

## Internalization Strategy of Religious and Moral Values for Early Childhood

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### Abstract

This study seeks to identify ways for the internalization of religious ideals and morals in early life. This study employs a literature review methodology, which entails the critical analysis of data obtained from various literary materials, including novels, journals, and scientific publications. The study's findings demonstrate that Islamic teachings regard early childhood education as a crucial element in cultivating robust religious ethics and ideals. In this context, eleven successful tactics have been found, including fostering a sense of love for Allah, establishing a sense of security, and promoting environmental observation. These tactics, grounded in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and endorsed by Muslim authorities, can be executed by educators and parents. The surrounding environment, including family and classmates, significantly influences the development of children's character. A holistic approach encompasses a concealed curriculum that reinforces religious beliefs and ethics in early life via exemplification, appreciation for diversity, environmental stewardship within schools, and disciplinary practices that align with the moral objectives of education.

### Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan strategi internalisasi nilai-nilai agama dan akhlak anak usia dini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi telaah pustaka, yakni pendekatan penelitian yang melibatkan analisis data dari berbagai sumber literatur, seperti buku, jurnal, artikel ilmiah, untuk kemudian dianalisis secara kritis. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa ajaran Islam menempatkan pendidikan anak usia dini sebagai aspek penting dalam membangun etika dan prinsip-prinsip keagamaan yang kokoh. Dalam konteks ini, sebelas strategi efektif telah diidentifikasi, termasuk pembentukan rasa cinta kepada Allah, menciptakan rasa aman, dan mendorong pengamatan lingkungan. Strategi ini dapat diterapkan oleh guru dan orang tua dan didasarkan pada ajaran Nabi Muhammad serta dukungan dari para tokoh Muslim. Lingkungan sekitar, seperti keluarga dan teman sebaya, memiliki pengaruh signifikan dalam pembentukan karakter anak. Pendekatan komprehensif termasuk kurikulum tersembunyi yang membantu memperkuat nilai-nilai agama dan moralitas

anak usia dini melalui contoh, penghormatan terhadap keanekaragaman, pengelolaan lingkungan sekolah, dan kebijakan disiplin yang mendukung tujuan pendidikan moral.

**Keywords:** *Akhlâq*, religious values, early childhood, childhood education

## INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in preserving morality and has a significant impact on the life of a country (Nurazizah et al., 2021). Every nation needs education as an important means of forming a quality generation. In this context, early childhood education has an important role in providing guidance and introducing religious and moral values to children from an early age (Wasiah et al., 2018). Education should have the capacity to form a generation that has strong ethics and character, considering that humans can basically be formed through education. Aristotle once said that in society, it is important to educate individuals to have good habits, because without it, society will tend to be trapped in bad behavior (Hidayat, 2015). Therefore, the importance of integrating religious and moral values in early childhood education is so that it can contribute to forming ethical and valuable characters for the nation. The majority of the Indonesian population is Muslim, which has presented positive values that are valuable in the context of social life.

However, currently, we are facing a worrying challenge, where signs of the decline of the Indonesian nation have begun to appear. Thomas Lickona has identified ten behaviors that can lead a country towards decline, namely: (1) increasing incidents of violence among adolescents; (2) increasing dishonest acts in society; (3) decreasing respect for parents, teachers, and leaders; (4) the influence of peer groups in acts of violence; (5) increasing levels of suspicion and hostility; (6) the use of degrading language; (7) decreasing work enthusiasm; (8) decreasing sense of individual and civic responsibility; (9) increasing self-destructive behavior; and (10) increasingly blurred perceptions of moral norms (Lickona, 1992, 2012; Rusnak et al., 1992; Ryan & Lickona, 1992).

Signs of a country's decline are seen from the increasing incidents of violence in schools, especially in urban areas. Cases that are very worrying include dishonesty that has serious consequences, such as increasing incidents of corruption in various government sectors (Aisah et al., 2021). In addition, the culture of corruption has also spread pervasively. High self-destructive behavior is also evident in the prevalence of drug abuse among teenagers. It is important for us to immediately take preventive measures and find solutions to ensure that the Indonesian nation can maintain its moral integrity and dignity.

