

Contribution of Character Education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teacher Education Curriculum

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ABSTRACT. This research explores the contribution of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum and its impact on the quality of education in these institutions. Character education is an important component in shaping students' morals and attitudes in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, which is an educational institution that integrates aspects of general science and religion. This article uses the literature review method to examine various studies and related sources that discuss the implementation of character education in the teacher education curriculum. The results show that the integration of character education in the teacher education curriculum not only enriches teachers' pedagogical competencies but also enhances their ability to shape students' positive character. Effective character education helps teachers in developing teaching methods that not only focus on academic aspects, but also on shaping students' moral and social values. However, challenges such as lack of adequate training and limited resources often hinder optimal implementation. This study recommends the need for strengthening character education training for prospective teachers, as well as providing better support from education institutions, to ensure that character education can be effectively implemented in the curriculum and have a significant positive impact on the quality of education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Keywords: *Character education, teacher education curriculum, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, character development.*



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INTRODUCTION

Character education has become an integral part of the education system in Indonesia, especially in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, which is a basic education institution that integrates general knowledge with religious values. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah plays an important role in shaping students' character in the early stages of education, so the formation of strong character is one of the main focuses in their curriculum. Character education aims to instill moral, ethical and social values that support students' personal development in a holistic manner, which is very much in line with the educational mission of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Syarnubi et al., 2021). In the context of the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum, the integration of character education is an equally important aspect. Prospective teachers who are trained to teach in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah are expected to have not only adequate pedagogical and academic competencies, but also the ability to apply character principles in their teaching process. Therefore, it is important to evaluate how character education is incorporated in the teacher education curriculum and how it contributes to the development of their competencies (Hasanah, 2021).

The literature review shows that character education in the teacher education curriculum can influence the way teachers manage the classroom, interact with students, and design learning activities that instill moral and social values. Effective character education in the curriculum assists prospective teachers in understanding the importance of their role in student character formation and provides them with tools and strategies to integrate character values in the teaching-learning process (Lukman et al., 2021).

However, despite widespread recognition of the importance of character education, its implementation in teacher education curricula often faces challenges. These include the lack of adequate training for prospective teachers on character education, limited resources and lack of support from educational institutions. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the contribution of character education in the teacher education curriculum is crucial to identify its effectiveness and shortcomings. This study aims to explore the contribution of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum, focusing on how character education can improve the quality of education and students' character development. By evaluating various related studies and practices, it is hoped that this research can provide valuable insights into how character education can be optimized in the teacher education curriculum and provide recommendations for improvements that can be implemented in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

METHOD

This research uses the literature review method to analyze the contribution of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum. This method was chosen because it allows researchers to collect, evaluate and synthesize various relevant studies and sources to provide a thorough understanding of the topic under study.

Data Collection:

Data were collected from various literature sources relevant to the topic of character education and teacher education curriculum. These sources included academic journal articles, textbooks, research reports, policy documents and other related sources. Literature searches were conducted using academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, ProQuest, and EBSCOhost with keywords such as “character education,” “teacher education curriculum,” “Madrasah Ibtidaiyah,” “character development,” and “character integration in education.”

Selection Criteria:

- a) The literature selected for the review should meet the following criteria:
- b) Focus on the integration of character education in the teacher education curriculum, particularly in the context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.
- c) Provide analysis or empirical data on the impact of character education on teaching quality and student character development.
- d) Include information published within the last 10 years to ensure relevance and currency.

Data Analysis:

The analysis is conducted using a descriptive-analytical approach. Each selected piece of literature will be analyzed based on its contribution to the understanding of the role of character education in the teacher education curriculum. The researcher will evaluate the key findings from each source, including the way character education is implemented, the strategies used and the

outcomes achieved. The data will be categorized under key themes, such as methods of integrating character education, challenges in implementation and impact on the quality of education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Contribution of Character Education in Teacher Education Curriculum:

The results of the literature review indicate that character education plays a very important and significant role in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum. The integration of character education into this curriculum provides extensive benefits for prospective teachers, not only in terms of developing their pedagogical competencies, but also in shaping attitudes and behaviors that support holistic learning. Educational programs that integrate character education help prospective teachers to understand and internalize moral and ethical values, such as honesty, responsibility, empathy and cooperation, which are important foundations in the learning process (Mukminin Al Anwari et al., 2022).

