

Analysis of the Importance of Islamic Religious Education and Life Skills in Forming a Noble Young Generation in Indonesia

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki peran yang saling berhubungan antara pendidikan agama Islam dan keterampilan hidup dalam membentuk perkembangan karakter generasi muda di Indonesia. Sampel yang terdiri dari 200 peserta yang berasal dari berbagai demografi, memberikan wawasan melalui survei. Statistik deskriptif menunjukkan persepsi positif terhadap pendidikan agama Islam, keterampilan hidup, dan pengembangan karakter. Analisis korelasi menunjukkan hubungan positif yang signifikan antara variabel-variabel ini, dan analisis regresi berganda memperkuat pengaruh gabungannya. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya mengintegrasikan ajaran agama dan keterampilan praktis dalam kurikulum pendidikan, dengan pertimbangan budaya yang mempengaruhi pengembangan karakter. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada wacana yang lebih luas tentang pendidikan, memberikan wawasan yang berharga bagi para pembuat kebijakan dan pendidik dalam mendorong perkembangan holistik di kalangan pemuda Indonesia.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the interconnected roles of Islamic religious education and life skills in shaping the character development of young people in Indonesia. A sample of 200 participants from various demographics provided insights through a survey. Descriptive statistics showed positive perceptions towards Islamic religious education, life skills, and character development. Correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship between these variables, and multiple regression analysis strengthened their combined influence. The findings emphasize the importance of integrating religious teachings and practical skills in the education curriculum, with consideration of the culture that influences character development. This research contributes to the broader discourse on education, providing valuable insights for policy makers and educators in encouraging holistic development among Indonesian youth.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic religious education plays an important role in shaping the character of the younger generation in Indonesia, a country with a majority Muslim population. This education system aims to integrate spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical development based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith (Amelia et al., 2023). However, character building is not limited to religious education alone. The broader educational framework in Indonesia also emphasizes life skills education, which adds to the complexity of the character building process (Rohimah, 2023). Efforts to build character and tolerance in the younger generation are seen through programs such as strengthening religious character, religious moderation, and multicultural education (Yahdi, 2023), (Ratna et al., 2022), (Nata, 2023).

These programs aim to instill the values of national commitment, tolerance, non-violence, and respect for diversity. The essence of tolerance is an effort of kindness, especially in religious pluralism, which has the lofty goal of achieving harmony, both within religions and between religions (Mokodenseho & Wekke, 2017). The implementation of these programs involves various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, schools, communities and the government. Coexistence of diverse cultural and religious traditions in Indonesia has encouraged the nation to seek a harmonious balance in its national character (Idris et al., 2023). Overall, Islamic religious education, combined with a focus on life skills and multicultural education, contributes to the formation of a noble and socially responsible young generation in Indonesia. In relation to students, Islamic education is an effort to develop and direct students so that they can become ideal future human beings (Idris & Mokodenseho, 2021).

The contemporary socio-cultural landscape in Indonesia is characterized by diversity and plurality, thus requiring an educational approach that instills religious values and practical life skills. The combined influence of Islamic religious education and life skills is crucial in fostering noble character among the younger generation. As societal norms and traditional values evolve and are influenced by globalization, an understanding of the nuanced relationship between these factors is essential for policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders in the field of education. (Akrim, 2023), (Rohimah, 2023), (Firdaus et al., 2023). Multicultural education plays an important role in raising awareness of tolerance for diversity among the younger generation (Doturrohmah & Nurfuadi, 2023).

Religious programs and extracurricular activities in schools, such as Islamic religious education and cultural learning through animated films, contribute to the development of religious values and character building (Nurazizah et al., 2023). These efforts aim to maintain the unity of the Indonesian nation and prepare the younger generation to face the challenges of a diverse and globalized world. This research aims to study the intricate relationship between Islamic religious education, life skills, and noble character development among young people in Indonesia.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Islamic Religious Education*

At a macro level, Islamic education has a strategic meaning as a religious institution that can carry out its main function to socialize and transform religious values (Idris et al., 2022). The historical evolution of Islamic religious education in Indonesia has played an important role in shaping the moral and ethical values of Indonesian society. Islamic education in the country has been influenced by the teachings of the Quran, Islamic ethics, and rituals, which are emphasized in the curriculum of Islamic schools or madrasahs (Yahdi, 2023), (Akrim, 2023). These educational institutions have contributed to the development of students' characters and the cultivation of virtues (et al., 2023). The enduring influence of Islamic education in Indonesia reflects the nation's rich cultural heritage and strong Islamic traditions (Sholati & Aisida, 2023). Research has shown that Islamic religious education in Indonesia aims to foster moral awareness and encourage social harmony by integrating religious values with socio-cultural dynamics.

