

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND EDUCATION | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Implementation of Islamic-Based Character Education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD, Ternate City

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This study aims to describe the implementation of Islamic-based character education at PAUD Bina Insania Arrahman in Ternate City, with a focus on the form of implementation, the process of internalizing character values in early childhood, and the role of teachers and the school environment in the formation of Islamic character. This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive research. The research subjects included the principal, teachers, and parents of students who were selected purposively. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, while the validity of the data was guaranteed through triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study indicate that Islam-based character education is implemented in an integrated manner through religious habits, teacher role models, and an Islamic-nuanced school culture. The process of internalizing character values takes place gradually through consistent introduction, habituation, and reinforcement according to the developmental stages of early childhood. Teachers and the school environment play a key role in the success of Islamic character formation, with parental support as a reinforcement of values in the family environment. This study confirms that Islamic-based character education in early childhood is an ongoing process that requires synergy between schools and families.

Keywords: Character Education, Islamic Education, Early Childhood.

I. Introduction

Bina Insania Arrahman Early Childhood Education (PAUD) in Ternate City is one of the educational institutions that explicitly integrates Islamic values into all its learning activities. A visible phenomenon at this institution is the systematic effort to instill Islamic-based character education from an early age through routine activities, habituation, role models, and educational interactions between educators and students (Cahyo et al., 2023). In daily practice, children are accustomed to greeting each other, reciting prayers before and after activities, demonstrating politeness to teachers and peers, and practicing the values of honesty,



responsibility, discipline, and compassion based on Islamic teachings. The process of internalizing these values is not only carried out in formal classroom learning activities but also through play activities, simple worship activities, and the cultivation of religious attitudes within the school environment. This phenomenon is interesting because Islam-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD is not positioned as a separate activity but is holistically integrated into the curriculum, learning strategies, and school culture. Teachers play an active role as role models (*uswah hasanah*) who directly practice Islamic character values in daily interactions. (Azriani Sari Nasution, 2024) Furthermore, the involvement of the principal and parents strengthens the process of character formation in children, both through intensive communication and shared understanding of values instilled at home and at school. This reflects a collective awareness of the importance of character education from an early age as the foundation for developing a child's personality. The phenomenon of the concrete and contextual implementation of Islamic-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD is the starting point and primary focus of this research. (Jafar & Maswati, 2025)

Although the implementation of Islamic-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD demonstrates various positive practices, several issues have emerged during its implementation. The main problem lies in the dynamics of implementing these character values in the context of early childhood learners who have diverse family backgrounds, levels of understanding, and psychological development. (Futhira et al., 2025). Teachers, as the primary actors in implementing character education, face the challenge of aligning learning methods with the characteristics of children who are still egocentric and learn through imitation and direct experience. Not all Islamic character values can be understood and consistently practiced by children, requiring a patient, creative, and sustainable pedagogical approach.

Furthermore, the role of parents as educational partners has not been fully explored. Differences in parenting styles and the intensity of Islamic values instilled in the family environment influence the consistency of children's character at school. (Ningsih et al., 2022). This situation creates a gap between the values instilled in early childhood education institutions and the reality experienced by children at home and in their social environment. The direct impact of these problems is seen in the variations in children's behavior in demonstrating discipline, responsibility, and religiosity daily. However, the lack of systematic documentation regarding the process, strategies, and significance of implementing Islam-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD has resulted in an in-depth mapping of existing good practices. Therefore, qualitative research is needed to comprehensively explore the experiences, perspectives, and practices of educational actors in implementing Islam-based character education. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic character values are instilled, the challenges faced, and their implications for character development in early childhood.

The phenomenon of implementing Islam-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman Early Childhood Education (PAUD) in Ternate City can be understood as a social and pedagogical practice rich in meaning, experience, and social interactions between educational actors. From a qualitative perspective, character education is not simply viewed as the transfer of normative values but rather as a process of constructing meaning formed through the relationships between teachers, students, the school environment, and institutional culture. The Islamic values instilled in early childhood are interpreted contextually through daily learning experiences, such as habituation to worship, teacher role models, and repeated social interactions. This process reflects the existence of school cultural practices that gradually shape children's religious habitus. Therefore, the implementation of Islamic-based character education in PAUD cannot be separated from teachers' perceptions of character education, children's experiences in interactions, and the meaning of Islamic values internalized in daily life. (Kurniawati et al., 2024) A qualitative approach allows researchers to understand this reality from the perspective of the research subjects, not simply measuring the final results, but exploring the processes and dynamics that accompany them.

