Reinforcing Character Education Values on Islamic Education in the Time of Distance Learning

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v5i2.3189

Received: October 10, 2020  |  Revised: December 28, 2020  |  Approved: December 30, 2020

Abstract
This study aims to describe the results of the critical analysis regarding some strategies that can be adopted in building character education values in Islamic education, especially in the time of distance learning. These strategies are deemed to be crucial parameters in the learning process so that the learning process will not merely on cognitive achievement. Grounded in library research, study findings promote four strategies to be employed in building character education values in Islamic education.
education in the age of distance learning. First, teacher-parent communication was optimized via online media, e.g. social media, digital mutaba’ah books (communication book: a teacher-parent daily communication book) based on Google form applications, or offline media, e.g. printed Mutaba’ah books. Second, the character education value-based learning module was designed to highlight several materials related to character education in the form of motivational videos, inspirational stories, and so forth. Third, various innovative learning methods, including problem-solving, positive habituation, and reflection methods were undertaken to emphasize the affective and psychomotor indicators. Forth, a comprehensive learning evaluation was developed to leverage not only cognitive skills but also the affective and psychomotor domains.

**Keywords:** Character Education Values, Distance Learning, Islamic Education

**INTRODUCTION**

The presence of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) seems to be a terror for many people around the world. It encourages people to change their lifestyle into a new normal. They have to do social distancing as well as physical distancing everywhere. Consequently, it brings massive impacts on some crucial sectors, such as economy, politics, health, culture, tourism, and education (Suhaidi et al., 2020).

This pandemic initially affected the global economic sector, but its impact start to spread into other sectors, including education. As an effort to prevent the spread of Covid-19, Indonesian government temporarily closed entire schools in Indonesia (Hermawan, 2020). Therefore, Indonesian government, especially government department of education made an alternative way of teaching and learning process. The government then released a policy written in Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture No. 4 of 2020 regarding education policy in Indonesia during covid-19 pandemic and No. 15 of 2020 related to the guidance of study from home during the pandemic to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Through those policies, the government department of education instructed to the entire education stakeholder in Indonesia to conduct distance learning or study from home (Firman & Rahayu, 2020). There are two types of distance learning, they are online-based learning (daring) and offline-based learning (luring). Both of them were then applied to the whole institution especially for the formal education started from primary school level until higher education level or university (Abidin et al., 2020).

Now, Indonesia has applied this distance learning model for almost a year. For Indonesian teacher and education stakeholder, distance learning that has been applied in
almost all learning program is something new and challenging. It encourages all students from various level educations to learn and practice all subject material through Online learning (Darsono et al., 2020). This phenomenon is certainly a challenge for teachers in delivering material consisting cognitive competencies, affective and psychomotor, especially for teachers of Islamic education who also should build students’ character by internalizing character education values in the learning process.

In the distance learning model, teacher have big responsibility to deliver and explain online material, make online tasks, give great example and build students’ character values via online. This is quite challenging for teacher, especially when they have to evaluate students in reciting Qur’an from their house. It is because normally teacher observes the students directly to evaluate students’ performance, then teacher also can give a direct feedback when there is mistake made by the students. In addition the other challenges are the teachers’ ability in mastering technology for integrating character education value within the material. Those are only seemed like booming when the COVID-19 pandemic occurs (Santika, 2020).

The technological mastery is a crucial thing in this Industrial Revolution 4.0. Nonetheless, soft skills will be more important and is not replaceable by the technological sophistication. The intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, such as the ability to communicate, negotiate, think critically and solve the problems are also crucial in education. The future generation must be prepared from now. The characters that must be built in our education especially in facing a Golden Indonesia in 2045 are honesty, discipline, leadership capabilities, teamwork and collaboration skills, emotional intelligence, ability to make decisions in various conditions, service orientation, and ability in communications and negotiation, the ability to create and sell products, as well as the ability to respond and adapt. Those skills are the main keys to the golden generation of 2045, and this is the challenge of our education to build those character values, especially in the distance learning models in this pandemic era (Margianto, 2020).

What has been presented above is the main issue of this study. Character education value is crucial, especially for the future generations of the nation. On the other hand, the condition of the current pandemic requires us to keep distance one another. As a result, it complicates the process of students’ character building at school.
The aim of the research is to describe the results of a critical analysis regarding some strategies that can be used in building character education values in the Islamic education learning, especially in the era of distance learning. This study uses library research method which belongs to qualitative approach.