In facing a number of problems currently being faced by our nation, early childhood education is a crucial element in anticipating these problems and providing a positive impact in instilling religious and moral values in the young generation of Indonesia. The introduction of these religious and moral values can be achieved through the formation of positive characters that will shape a child's personality. This will help them grow into a generation that is religious, moral, ethical, and has high dignity. The relationship between religious aspects, morality, behavior, and dignity is an integral part of the concept of spiritual intelligence. Therefore, the development of spiritual intelligence must be the main focus in efforts to introduce religious and moral values (Malviya et al., 2022; Nurjamal & Munandar, 2019; Sulaiman et al., 2018). Education of religious and moral values in early childhood is an urgent necessity in forming a society that reflects the principles of religion, morality, ethics, and dignity that are in line with the teachings of Islam. In addition, the development of moral dimensions and religious values also has a very important role in improving the conditions and development of a nation.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a literature review methodology. The literature review method is a research approach that involves analyzing data from various literature sources, such as books, journals, scientific articles, or notes, to obtain theoretical foundations and relevant information on the research topic of the strategy for internalizing religious values and morals in early childhood. The literature review process is often referred to as library research. In the literature review methodology, we carry out a series of actions, including reading, taking notes, analyzing research materials, identifying previous research findings, and formulating theoretical and methodological contributions to the subject of the strategy for internalizing religious values and morals in early childhood.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The close relationship between morals and ethics cannot be separated. Morals refer to a person's inner state that influences the way they behave, act, and act. In the context of Islam, the moral aspect is known as *al-akhlaq al-karimah*, which reflects high standards of what is considered good and bad, what is appropriate and inappropriate, which are reflected in real human actions (Karim, 2013). The goal is for human behavior and actions to be in line with religious values and prevailing social norms. Religious and moral values play a central role in the life of a society (Ainusyamsi, 2021; Ismail & Sumadi, 2018). In the context of education, moral development plays a major role in efforts to improve the quality of life of the nation. In addition, the development of science also has great significance. Indonesian society believes that these two aspects are closely

related. When the moral or ethical aspect is set aside, there is the potential for excessive respect for knowledge that may encourage individuals to become more individualistic and egocentric, which can ultimately lead to conflict between them (Abdullah & Azis, 2019; Munawwaroh, 2019). Conversely, if education only emphasizes moral development, this may hinder creativity and potentially lead to a stagnant life without development. Therefore, it is important to uphold Islamic morals, which encourage humans to act as responsible caliphs in advancing life in the world (Karim, 2013). Cooperation between science and morals is a must in creating a generation that is faithful, moral, civilized, and dignified. Science that continues to develop should be placed on a strong moral foundation, so that it can provide benefits and goodness for society and the country. Achieving the essential goal of education is to form individuals who practice the moral and ethical values contained in the teachings of Islam. Education plays an important role in efforts to explore and strengthen religious values, with the hope that future generations can practice religion well, behave politely, have good morals, and uphold dignity (Munawwaroh, 2019; Thooyibah & Setiawan, 2018). Realizing this target is a shared responsibility of all members of society.

Ibn Sina stated that the goal of education in forming individuals who have noble personalities covers various aspects of human life. These aspects include personal, social, and spiritual dimensions (Abu Muhammad, 2015). The personal dimension is the starting point for change, because change cannot occur without personal awareness to change. Therefore, the formation of moral individuals is an important strategy in achieving the agreed educational goals. With the emergence of personal awareness, moral individuals will emerge, as well as creating an environment that supports moral values, especially for the development of children.

In the early stages of child development, their moral development is greatly influenced by the support they receive in several key aspects, such as character formation, personality development, and social aspects (Hidayat, 2015). The process of character formation in children is often influenced by the surrounding environment, including family, society, and school environment. Among all these factors, the family plays a major role in forming a child's character. In addition to family, interactions with neighbors and peers also play an important role in the development of children's morals.

