accustomed to obeying their parents will more easily accept the direction, advice, and moral education they receive. Parental role models are a key factor, as at that age, children typically imitate their parents' behavior directly. As the saying goes, "One example is worth more than a thousand pieces of advice." (Aunillah, 2015).

Finally, the Prophet Muhammad Saw emphasized the importance of teaching children to pray from an early age. Prayer serves as a means of developing discipline, responsibility, and spiritual awareness in children. Through the habit of worship, children are not only trained to carry out their religious obligations but also develop morals, ensuring their obedience to Allah SWT and good morals in their daily lives.

2. Educational Stages at Ages 10-14 Years

In educating children aged 0–10, the initial aspect that needs to be considered is naming them after birth. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encouraged Muslims to give them good names, particularly the names of the prophets. A hadith narrated by Abu Dawud explains that the names most beloved by Allah SWT are Abdullah and Abdurrahman, while names that reflect honesty and sincerity are Harith and Hammam. Conversely, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) forbade the use of names with negative connotations, such as Harb, meaning war, and Murrah, meaning bitter. This

recommendation is reinforced by another saying of the Prophet Muhammad, Saw, which states that on the Day of Judgment, people will be called by their own names and the names of their fathers, so Muslims are commanded to beautify these names (Narrated by Abu Dawud). Giving a good name is thus an early part of a child's moral education (Al-Jauziyyah, 2014).

Second, the recommendation to shave a baby's hair, as narrated by Imam Malik, relates that Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, weighed the hair of Hasan, Husayn, Zainab, and Umm Kulthum after shaving it, and then gave alms in the form of silver equivalent to the weight of the hair. Asy-Shaykh ad-Dahlawi interpreted the practice of giving alms accompanying this hair shaving as a symbol of gratitude for the gift of the birth of a child. This tradition is not merely ritualistic, but also contains an educational dimension that emphasizes that the birth of a child is seen as a divine gift that demands moral and social responsibility from parents, especially through instilling the values of care and spiritual awareness from the beginning of a child's life.

The transition of a child from the fetal phase to life as an infant is seen as a gift from Allah SWT, an expression of gratitude for which is expressed through charity. This practice of charity not only has social worship value, but also has an educational dimension, because from the beginning, parents are directed to instill the values of empathy, social concern, and spiritual awareness in welcoming the arrival of a child. It is in line with the narration of Ibn Khuzaimah, who mentions the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW: "O son of my brother, whoever today lowers his gaze and guards his private parts and tongue, his sins will be forgiven." *(U. Azizah, 2021).*

At this age, children need to be guided with educational discipline. If a child makes a mistake, parents are advised to administer punishment gently and proportionately, rather than using violence. Furthermore, parents should avoid over-indulging their children or always giving in to their every whim. Teaching polite speech etiquette and mutual respect, especially for elders, must also be continuously instilled as part of developing noble character.

3. Educational Stages at Age 14-15 Years

The role of parents in guiding children's use of free time is becoming increasingly important. Psychology and education experts emphasize that a lack of cognitive and emotional activity in children has the potential to open up space for the development of negative imaginations and a tendency toward unhealthy thought patterns. If this condition is

not managed properly, it can lead to behavior that deviates from moral values. Therefore, parents are required to go beyond prohibitions, but to actively guide children to manage their time effectively through involvement in educational, constructive, and productive activities, so that free time serves as a means of self-development, not a source of problems (Alwan et al., 2024).

In the context of Islamic education, parents have an obligation to teach the fundamentals of religious teachings that are obligatory, such as the fundamentals of faith, the pillars of Islam, and the main obligations of Islam, as these should not be neglected under any circumstances. Once these basic obligations are fulfilled, the next step is to pay attention to the child's tendencies, potential, and talents. Once parents have identified their child's skills and interests, they are obligated to provide optimal encouragement, guidance, and support so that the child can develop these potentials in a positive and focused manner (Hasbullah & Nurhasanah, 2024).

Second, parents need to nurture and develop their children's potential, tendencies, and talents on an ongoing basis. Attention to these aspects is an integral part of the family's educational responsibility, ensuring that children can grow in a balanced way, encompassing their faith, morals, intellect, and life skills (Labaso, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that family-based Islamic moral education (*tarbiyat al-akhlaq*) functions as a foundational mechanism for cultivating resilient, faith-centered generations amid contemporary challenges. Grounded in Qur'anic imperatives such as *At-Tahrim* 66:6, prophetic exemplarity, and classical scholarship including Al-Ghazali's *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, the study shows that library-based synthesis of approaches—*uswah hasanah* (exemplary modeling), *ta'wid* (habituation), *maw'izah* (exhortation), balanced *ta'shir wa ta'dib* (reward–punishment), and early rituals such as *aqiqah* and breastfeeding—effectively supports holistic development across childhood and adolescence (0–15 years). These methods integrate spiritual piety (*takwa*), moral integrity (*akhlaq*), and social responsibility (*'adl*), and move beyond mere behavioral control toward intrinsic transformation (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) that is consonant with insights from neuroscientific habit formation and attachment theory, while directly addressing contemporary familial disruptions such as digital influences and materialistic pressures.

The study's scientific contribution lies in systematizing a coherent Islamic moral-educational framework that links Qur'anic, prophetic, and classical intellectual sources with contemporary understandings of child development, thereby clarifying how family-based *tarbiyat al-akhlaq* can be structured across developmental stages. Conceptually, it enriches the discourse on Islamic moral education by demonstrating that family-centered practices can serve as an integrated paradigm for nurturing spiritual, moral, and social virtues under modern conditions. Practically, it offers parents, educators, and policymakers a structured repertoire of strategies for cultivating intrinsically motivated, morally grounded, and socially responsible members of the *ummah*, and provides a normative reference for designing family-sensitive Islamic educational interventions.

Future research should empirically validate these conceptually derived methods through longitudinal studies in Indonesian *pesantren* and family settings, in order to examine their effectiveness and durability over time. Building on such evidence, subsequent work is expected to inform policy development for integrated national–Islamic curricula that support the cohesion of the *ummah* and national progress, in line with the mandates of Indonesia's 1945 Constitution and UU No. 20/2003.

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