The issue of distance learning and character education has been carried out by several previous researchers indeed. Some of them are the study conducted by Darsono et al. (2020) entitled “The Effectiveness of Distance Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic; a case study at the Bandung State Polytechnic”; Abidin et al. (2020) entitled “The Effectiveness of Distance Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic”; Santika (2020) entitled “Character Education in Online Learning”; Hamdani & Priatna (2020) entitled “The Effectiveness of the Implementation of Online Learning (Full Online) During the COVID-19 Pandemic at Elementary School Level in Subang Regency”. From the above studies, three of them did not specifically discuss about building character education values in the distance learning model. They only discuss about the effectiveness of distance learning. Meanwhile, one of them focuses on the discussion of character education in online learning. There are no previous studies related to distance learning using offline learning. Therefore, the contribution of this study is to provide an alternative solution, especially for the teachers of Islamic education in building character education values in the Islamic education learning, especially in the era of distance learning.

TEACHERS’ EFFORTS IN BUILDING CHARACTER EDUCATION VALUE IN THE ERA OF DISTANCE LEARNING

Maximizing Teacher-Parent Communication

One of learning success factors is the existence of teacher-parent communication. It is carried out in order to monitor the process of learning held by using study from home system (distance learning). In this case, communication is a form of collaboration between teachers and parents in fostering students to conform to the values of Islamic education, and this is very effective in shaping the students character (Wahyuni & Putra, 2020). As stated by Kohut in Ardiawan & Heriawan (2018), building up active communication networks for teachers, especially Islamic education teachers with parents, will provide positive things for monitoring the
development of children's education, including during distance learning. As children, students need the role of parents in providing attention and affection, especially in the development process, and it is the parents who actually have big responsibility in regulating, coordinating and providing stimuli for the growth and development of their children’s character and personality. There are some efforts that can be done to maximize teacher-parent communications. It can be carried out via online media such as social media, digital mutaba’ah books (Communication book: a teacher-parent daily communication book) which based on Google form applications, or offline media such as printed Mutaba’ah books.

**Online Communication**

Nowadays, there are some social media that can be used in online communication. One of them is Whatsapp. It is the most widely used social media recently. In this case, by using Whatsapp, teacher and parents can communicate through one of its feature, Whatsapp group. Through this digital media, all information related to the development of students’ character and personality will be easily and quickly shared (Wahyuni & Putra, 2020). In addition, teachers can also make a kind of digital mutaba’ah book. It is a kind of communication book used by a teacher and parents for daily communication, which based on Google form applications (the google form application as one of the instruments).

![Figure 1. Portrait of Digital Mutaba’ah Book with Google Form](image)

Figure 1 illustrates an example of *Mutaba’ah* Digital Book display developed using the Google Form application related to the daily *al-Qur’an* recitation reports...
recited by the students. Although there is possibility for the students to manipulate this form, good communication between the teachers and parents will bring valid and objective learning result.

Therefore, the main key to success of the psychomotor competence in this distance learning such as positive habits above actually depends on the communication between the teacher and parents. It is because they have main role to guard and reinforce a number of positive habits for their children at home, especially during the distance learning process. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by El-Mubarok (2006) that one of the approaches that can be taken by teachers as educators in instilling character values is the action learning approach. The learning approach emphasizes the effort to provide opportunities for students to do moral actions, both individually and collectively in a group. This is also in line with Kamal (2017a) who also offered habituation programs to be carried out at school or in a family environment. It is confirmed in Atmaja (2011) declaring that this sector is called as priority praxis stage, which is a form of value (goodness) that has been prioritized by teachers to students.

Accordingly, the convincing arguments shows that intensive communication between teacher and parents has positive impact to the students. It is able to strengthen students’ positive habituation and in the end it can produce positive culture in the students’ surroundings. This is consistent with what has been said by Thomas Lickona that moral culture will affect moral function of students. Furthermore, Lickona in Kamal (2012) adds that: “We want students to become the kind of people who will do whats right even when they are surrounded by a rotten moral culture, but forming that sort of character is much easier in a moral environment where being honest, decent, and caring is perceived to be the norm. The essence of Lickona's statement is that character building of students will be easier to do if it is carried out in a supportive cultural environment in the sense of an environment that upholds good morals and personality. Therefore, building a positive culture beginning with escorting a number of students’ habituations in their respective environments is highly expected from the establishment of intensive communication between teachers and parents in instilling the character education values to the students.
Teachers as educators should make various efforts to create character education culture. The process of students’ character building is certainly difficult to realize instantly. It means that it needs habituation, patience, as well as strong commitment from teachers, parents and the students’ surroundings to build character-based culture (Ali, 2018). Parental support is needed to realize the character development of students as well as to help character formation greatly determining the success of students (Suasthi & Suadnyana, 2020).