The process of character formation in children, which is an integral part of their moral development, is also influenced by the educational environment in schools. Schools are educational institutions that introduce and provide guidance related to religious and moral values to children. In addition, the role of teachers is also very important as examples or role models for children through various teaching methods applied. This helps

children to understand and internalize how they should behave according to applicable religious and moral norms.

The stages of individual moral development, as explained by John Dewey, involve three main phases (Hidayat, 2015). The first phase is the premoral or preconventional phase, where human behavior is more influenced by biological drives and social pressures. Then, the conventional stage, which is the second phase, shows that moral development is more dependent on social norms and group views. Finally, the third phase, namely the autonomous phase, indicates that individuals have achieved the ability to independently determine their own moral decisions without being too influenced by external factors.

A child's moral development is greatly influenced by factors in their social environment. When reaching certain stages in their growth process, a child is generally very dependent on the individuals around them. Therefore, it is very important to provide the right and positive parenting patterns, because this will significantly affect the way a child absorbs and understands positive values. Therefore, involving all elements of society as actors who play an active role in creating a social environment that supports the development of Indonesian children is a must. Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, as quoted by Karim, said that Islamic teachings have a very strong focus on moral improvement, because moral values in Islam are essentially an extension and enhancement of moral values that already exist in society. In one of the hadiths of the Prophet SAW, he once stated, "I was sent to improve noble morals" (Karim, 2013). Therefore, our shared task as Indonesian society is to improve morals together.

Moral education or moral improvement covers the entire society, not just schools. To ensure that everyone, especially children, can find good examples, society must create a supportive environment. The world around children is one of the main learning media that helps them form religious, social, and moral principles. Therefore, it is very important for society to help perfect morals. The goal of education according to Ibn Taimiyah is to provide a generation of Muslims who are able to carry out the message of Islam as a universal paradigm and a blessing for the entire universe. This generation is expected to have strong human resources, both physically and intellectually, so that they can interpret Islamic teachings and spread them to everyone (Muhammad, 2015).

One of the main goals in education is to achieve excellence in physical and intellectual aspects. Therefore, education that pays special attention to moral values and religious teachings from an early age has an important role in preparing individuals to carry out Islamic teachings and act as supporters of goodness for the whole world.

The knowledge contained in Islamic teachings should be applied through an early age education process. This is because children from a young age already have scientific and spiritual instincts that need to be built

through the education process. Small children, in this context, can be likened to a piece of pure white paper that can be filled with knowledge according to their environment (Muhammad, 2015). Values and role models can be introduced through various types of interesting games and learning activities for early childhood. Children at this stage of development generally show interest in games that are educational and entertaining. In the context of these game activities, religious and moral values can be creatively included, so that children can learn and understand the concepts of these values in the most comfortable and enjoyable environment for them.

### *Religious Values and Character*

According to Hamka, character is defined as a person's mental and moral quality or strength, which includes morals and manners. This character is an inseparable part of an individual's personality, making each person unique and different from others (Hamka, 2011). The importance of character in life, especially in children, is very significant. Therefore, it is highly recommended to develop character from an early age so that it becomes a positive habit that is embedded in the child until he reaches adulthood. Early character education is the key to forming individuals who have good morals and manners, which will guide them in living their lives with integrity and high morality.

The age from zero to five years is known as the golden age for children's brain development. During this period, the child's brain experiences rapid growth and is very responsive to external stimuli. Therefore, this period is often referred to as the "golden age" of children (Fauzi, 2011). The golden age is the period in which children begin to build an understanding of character, attitudes, intellectual aspects, emotions, and human morality. The quality of parenting during this period is very influential, because it will form learning pathways in the child's brain. The better the quality of parenting provided, the more and stronger the learning pathways formed in the child's brain (Fauzi, 2011). The quality of parenting is one of the important aspects in early childhood education. Both in the context of school and family environment, the parenting patterns applied will have a major impact on the child's behavior. Children learn through observing and imitating the behavior of those around them in the parenting process.