In a broader context, the implementation of Islam-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD is closely linked to national education policies that emphasize character building from an

early age. The government, through various regulations, such as the Character Education Strengthening (PPK) policy and the PAUD curriculum, encourages educational institutions to integrate moral, spiritual, and social values into the learning process (Afidah et al., 2024). Institutionally, PAUD, as an early education institution, plays a strategic role in shaping the foundation of children's personalities before they enter the next level of education. Socially, the religious culture of the Ternate City community also influences the educational orientation, emphasizing Islamic values. However, modern social dynamics, such as the influence of digital media, changing parenting patterns, and the complexity of children's social environments, present unique challenges to implementing character education. Therefore, Islamic-based character education in PAUD must be understood not only as an internal school activity but also as part of the broader educational and social system.

Several previous studies have shown that Islam-based character education in PAUD institutions positively contributes to the development of children's religious attitudes, discipline, and social behavior. These studies generally highlight habituation strategies, teacher role models, and the integration of religious values in learning. (Hasbi, 2025) However, most studies still focus on the results or effectiveness of the program in general and have not explored the meaning, the process of internalization of values, and the subjective experiences of educational actors in depth. In addition, the perspectives of teachers, principals, and parents as the main actors in character education are often not comprehensively explored. This gap in understanding (research gap) indicates the need for qualitative research that not only explains "what" and "how" character education is implemented, but also "why" and "how the meaning of these values is constructed in daily educational practices in PAUD".

Based on the above description, this research focuses on an in-depth understanding of the implementation of Islam-based character education at the Bina Insania Arrahman Early Childhood Education Center (PAUD) in Ternate City. This study aims to uncover the processes, strategies, and meanings of Islamic character education as understood and practiced by educational actors. The approach used was a qualitative case study design, as this research seeks to intensively and contextually explore the phenomenon within a specific educational institution. Through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, this study seeks to capture the complete, natural, and meaningful empirical reality based on the experiences of the research participants.

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of Islam-based character education, particularly in the context of early childhood education, by emphasizing the aspects of meaning, experience, and the social processes that occur within it. The findings of this study can contribute to the development of character education theory that is more contextual and based on real-world practices. Practically, the research results are expected to serve as a reference for educators, PAUD managers, and policymakers in designing and implementing more effective and sustainable Islam-based character education. Thus, this research contributes to the development of scientific knowledge and provides direct benefits for improving the quality of character education in PAUD institutions.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Character education in early childhood is the primary foundation for developing a child's personality, morals, and social values. According to Lickona, character education is a planned effort to help individuals understand, feel, and practice good moral values in their daily lives. (IAminullah, 2024) In the context of early childhood education (PAUD), character education is inseparable from the process of habituation, role modeling, and a conducive learning environment, as early childhood learns through imitation and direct experience. Therefore, character education in PAUD emphasizes the process of internalizing values through meaningful and repetitive activities. (Minarti, 2023)

From an Islamic perspective, character education has a strong theological foundation, as the primary goal of Islamic education is to develop individuals with noble character (Akhlakul Karimah). (Akbar, 2025) Al-Ghazali emphasized that early childhood education aims to accustom children to good deeds so that these values become embedded in their personalities throughout adulthood (Mualifatul & Filasofa, 2021). Islamic-based character education combines universal moral values with the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah, such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, compassion, and obedience to God. These values are instilled not only through verbal instruction, but also through the example of educators and the culture of the educational institution (Syafriada et al., 2025).