**Offline Communication**

One of the media that can be used as offline communication between teachers and parent is a printed *mutaba’ah* book. It is a kind of book used for evaluating student activities during studying at home. This book is almost the same as the *Ramadhan* activity book. By having this book, teachers and parents can control students’ daily activity, either daily worship or other positive activities, such as reciting the *Qur’an, Iqra* or *Qira’ati*, doing five daily prayers and reading some books during studying from home (Kamal, 2014). Therefore, students’ character and personality development can be well monitored. It is of course because building good character needs process and cannot be instantly embedded (Ilmiwan et al., 2013).

**Table 1. Example of a Mutaba’ah Book Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day/ Date</th>
<th>Fajr</th>
<th>Dhuhur</th>
<th>Asr</th>
<th>Maghrib</th>
<th>Isha</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 06-01-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The column for prayer time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 07-01-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>is filled in after performing the prayer by signing the prayer priest or parent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 08-01-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 09-01-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 10-01-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows one of the tables associated with the printed *Mutaba’ah* Book report of five times prayers required by learners during the process of distance learning. Although there is possibility for the students to make up the reports, good
communication between the teachers and parents will bring valid and objective learning result. In this case, the students will gradually learn to be honest in filling out this Mutaba’ah Book report.

**Developing Character Education Value-Based Learning Module**

Islamic education learning should not be stuck at the cognitive level only. The students should not be asked to read and memorize the material presenter only, but also applying the material they have studied to their daily routine. Learning activities carried out in a non-face-to-face (in distance) manner require teaching materials as a means of supporting the distance learning process. However, the learning module used so far only contain substances focusing on cognitive competence, without any affective as well as psychomotor aspects in it in order to prepare students as a whole. Learning module is a part of learning resources containing a set of materials arranged sequentially to help teachers in the learning process (Ilmiwan et al., 2013). Therefore, developing character education value-based learning module is very urgent to do and of course all of its content should be adjusted to the basic competences and indicators of the nationally mandated curriculum, i.e. the 2013 Curriculum.

The 2013 Curriculum is a way to balance students’ competence including affective, cognitive, and psychomotor comprehensively which is then developed into spiritual behavior stated in Core Competence 1, Basic Competence and its indicator. Meanwhile, social behavior competence is stated in Core Competence 2 with its basic competence and its indicator. In addition, cognitive competence is shown in Core Competence 3 with its basic competence and its indicator. The last one is skill competence shown in Core Competence 4 with its basic competence and its indicator.

Some alternatives which can be done especially by Islamic education teachers in developing learning module are complementing the main material presented especially during distance learning with several supporting rubrics leading to affective values building, such as *tafakkur* rubric which contains questions related to important meaning of the material, *uswah hasanah* rubric which contains exemplary stories related to the main material presented, *mahfuzat* rubric or quotes related to material that can be used as inspiration and motivation for students, and so on. In addition, the development of
the learning modules can be done by using sound power points and displaying the teacher's face which is then developed into a video and uploaded on YouTube.

The following figure is the example of a reading rubric in Islamic education learning module that contain affective values in the form of *uswah hasanah* rubrics or stories that have exemplary values related to the theme of the material presented.

![Example of Uswah Hasanah Rubric](image)

Figure 2. Example of *Uswah Hasanah* Rubric (Kamal, 2017b)

Figure 2 reveals an additional rubric of the main material presented with the aim of providing inspiration and motivation which leads to the achievement of students’ affective competences related to the main material they have learned. By having this, the students are supposed to enjoy the material they have learned cognitively. Besides that they are also able to reflect on the inspirational story they read, so that the attainment of affective competence from the material they are studying can be achieved easily.