Character education plays a central role in forming very important core ethical values. These ethics include concern for others, integrity, fairness, responsibility, and respect for oneself and others. In addition, aspects of performance such as perseverance, work ethic, and perseverance also support the formation of a strong character (Hidayat, 2015). If children are involved in activities they enjoy, they can instill these basic moral principles in themselves. Joint cleaning activities, such as cleaning the classroom, can teach children about the importance of maintaining the school environment. In addition, planting activities with children can also

be used to teach children about the importance of loving the environment and caring for it by planting and caring for trees. In this way, children will develop a sense of caring for what God has created for them and their environment.

Effective character education involves understanding, caring, and acting rooted in core ethical values. Therefore, a holistic approach to character education aims to develop all cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects related to an individual's moral life (Hidayat, 2015). By seeing how parents, teachers, and others behave in their environment, a child can understand these basic principles, early childhood children can learn and understand religious values. By involving all these aspects, character education can create better individuals who are more committed to ethics, so that they can have a positive impact on society and the surrounding environment.

A comprehensive approach to character education maximizes all aspects of the school environment as a means of forming character. This character development involves components often referred to as the "hidden curriculum." In this hidden curriculum, there are various factors that have an impact on the formation of student character, such as school ceremonies and procedures, examples given by teachers, interactions between students and teachers, involvement of other school staff, interactions between fellow students, teaching methods, diversity among students, learning assessments, school environment management, and disciplinary policies (Hidayat, 2015). Schools can help shape students' character and ensure that moral development takes place comprehensively and effectively by using this hidden curriculum as examples or activities that increase children's understanding and experience of positive attitudes that are beneficial to their moral development.

Morals are an internal aspect that forms a person's character. Therefore, it is important to educate children from an early age so that they practice traits such as honesty, trustworthiness, consistency, and staying away from words that criticize, curse, and are impolite. When someone is attacked with insults or abuse, it is important for children not to be provoked to retaliate in the same way. Instead, they should learn to stay calm, control their emotions, and restrain themselves from expressing anger (Najah, 2014). During the growth of children, it is very important to instill religious values such as honesty, trustworthiness, steadfastness, and avoiding insults. This will help them become moral people and be able to handle situations wisely.

Character building is indeed a process that requires a long and continuous time. The experience of the Prophet Muhammad in shaping the Arab community into a faithful and pious people is a very good example. This process began with strengthening the community's faith for about thirteen years, when the Prophet lived in Mecca. Furthermore, for approximately the next ten years, the Prophet continued to teach sharia

(Islamic law) to provide a foundation for them in worship and daily life. The faithful and pious community of Medina was successfully built on the basis of faith and knowledge of sharia, supported by the attitude and behavior of the Prophet. According to (Novan Ardy, 2012), this process continued after the Prophet died. This experience should be an example for us as Indonesians to continue to be enthusiastic about developing religious and moral values in our society. With hard work and sincerity, we can achieve the goal of building a faithful and moral society.

### *The Meaning of Spiritual Intelligence in Education*

Building religious and moral values is the main goal of creating a spiritually intelligent generation. Spiritual intelligence has many broad aspects. It not only includes one's relationship with God through daily worship, but also their relationship with others and the general public. Spiritual intelligence includes an individual's ability to live life with the principles of religion, morality, manners, and dignity. This includes understanding and practicing values such as honesty, kindness, compassion, empathy, tolerance, and social responsibility. Through the development of these values, the generation will become more aware of the importance of being religious, behaving well, being civilized, and upholding the dignity of oneself and others.