Several previous studies have shown that the implementation of Islamic-based character education in early childhood education (PAUD) generally involves strategies of religious habituation, the integration of Islamic values into thematic learning, and the role of teachers as role models. Research by Devianti et al., 2020 found that the practice of simple worship and religious attitudes in PAUD positively impacts children's moral and social development. Another study by Akbar (2025) confirms that the Islamic school environment contributes to the development of discipline and good manners in early childhood learners. However, these studies focus more on the outcomes or impacts of the program and have not yet deeply examined the processes and meanings experienced by educational actors. In qualitative studies, character education is understood as a social and cultural practice shaped through interactions between educational actors. According to Creswell, qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning individuals attach to a phenomenon based on their experiences. In the context of Islamic-based character education, the meaning of Islamic values is constructed through interactions between teachers and children, communication between schools and parents, and the evolving institutional culture. Therefore, it is important to explore teachers' perceptions, children's experiences, and daily practices in early childhood education institutions (PAUD) as a living and dynamic social reality.

Furthermore, previous studies have shown that the success of character education is greatly influenced by consistency between schools, families, and the social environment. Bronfenbrenner, through his developmental ecology theory, emphasized that child development is influenced by interacting environmental systems. In the context of Islamic PAUD, the inconsistency between the values instilled in schools and parenting styles at home can hinder character internalization. However, this aspect has rarely been studied in depth through a qualitative, case study-based approach. Based on this literature review, it can be concluded that although Islamic-based character education in PAUD has been widely researched, there are still limited studies that highlight the process, meaning, and subjective experiences of educational actors in a contextual manner. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by exploring in depth the implementation of Islamic-based character education at PAUD Bina Insania Arrahman, Ternate City through a qualitative case study approach, thus producing a more comprehensive and meaningful understanding.

III. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach (Sugiyono, 2017). The qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to deeply understand the process of implementing Islamic-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD in Ternate City, including the meaning, experiences, and social interactions that occur within it. Descriptive research is used to describe phenomena systematically, factually, and contextually, in accordance with the natural conditions of the research object.

This research was conducted at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD in Ternate City. The research location was selected purposively because this institution consistently implements Islamic-based character education in its learning activities. The research subjects included the principal, teachers, and parents of students directly involved in the implementation of character education. Subjects were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on relevance and involvement in the phenomenon under study.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were used to elicit the research subjects' views and experiences regarding the implementation of Islamic-based character education. Observations were conducted to directly observe learning practices and the instillation of character values in the school environment. Documentation was used as supporting data in the form of school programs, lesson plans, and other related documents. Data analysis was conducted qualitatively and descriptively using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (Miles, M and Huberman, 1994), which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Analysis was conducted continuously from data collection until the research was completed to obtain valid and meaningful findings. Data validity was ensured through triangulation of sources and techniques, as well as cross-checking of data with informants (member checking). This step was taken to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the research data.

IV. Result and Discussion

Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD in Ternate City is an early childhood education institution focused on developing children's religious and moral character based on Islamic values. This institution integrates character education into all learning activities and daily habits, both in the classroom and on the school grounds. Learning takes place in a religious atmosphere, characterized by the practice of prayer, greetings, polite behavior, and interactions that emphasize the value of compassion. The principal serves as the director of character education policy, while teachers play a key role in implementing Islamic character values through role models and practices. Teachers have a background in early childhood education and a basic understanding of Islamic education. Parents are involved as educational partners, particularly in maintaining the continuity of character values between home and school. Children, as the primary subjects of learning, exhibit characteristics typical of early childhood, such as learning through imitation, play, and direct experience.

4.1. Implementation of Islamic-Based Character Education at Bina Insani Arrahman PAUD, Ternate City

Based on research findings, the implementation of Islamic-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman Early Childhood Education (PAUD) in Ternate City is integrated into all learning activities and school life. Character education is not taught as a separate subject, but rather internalized through habituation, role modeling, and school culture. Islamic character values such as religiosity, discipline, honesty, responsibility, courtesy, and compassion are consistently instilled in children's daily activities. The most prominent form of implementation is religious habits, such as greeting children upon arrival and departure from school, reciting prayers before and after activities, and cultivating order and mutual respect. Furthermore, character values are integrated into play activities and thematic learning, so children gain meaningful learning experiences appropriate to their developmental stage.