**Developing Various Learning Methods**

Method is a way used to implement plans prepared in real activities so that the objectives can be optimally achieved. It is used to realize the predetermined strategy. Thus, in a series of learning systems it plays crucial role. The success of implementing learning strategies really depends on the way the teacher uses the learning method because a learning strategy can only be implemented through the application of learning methods (Khausar, 2014).

Distance learning can be carried out both online and offline. In general, online learning has the flexibility of time and place in its implementation. Besides that, online
learning is also able to encourage the emergence of students’ learning independence and motivation (Sadikin & Hamidah, 2020). However, online learning is limited to certain circles and certain places as well. It is because when the students are in a remote area that is far from network access or when the students come from a family with limitations, offline distance learning will be more relevant, especially in this pandemic condition. One of the research results reveals that offline learning is more effective in achieving student learning outcomes (Ekantini, 2020). As for what is meant by distance learning in Ekantini’s study is non-face-to-face learning, but through regular assignment submission taken by the parents at school and returned at the specified time. There are some alternative learning methods for distance learning system, both online and offline, in order to make students not to be stuck in the achievement of cognitive competences only.

**Problem-Solving**

Problem-solving method comes from a problem-based learning model which is considered very appropriate to be used in the learning process. Besides that, it also can be used in instilling character education values indirectly into students because this learning model emphasizes real-life problems that are meaningful to students, so that they can solve problems with in their surroundings (Virgiana & Wasitohadi, 2016). In this study, this method is developed into a method of solving social problems (social based learning), for example the task of analyzing the economic inequality of the Community from the perspective of zakat management. This activity can be carried out through offline or Online learning. According to Arends in Virgiana & Wasitohadi (2016), there are five stages in the problem-based learning model including: (1) Providing problem to the students, (2) Organizing students to conduct a research, (3) Helping students to investigate something independently or in groups, (4) Developing and presenting their work, (5) Analyzing and evaluating the process of overcoming the problems.

**Positive Habituation**

The positive habituation method is one of alternative methods that can be used to instill character education values. In this case, this method is appropriate to be
applied for religious character because they are trained and accustomed to do it every day. Habits that are carried out and repeated every day will always be embedded and remembered by students. Therefore, the students will do the same activities by themselves without having to be ordered to do so (Angdreani et al., 2020). This method can be carried out in line with the use of either printed mutaba’ah books for distance learning in offline systems or digital mutaba’ah books for distance learning in online system.

**Reflection**

Reflection method is the combination of various elements including internal aspects, such as will or desire, as well as emotions, and also external aspects such as context and learning experiences. To achieve the results of deep reflection, there should be synergic cooperation between those two aspects. It means that each aspect is something that must exist, and those two aspects are interconnected. Thus, the reflection method can run optimally (Pranyoto, 2016). In response to this case, this method can be applied by analyzing religious film as well as motivational videos based on the material taught which is in accordance with the basic competence and indicators.

**Developing Comprehensive Learning Evaluation**

Referring to the classification of educational goals focusing on three domains, namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, then the ideal educational evaluation should cover those three domains comprehensively. However, the reality shows that learning evaluation has not been carried out comprehensively. It is still dominated by the evaluations of cognitive domain. In the end, this partial development results in partial goals achievement (Alifah, 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to develop comprehensive learning evaluation, especially in the aspect of affective. In this case, affective aspects assessment can be carried out by using affective instruments. The instruments that can be used to measure the affective domain including a scale of attitudes, observations, self-reports, as well as interviews (Kusumawati, 2015).
CONCLUSION

The results of this study contribute to encourage Islamic education teachers in incorporating the character education values in the learning process, especially during the time of COVID-19 pandemic. The study findings demonstrate that there are at least four strategies that can be carried out in instilling character education values in Islamic education learning in this distance learning era. First, maximizing teacher-parent communication that can be carried out via online media such as social media, digital mutaba’ah books (Communication book: a teacher-parent daily communication book) which based on Google form applications, or offline media such as printed Mutaba’ah books. Second, developing character education value-based learning module such as adding several materials related to character education which can be in the form of motivational videos, inspirational stories, and so on. Third, developing various learning methods such as problem solving methods, positive habituation methods and reflection methods focusing on the affective and psychomotor domains. Forth, developing a comprehensive learning evaluation which is not only stuck in the evaluation of the cognitive only, but also in the evaluation of the affective and psychomotor domains.

REFERENCES