This spiritual intelligence helps individuals live their lives with integrity and make positive contributions to society. True, spiritual intelligence is closely related to the heart. The heart is the center of one's emotions, deep values, and integrity. This is the origin of courage, passion, integrity, commitment, vitality, and deep feelings that guide individual actions, learning, cooperation, leadership, and service (Kurniasih, 2010). Conscience is an inner guide that helps individuals determine what is right and wrong. Thus, cultivating a child's conscience is an important step in developing spiritual intelligence. This can be done by stimulating the sensitivity of the child's heart through various activities. For example, sensitivity to nature can be honed by inviting children to care for plants and animals. This gives children an understanding of responsibility and care for other creatures.

On the other hand, involving children in social activities such as visiting sick friends or visiting orphanages can also help develop their emotional sensitivity. Such activities will strengthen emotional relationships and help children understand the meaning of caring and empathy for others, which are important aspects in developing spiritual intelligence. Komarudin Hidayat explained that children's spirituality is reflected in their spontaneous, imaginative, and creative expressions, which take place honestly and happily (Kurniasih, 2010). Therefore, spiritual intelligence is not only limited to aspects of worship rituals, but also includes the characteristics of spontaneity and creativity that continue to develop during a child's learning process. For example, when a child is taken to the school prayer room, he is taught to arrange his sandals or shoes



before entering the prayer room. This action will become a habit that is formed in him, so that when he visits another place of worship, he will naturally tidy up his sandals or shoes. In addition, this practice also encourages values such as respect for others and developing a caring attitude and a sense of order. According to research by Danah Zohar and Marshall, cited by Novan, there are several indications that describe the development of healthy spiritual intelligence. These indicators include: 1) The ability to demonstrate flexibility, spontaneous adaptation, and initiative. 2) The ability to face suffering and use it as a means to overcome difficulties. 3) Readiness to avoid causing unnecessary harm. 4) Tendency to see holistic relationships between various aspects of life. 5) Strong urge to ask "why" or "how" in an effort to find fundamental answers (Novan Ardy, 2012). Therefore, it is important to stimulate the development of these spiritual intelligence indicators through a learning approach that attracts the interest of early childhood.

### *Internalization Strategy of Morals and Religious Values*

#### 1) Instilling a sense of love for God

One way to guide children towards a correct understanding of faith is through education that inspires love for God. This education should start early, when children are introduced to the various creatures of God, such as humans, animals, and plants, that are around them. In this process, it is important to build a bond between children and the Creator, who is the owner of greatness, the giver of blessings, and the Most Generous. With this approach, children will have a greater opportunity to develop love for God and appreciate His greatness (Hamdan, 2008). It is important to note that the introduction of a sense of love for God and all His creatures can be done in early childhood through scientific learning. In the scientific learning method, they can get to know God's creatures more deeply while being invited to love science through the observations they make.

Developing love for God always goes hand in hand with honing love for all of His creations, including loving family, parents, and neighbors. Implementing strategies to instill religious values with love for Allah and everything He created will shape a child's character that is full of love. As a result, children's words and actions will be more full of goodness, and they will grow as individuals who are able to provide benefits to others.

#### 2) Creating a sense of security

The importance of feeling safe and calm is something fundamental that children always want. When a child feels unwell or in trouble, they expect their mother to be present and willing to look after them all night, providing the support and warmth they need (Sheikh Muhammad Said, 2006). This sense of security is not only influenced by the family environment, but also by the school environment, including educators and peers, as well as the residential environment that plays a role in shaping a child's sense of security. Strategies to enrich the formation of morals and

religious values in child care have an urgency that cannot be ignored, especially because a sense of security plays a crucial role in a child's development. This well-being will have a significant impact on the child's ability to internalize and understand the religious and moral values applied by parents in the family environment or by teachers at school. When a child feels safe and comfortable, both at home and at school, they will be more receptive to learning and positive examples given by their parents or teachers more easily.

A sense of security has a great influence on a child's learning process, allowing them to experience optimal development according to their developmental stages. For example, it is important to pay attention to a child's sleep schedule. Children need enough sleep, quiet sleep, and often early, including naps (usually from 13:00 to 16:00). Forbidding children to sleep or cutting their sleep time is not recommended. Disturbing a child's sleep for any reason, such as waking them up to go to the toilet, giving a reprimand, or even just because someone comes, can have a negative impact on a child's heart health. Therefore, it is important for children to get enough sleep, at least seven hours or more a day and night (Sheikh Muhammad Said, 2006).