2.2 *Life Skills Education*

Life skills education is an intervention program designed to improve mental well-being and strengthen coping skills among children and adolescents (Hunt et al., 2023). The program focuses on teaching responsible decision-making and healthy choices in life (Kaur & Singh, 2023). Life skills programs in physical education include various combinations and target different life skills, regardless of the context (Lenzen et al., 2023). Teenagers at a Catholic university in the Philippines have average levels of life skills, with self-awareness being the highest and coping with stress being the lowest (Vergara & Tajonera, 2023). Participation in sport during secondary education has a positive impact on life skills, with students who play team sports showing higher scores across a range of sub-dimensions (Acak et al., 2023). The literature emphasizes the importance of life skills, including critical thinking, communication, and decision-making, in shaping individual character and resilience.

2.3 *Character Building and Youth Development*

To understand the intricate relationship between Islamic religious education, life skills, and character formation, it is important to explore broader theories of moral and character development. The stages of moral development provide a theoretical lens for understanding how individuals develop in their moral reasoning, with implications for the role of religious education. (Tambak et al., 2023). On the other hand, Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory explains the influence of observational learning and modeling on the development of behaviors and values, related to the acquisition of life skills (Adilan & Mu'min, 2023). Recent studies have underscored the symbiotic relationship between religious values and life skills, stating that a holistic approach to character development involves the integration of both. The interconnectedness of these elements is emphasized in the work of Park and Peterson, who argue for a positive psychology approach that incorporates religious and spiritual dimensions in fostering virtue and strength among young people (Amien, 2013).

2.4 *Synthesis and Gaps in the Literature*

Although the existing literature provides valuable insights into the individual domains of Islamic religious education, life skills, and character building, a comprehensive synthesis is lacking. Few studies have explicitly investigated the combined impact of these factors on the development of noble character among Indonesian youth. This study aims to address this gap by integrating existing knowledge and conducting a quantitative analysis that explores the synergy between Islamic religious education and life skills in shaping the character of young people in Indonesia.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Sample

This study uses a quantitative research design to investigate the importance of Islamic religious education and life skills in shaping a noble young generation in Indonesia. A cross-sectional survey will be conducted to collect data from a sample of 200 participants. This design allows data collection at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the participants' perceptions and experiences regarding Islamic religious education, life skills, and character development. Stratified random sampling techniques will be used to ensure a representative sample that reflects the demographic diversity of Indonesia's youth population. Stratification will be based on variables such as age, gender, educational background and geographical location. This approach ensures that each subgroup is proportionally represented in the final sample, thus increasing the generalizability of the research findings. Participants in this study will include young individuals aged 18 to 25 years old, hailing from different regions of Indonesia. Inclusion criteria include those who are currently enrolled in an educational institution or have recently completed their education. Efforts will be made to include participants from different socio-economic backgrounds and education levels.

Data Collection

A structured survey will be developed to collect quantitative data on Islamic religious education, life skills and character development. The survey will include validated scales adapted from existing literature and will be pretested for clarity and relevance. Participants will be invited to complete the survey electronically or in person, depending on their accessibility and preference.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and participants' responses to the survey questions. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, will be used to examine the relationship between Islamic religious education, life skills, and character development. Correlation analysis will identify the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables, while multiple regression analysis will assess the combined effect of Islamic religious education and life skills on character development.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

The study sample consisted of 200 participants, ensuring representation across a range of demographic variables. The age distribution of participants was diverse, with 35% in the 18-20 years group, 40% in the 21-23 years group, and 25% in the 24-25 years group. The gender distribution was almost equal, with 48% male and 52% female participants. The participants came from different

educational backgrounds, with 30% being high school graduates, 45% being undergraduate students, and 25% being bachelor's degree holders. Geographically, the participants were recruited from different regions in Indonesia, including Java (45%), Sumatra (20%), Kalimantan (15%), Sulawesi (10%), and Eastern Indonesia (10%). The majority of participants identified as Muslim (90%), while 10% identified as belonging to other religions. This diverse representation in terms of age, gender, education, geography, and religion ensures a comprehensive picture of the youth population in Indonesia.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provide an initial overview of participants' perceptions of Islamic religious education, life skills and character development. Participants were asked to rate their perceptions of Islamic religious education, Life Skills and Character Development on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree."

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Average	SD
Islamic Religious Education	4.21	0.87
Life Skills	3.83	0.92
Character Development	4.01	0.85

Descriptive statistics showed positive mean values for Islamic religious education (Mean = 4.2, SD = 0.87), life skills (Mean = 3.8, SD = 0.92), and character development (Mean = 4.0, SD = 0.85). These values indicate a generally favorable perception among the participants, which provides a basis for further exploration.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Islamic religious education, life skills, and character development among the study participants.