Interviews with the school principal revealed that Islamic-based character education is the institution's primary vision. The principal stated:

"From the beginning, we emphasized that this PAUD is not just about teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also about developing children's morals in accordance with Islamic values through daily habits."

Early childhood education teachers emphasized that character development is achieved through role models and repeated practice. One teacher stated:

"Early childhood children cannot yet understand theory, so we provide direct examples. If teachers are patient and polite, children will imitate."

Meanwhile, interviews with parents revealed a recognition of changes in their children's behavior after attending early childhood education. One parent stated:

"My child is now accustomed to praying and is more polite. This is evident in the habits he has brought home."

This research finding aligns with the character education theory proposed by Thomas Lickona (Lickona, 1991), which states that character education encompasses three main components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. In the context of Bina Insania Arrahman Early Childhood Education, these three components are evident in the practice of religious habits and teacher role models, where children not only learn the values of goodness but also experience and practice them in their daily lives. Furthermore, these findings are also relevant to Al-Ghazali's view (Mualifatul & Filasofa, 2021), which emphasizes the importance of moral education from an early age through habituation and a positive environment. According to Al-Ghazali, children are like blank paper, shaped according to the habits they are given. The practice of habituation and religious culture in early childhood education (PAUD) reflects a direct implementation of this concept. From a child development perspective, Bandura's theory (Bandura, 1977) on social learning explains that children learn through observation and imitation. The role model of teachers as significant figures is a key factor in the internalization of Islamic character values. Children imitate their teachers' behavior in prayer, politeness, and social interactions, thus forming character values naturally.

Based on the research results and theoretical analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of Islamic-based character education at PAUD Bina Insania Arrahman in Ternate City is carried out through religious habituation, teacher role models, and the integration of character values into all learning activities. This implementation occurs contextually, consistently, and appropriately for the developmental stage of early childhood. Teachers' exemplary behavior and a religious school environment are key factors in the success of character education, while parental involvement strengthens the continuity of values between school and home. Thus, Islamic-based character education in early childhood education not only shapes children's religious behavior but also instills a foundation of sustainable noble morals.

4.2. The Process of Internalizing Character Values in Early Childhood

Based on research findings, the process of internalizing Islamic character values in early childhood at Bina Insania Arrahman Preschool (PAUD) occurs gradually and continuously. Internalization of values is not achieved through the delivery of abstract concepts, but rather through direct experiences that align with the child's developmental characteristics. This process begins with the introduction of values, continues with habituation, and is reinforced through repetition and positive reinforcement from teachers. Children are introduced to Islamic character values through simple activities such as praying, sharing, waiting their turn, and apologizing. These values are then incorporated into daily activities, becoming part of the child's routine. Reinforcement is achieved through praise, affirmation of positive attitudes, and concrete examples from teachers. This process creates a meaningful learning experience and helps children understand values not simply as rules, but as lifelong habits. Interviews with teachers indicate that internalization of character values is carried out using a gentle and repetitive approach. One teacher stated:

"We don't force children to learn them right away, but continue to remind them and provide examples until they become accustomed to them."

The principal emphasized that the internalization process requires time and consistency. He stated:

"Early childhood children learn from habits. If they practice them every day, over time, the values become ingrained in them."

Parents also acknowledged changes in their children's behavior as a result of the internalization process taking place at school. One parent stated:

"Now my child often reminds us to pray. That's a habit he learned from school."

This research finding aligns with Jean Piaget's theory of moral development (Piaget, 1932), which states that early childhood is in the heteronomous stage, where moral understanding is formed through rules and concrete experiences. The process of internalizing values in early childhood education is carried out through concrete activities and habits, thus aligning with the child's cognitive developmental stage. Furthermore, Bandura's theory (1977) on social learning emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and adult guidance. The role of teachers as companions and role models in the process of internalizing Islamic character values suggests the need for scaffolding that helps children understand and practice values gradually. From an Islamic education perspective, (Mualifatul & Filasofa, 2021) emphasizes that moral development must be achieved through continuous practice and habituation. The internalization process at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD reflects this concept, where Islamic character values are instilled through consistent and contextual moral training. Based on research results and theoretical analysis, it can be concluded that the process of internalizing Islamic character values in early childhood at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD in Ternate City occurs through stages of introduction, habituation, and continuous reinforcement. This process is carried out through direct experience, teacher role models, and intense social interaction. Internalization of character values is not instantaneous but requires time, consistency, and support from the school and family environment. With this approach, Islamic character values can be naturally ingrained in children according to their developmental stage.