3) Kissing and caressing children Kissing a child is an act that can fulfill the need for an expression of affection. The message from the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW emphasizes how important this act is. He taught parents to routinely kiss their children, because every kiss given to a child will bring rewards in heaven. In fact, each kiss has a degree equivalent to five hundred years. In addition, when someone kisses their child, Allah will record one good deed for that person. If we make our children happy, Allah will also reward us with our happiness on the Day of Judgment. And if we teach them the Quran, on the Day of Judgment we will be given clothes of light that will make the faces of the inhabitants of Paradise shine and glow (Mansur, 2011).

The extraordinary goodness associated with giving a kiss to a child is very important. In addition to kissing, caressing is also an expression of affection that is very necessary for a child's development. These kisses and caresses fulfill the child's basic needs and help create feelings of security and comfort. With these feelings, children have the possibility to grow into affectionate individuals. The impact can also affect their ability to share love and affection with their friends or siblings in the future.

#### 4) Instilling love for the homeland

Introducing a sense of love for the homeland from an early age is one of the important strategies in building moral and religious values in early childhood. Participation in official ceremonies is a common way to acknowledge love for the homeland. We see the red and white flag that must be respected during the ceremony, and we sing together the songs "Garuda Pancasila" and "Indonesia Raya". This ceremony may be interesting for children. It is important to note that the idea of patriotism has become an integral part of Indonesian culture. The slogan "Cinta Tanah

Air" which emerged from KH Hasyim Asy'Ari, the founder of NU, is a clear evidence of these values. This slogan does not only belong to Indonesian clerics, but has also played an important role in uniting the Indonesian nation during the war of independence. Therefore, educating children about the importance of patriotism and defending the nation is an important task, and this can be done not only through flag ceremonies in schools, but also by introducing them to the various traditional houses and traditional clothes of various tribes in Indonesia. Although we have diverse tribes and religions in Indonesia, we remain united as the Indonesian nation. 5) Research and observe Children naturally have the urge to explore the world around them, which in turn helps them gain knowledge. They develop their understanding through personal experience. Sometimes, a lack of experience in certain things can trigger children to try everything, even risky things. For example, they may want to hear the sound of an object like glass when it falls to the floor, and eventually they try it. Fulfilling children's curiosity in a safe and supportive way is important for their intellectual development and for nurturing their love for the world around them (Syaiikh Muhammad Said, 2006).

When children are doing research and observation activities, it is necessary to give them the opportunity to do things themselves, to experience, and feel for themselves. Through this direct experience, children learn and gain insight from their mistakes, so that they can understand the consequences and avoid repeating those mistakes in the future.

One effective strategy in educating religious and moral values in children is through research and observation activities. For example, involving children in observing plants or animals can be a useful way. Through this observation activity, children can learn about the wonders of God's creation. Introducing the concept of God through an observation process like this can be a joyful experience for children. Moreover, this activity can be done outside the classroom, which gives children the opportunity to feel comfortable and happy in an open natural environment.

Looking at pictures of places of worship from various religions can also be a way to use visual observation to build religious and moral values. This can be a way to consider the idea that we should respect people who have different religious beliefs. Activities like this also instill an understanding of diversity and the importance of accepting differences between people.

#### 6) Touching and encouraging children's thinking skills

Through stories or fairy tales, one important way to instill moral and religious values in early childhood is to stimulate and utilize children's thinking skills. Children are often very interested in stories told by teachers, parents, or figures close to them. When they choose a story to tell, make sure it is related to prophecy or pious figures because these stories usually contain positive values that can help children develop. Stories have the

ability to move children's awareness and influence the way they think, and can bring positive values into their lives (Hamdan, 2008). In addition, stories or fairy tales can also stimulate children's imagination, helping them develop their thinking when they listen to the stories told.