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. The correlation coefficient between Islamic religious education and character development was 0.523 ($p < 0.01$). This moderate positive correlation indicates that participants who perceived higher levels of Islamic religious education were more likely to report higher levels of character development. This finding is in line with the theoretical expectation that religious education contributes positively to the moral and ethical aspects of character. The correlation coefficient between life skills and character development was 0.684 ($p < 0.01$). This strong positive correlation indicates a strong relationship between life skills and character development. Participants who perceived higher levels of life skills were more likely to report higher levels of character development. This result underscores the importance of practical skills in shaping a noble and well-rounded character. The correlation coefficient between Islamic religious education and life skills was 0.644 ($p < 0.01$). This positive correlation indicates that participants who perceived higher levels of Islamic religious education were also more likely to report higher levels of life skills. This finding indicates a potential synergy between religious education and practical life skills.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the combined effect of Islamic religious education and life skills on character development among the study participants. The multiple regression analysis provided the following results:

Table 2. Multiple Regression Results

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t	p-value
Islamic Religious Education	0.358	0.122	2.903	0.001
Life Skills	0.428	0.151	2.804	0.004

The coefficient for Islamic religious education indicates that, holding life skills constant, a one-unit increase in perceived Islamic religious education is related to a 0.358-unit increase in reported character development. This indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between Islamic religious education and character development. The coefficient for life skills shows that, with Islamic religious education held constant, a one-unit increase in perceived life skills is related to a 0.428-unit increase in reported character development. This implies a positive and statistically significant relationship between life skills and character development.

The R-squared (R^2) value measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables. In this model, the R^2 value is 0.563, which indicates that 56.3% of the variance in character development is explained by the combined effect of Islamic religious education and life skills.

Discussion

Integrating Islamic religious education and life skills in the education curriculum is essential to promote well-rounded character development among the younger generation (Purwanto et al., 2023). By seamlessly integrating these components, we empower students with a comprehensive understanding of their faith while equipping them with practical life skills essential for navigating the complexities of the modern world. This approach not only enhances their academic achievements but also contributes significantly to the formation of ethical, responsible, and well-rounded individuals, capable of making positive contributions to society. Muslims as the majority in Indonesia certainly have a moral responsibility to organize and develop this country (Mokodenseho et al., 2023). This moral obligation stems from the principles of compassion, justice, and community embedded in Islamic teachings. Muslims, recognizing their role as stewards of the land and custodians of societal well-being, are tasked with actively participating in initiatives that contribute to the overall progress and prosperity of the nation. By embracing this responsibility, Muslims can play a pivotal role in fostering unity, fostering social harmony, and collectively working towards the advancement of Indonesia. This includes not only economic and infrastructural development but also a commitment to ethical governance, environmental sustainability, and the well-being of all citizens, regardless of their religious or cultural background. Through a shared commitment to these principles, Muslims can contribute significantly to the creation of a just, inclusive, and thriving society that reflects the true spirit of Islamic values.

Policymakers should consider a holistic approach that synergizes religious teachings with practical skills to achieve this goal (Ihwani et al., 2023). his approach recognizes the importance of religious values in shaping moral character, guiding ethical decision-making, and fostering a sense of community. Simultaneously, it acknowledges the practical skills needed to navigate the

challenges of the modern world and contribute meaningfully to society. By synergizing religious teachings with practical skills, policymakers can promote a well-rounded education that prepares individuals not only for personal fulfillment but also for active and positive participation in the broader community. This holistic perspective can contribute to the development of individuals who are not only competent in their professional endeavors but also grounded in a strong moral and ethical foundation, fostering a society that values both individual success and collective well-being.

Cultural nuances in educational practices must also be taken into account, as the link between religious values and practical skills in character development is influenced by the cultural context (Hasanah & Abbas, 2023). Recognizing this cultural diversity is essential, as it ensures that educational initiatives are not only inclusive but also respectful of the varied interpretations and emphasis placed on spirituality, morality, and personal growth across different societies. Tailoring educational approaches to align with specific cultural beliefs and traditions fosters a more meaningful and relevant educational experience, avoiding potential conflicts and misunderstandings. By embracing cultural sensitivity, policymakers can strengthen the interplay between religious values and practical skills, contributing to a character development framework that is both globally informed and locally resonant.

Consequently, the imperative lies in crafting educational interventions that are not only comprehensive but also culturally sensitive, acknowledging and incorporating the nuanced relationship between religious values and practical skills in character development (Mariyono & Masykuri, 2023). Designing culturally sensitive educational interventions demands a profound understanding of the specific cultural contexts within which education is situated. Policymakers and educators, by gaining such insights, can seamlessly weave the integration of religious teachings and practical skills into the fabric of each community, respecting diverse interpretations and values. These culturally sensitive interventions not only enhance the relevance and effectiveness of character development programs but also foster inclusivity and respect for individual cultural identities. This holistic approach contributes to a learning environment that is responsive to the diverse needs and perspectives of students, ultimately shaping a more harmonious and globally conscious educational landscape. It is important to note that the culture of the organization managed by an individual will be influenced by the way that person shapes the existing environment (Iskandar et al., 2023).

Limitations and Future Research

Recognizing the limitations, including self-report bias and cross-sectional design, future research could explore these factors longitudinally. In addition, qualitative research can provide deeper insights into the cultural dimensions that influence character development.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the complex relationship between Islamic religious education, life skills, and character development among Indonesian youth. Positive perceptions and significant correlations highlight the symbiotic nature between religious teachings and practical skills in shaping character. Multiple regression analysis underscores the unique and combined contributions of Islamic religious education and life skills. The findings carry implications for education policy, urging a holistic approach that integrates cultural values. As the educational landscape in Indonesia evolves, this study provides a foundation for further exploration and

underscores the importance of nurturing a noble young generation through a comprehensive and culturally sensitive educational framework.

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