4.3. the role of teachers and the school environment in the formation of Islamic character

The research results show that teachers and the school environment play a crucial role in the development of Islamic character in early childhood at Bina Insania Arrahman Preschool in Ternate City. Teachers serve not only as instructors but also as primary educators and role models in instilling Islamic-based character values. Their attitudes, speech, and behavior serve as direct examples for children to imitate in their daily interactions. The school environment is designed as an educational environment that supports the development of religious character. A conducive, compassionate, and Islamic-inspired school atmosphere fosters positive habits in children. Character values are embodied through simple rules, daily routines, and a culture of mutual respect among school members. Thus, the school environment serves as a social space where children learn character values in a tangible way. Interviews with teachers revealed a strong awareness of their role as role models. One teacher stated:

"Children are quick to imitate. If teachers are patient and polite, children will learn to behave likewise."

The principal emphasized that Islamic character formation will not be successful without the support of a consistent school environment. He said:

"We strive to create a safe, religious, and comfortable school environment so that children become accustomed to Islamic values."

Meanwhile, parents also feel the impact of the role of teachers and the school environment on changes in their children's behavior. One parent said:

"My child has become more disciplined and polite since attending school here, because the teachers set a good example."

This research finding aligns with Albert Bandura's (Bandura, 1977) theory on social learning, which emphasizes that children learn through observation and imitation of figures they consider significant. Teachers, as authority figures and behavioral models, have a significant influence on shaping the character of early childhood. The exemplary behavior of teachers at Bina Insania Arrahman Preschool is the primary medium for learning Islamic character. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner's (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) theory on the ecology of human development emphasizes that child development is influenced by the immediate environment (microsystem), including the school. The religious and conducive school environment at this Preschool serves as a primary support system for the formation of children's Islamic character. Positive interactions between teachers, peers, and the school culture shape sustainable behavioral patterns. From an Islamic educational perspective, the concept of *uswah hasanah* emphasizes that role models are the most effective educational method for shaping morals. The practice of teachers as character role models at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD reflects the practical application of this concept in early childhood education.

Based on research results and theoretical analysis, it can be concluded that teachers and the school environment play a central role in the formation of Islamic character in early childhood at Bina Insania Arrahman PAUD in Ternate City. Teachers serve as primary role models who directly influence children's behavior and attitudes, while the school environment provides a social and cultural space that supports the internalization of character values. The synergy between the roles of teachers and the school environment creates an effective learning environment for consistently and sustainably instilling Islamic values.

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of a descriptive qualitative study on the implementation of Islamic-based character education at Bina Insania Arrahman Early Childhood Education Center (PAUD) in Ternate City, it can be concluded that Islamic character education is implemented in a planned, integrated, and contextual manner throughout all learning activities and school life. Character education is not positioned as a separate subject, but rather internalized through religious practices, teacher role models, and an Islamic-infused school culture. The process of internalizing character values in early childhood occurs gradually through consistent introduction to values, practice, and reinforcement. This approach aligns with the developmental characteristics of early childhood, who learn through direct experience, imitation, and social interaction. Teacher role models are a key factor in the success of value internalization, as children view teachers as primary role models for imitating behavior and attitudes. Furthermore, a conducive and religious school environment serves as a social space that supports the formation of children's Islamic character. A school culture that emphasizes the values of compassion, discipline, and responsibility naturally strengthens the character learning process. Parental involvement also reinforces the values instilled in schools, although the level of consistency in its implementation within the family environment varies. Overall, this research shows that the success of Islamic-based character education in early childhood education is largely determined by the synergy between habituation strategies, teacher role models, and support from the school and family environment. Islamic character education in early childhood is not an instantaneous process, but rather an

ongoing process that requires consistency, patience, and commitment from all parties involved in the child's education.

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