#### 5) Giving appreciation

It is important for children to feel like a source of pride for their parents, family, teachers, and other individuals in their environment. Children should be treated with affection and appreciation, and one way to arouse these feelings is to involve them in simple activities that help others around them. Children can be given roles in tasks such as sweeping, dusting, throwing out trash, or helping to carry things. This is an effective strategy in developing religious and moral values (Syaikh Muhammad Said, 2006). Involving children in activities like this helps them feel that they have a meaningful role in helping others, and this will shape positive behavior and character.

Giving children an award after completing their task is an important step. However, what is no less important is giving appreciation for the process they go through. As a teacher or parent, giving appreciation to children by giving praise for their efforts and the journey they have gone through is very meaningful. It is advisable not to only praise the end result, but rather to give praise that leads to the efforts and processes they have gone through. This aims to help children learn to appreciate the journey and effort required in achieving their goals.

#### 6) Physical education

Physical education is very important for children's development. These physical activities include various types of games and sports that help children grow physically and motorically. Children's growth can be achieved by participating in games and sports. Sports have many benefits for children, such as: 1) Improving children's brain development, which in turn can have a positive impact on their intelligence; 2) Improving children's physical and motor abilities, which supports healthy physical growth; 3) Helping children learn to work together with friends and teachers; and 4) Instilling values such as honesty, because games and sports create relationships between honest people.

Through these physical activities, children learn many things that contribute to their comprehensive development. In the context of education, Ibn Sina has emphasized the importance of considering the physical aspect as an integral part of education. According to Ibn Sina's view, education should not only pay attention to mental or intellectual aspects, but also include physical care, such as exercise, diet, sleep, and maintaining cleanliness (Abu Muhammad, 2015). The importance of fulfilling basic needs such as eating, drinking, and sleeping in the context of education cannot be ignored. In addition to being a physical need, moments such as eating together, both at home and at school, can also be

used as an opportunity to introduce religious values. For example, teachers or parents can guide children to start eating with a prayer as a sign of gratitude for the sustenance given by Allah. This is an effective way to instill a sense of gratitude to Allah for all the blessings we receive.

When physical education is included in eating together, it can also be an opportunity to introduce oneself to various types of food and appreciate the various creations of Allah. In such a situation, various foods are considered as gifts from Allah that we should be grateful for. Children can also gain verbal knowledge to distinguish and name various types of food. For example, children can be asked to talk about what they eat after they eat. This helps them develop their language skills by explaining how they do things as a way to show gratitude for what they get from Allah.

With physical education, it is hoped that children can experience healthy physical growth, which in turn can affect their intelligence. Moral education aims to help children develop ethics and polite behavior in everyday life, as well as maintain their mental health. Arts education is expected to help children hone their creativity, increase emotional understanding, and develop their imagination. The purpose of skills education is to facilitate the development of children's talents and interests so that they reach their optimal potential (Abu Muhammad, 2015).

#### 7) Good role models

Setting a good example is a way to instill religious and moral principles in children. Children need role models during their observation and development. These people can be found in their families, schools, and the communities around them. A teacher must have strong scientific competence, be well-behaved, and have a personal charm that can inspire respect and be a role model for his students, according to Ibnu Sina (Kurniasih, 2010). A teacher functions as a role model for children, so it is expected that in addition to concentrating on education, he also pays attention to the development of the student's personality. A good personality is one that does not conflict with Islamic principles and teachings.

A teacher might enhance his character by consistently praying for the success of his students. An educator prays for the success of his students in several facets of life. Establishing a positive emotional rapport between the teacher and the student is crucial. A robust rapport between instructor and student is anticipated to mitigate inappropriate conduct or excessive rage from the educator. Furthermore, educators are anticipated to enhance their pupils' learning experiences through prayer.

#### 8) Repetition in the learning process

In the period of 0-3 years, there are around 1000 trillion connections (connections between cells) in the child's brain. This is a very

crucial period where children have the capacity to learn through a repetitive process. From the age of 3-11 years, there is a restructuring or re-formation of these connections. There are various ways to optimize this potential, including: (a) Listening to the recitation of the Qur'an. (b) Learning a foreign language. (c) Introducing the names of objects through games and pictures. (d) Teaching the concept of color by using objects that are familiar to the child, bright colors, and pictures. (e) Reading stories or fairy tales. (f) Introducing various fruit aromas through books and other supporting materials (Kurniasih, 2010). In this way, children can take advantage of their highly responsive brain development period to learn and explore the world around them.

#### 9) Fulfilling the need to play

One of the basic needs for a child is to play. Playing is not only a time for entertainment, but can also be a means for learning and instilling religious and moral values. When playing, children experience stimulation that affects their brain development and physical growth. Therefore, games can be designed to be educational, so that children can learn while having fun. Playing is a basic physical and biological need for children. This means that playing is an important part of fulfilling children's basic needs that must be met. By fulfilling this need to play, children will feel happy, comfortable, and happy. In addition, playing also helps maintain children's physical health, which has an impact on further development (M. Fadlillah, 2014).

The Prophet Muhammad also recognized the importance of playing and entertainment for children, because games help children develop their minds, expand their knowledge, and stimulate their senses and feelings. Providing useful toys for children is a way to overcome boredom, encourage children to be devoted to their parents, please them, and fulfill their need to play, which ultimately helps them grow into balanced children (Jamal, 2013).

## CONCLUSION

Islamic teachings are seen as complete directives that encompass principles pertaining to early childhood education. Islam prioritizes early childhood education to implement suitable ways for fostering moral and religious growth. In this context, it is crucial to employ suitable tactics for imparting moral and religious beliefs, particularly given that children at a young age exhibit diverse characteristics and habits. Early childhood education significantly influences the moral framework that profoundly affects a nation's existence. In early childhood education, initiatives are undertaken to cultivate and enhance religious and moral values, which significantly contribute to the improvement of a nation's quality of life.

Enhancing individuals' lives necessitates the integration of scientific principles with the cultivation of religious and moral ideals. This method can be employed to convey the concept of Allah as the creator of the cosmos within the framework of scientific learning for early infancy. According to Islamic teachings, there are eleven effective techniques for cultivating religious and moral qualities in early life. These strategies encompass cultivating a love for God; establishing a sense of security in children; engaging in physical contact and affectionate stroking; fostering patriotism; encouraging exploration and observation of their surroundings; stimulating cognitive potential; offering rewards as motivation; incorporating physical education into the curriculum; presenting positive role models; employing repetition techniques in learning; and satisfying the need for play as a component of child development. This strategy can be utilized by parents and educators in educational institutions. This technique is derived from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and is reinforced by the Muslim perspective.

The cultivation of a child's character through religious and moral beliefs is significantly influenced by their surroundings, encompassing family, society, and educational institutions. The environment, particularly familial factors, significantly shapes a child's character. Alongside family, the surrounding environment, including friends and neighbors, significantly impacts the development of children's morality. It is crucial to have a holistic approach in establishing religious and moral ideas from early childhood. In such circumstances, an implicit curriculum is essential for imparting religious and ethical ideas to youngsters. The hidden curriculum encompasses behaviors that exemplify or engage youngsters in activities that enhance their comprehension and experience of favorable attitudes conducive to moral growth. Instances of hidden curriculum encompass the role models presented by educators, the acknowledgment of student diversity, the management of the school environment, and the execution of disciplinary measures that further moral education objectives.

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### **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

There is no conflict of interest, according to the writers. We confirm that no other publication is currently reviewing the work and that it is completely original.

### **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

All of the publications, research papers, and proceedings from scientific forums that were used as sources for this study did not infringe on anyone's copyright.

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This article's claims and opinions are solely those of the author and do not represent the views or policies of any organization with whom the author is associated in any way.

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