Through structured training and specially designed modules, prospective teachers are introduced to various methods and strategies that enable them to embed these character values in daily learning activities (Findeisen et al., 2021). For example, prospective teachers are trained to use teaching techniques that not only focus on academic achievement, but also on student character development. This includes approaches such as value-based learning, where character values are applied in the context of academic activities, as well as the application of classroom management techniques that support the formation of positive attitudes. In addition, programs that integrate character education often include a field practicum component, where prospective teachers can apply the character principles they have learned in real classroom situations (Syarnubi et al., 2021). This practicum experience gives teacher candidates the opportunity to see first-hand the impact of applying character values to the learning environment and interactions with students. Evaluation and reflection conducted after the practicum allows teacher candidates to understand their strengths and weaknesses in implementing character education and get constructive feedback for improvement (Cho & Johnson, 2020).

The analyzed literature also shows that character education that is well integrated in the teacher education curriculum helps in shaping a learning environment that is more conducive to students' character development. Prospective teachers trained in character education tend to be more effective in creating a classroom atmosphere that supports students' positive character development, such as caring, discipline and mutual respect. This in turn contributes to improving the overall quality of education, as students who have good character are more likely to engage in the learning process actively and productively (Dewi & Alam, 2020).

Thus, the integration of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum not only enhances teacher candidates' pedagogical competencies but also strengthens their ability to shape a learning environment that supports students' character development. These programs provide prospective teachers with an in-depth understanding and the necessary tools to embed character values in their teaching practices, thus creating a positive and sustainable impact on the quality of education and students' character development ("The Teacher Efficacy in Developing Character Education of Integrated Islamic Schools Students in Indonesia," 2021).

Implementation Strategy and Effectiveness:

The literature review identified various strategies implemented in the curriculum to integrate character education, designed to facilitate the effective application of moral and ethical values in the teaching of prospective Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers (Hasanah, 2021). One of the main strategies is case-based training, where prospective teachers are invited to analyze and solve case studies that illustrate moral and ethical dilemmas they may face in the classroom. These case studies are designed to challenge teacher candidates to make decisions based on character principles such as honesty, fairness and responsibility. By addressing a variety of complex situations and moral conflicts, teacher candidates not only learn how to respond ethically but also develop skills in applying character values in practical contexts. This strategy has proven to be effective in helping teacher candidates internalize character values and integrate them in their teaching methods, thus improving the quality of classroom interaction and management (Bukko et al., 2021).

The second strategy is project-based learning, which links character education theory with real practice through social and community service activities. In this approach, prospective teachers engage in projects that entail the application of character values in a broader community context. For example, teacher candidates may develop and implement community service projects that engage students in activities that support values such as empathy, cooperation and social care (Dobson & Dobson, 2021). This project-based learning allows teacher candidates to see the direct impact of applying character values on the surrounding community and gain practical experience in managing and leading worthwhile projects. This activity supports more in-depth and integrated learning, as prospective teachers can relate character values to first-hand experiences, thus strengthening their understanding of the importance of character in education (EVCIMIK & ORUC, 2023).

In addition, self-reflection is an equally important strategy in integrating character education. In this approach, prospective teachers are encouraged to reflect regularly on their teaching practices, including how character values are applied in daily interactions with students. This reflection process involves self-assessment, feedback from mentors or peers, and discussion of the challenges faced in implementing character values (Muhlisin et al., 2021). With self-reflection, prospective teachers can evaluate the effectiveness of their approach and make necessary adjustments to improve the application of character values in teaching. This process also helps teacher candidates to continuously develop self-awareness and interpersonal skills that support positive character formation in students (Erdemir & Yeşilçinar, 2021).

Overall, these strategies - case-based training, project-based learning, and self-reflection - proved effective in integrating character education into the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum. Good implementation of these strategies not only facilitates the development of teacher candidates' pedagogical competencies but also strengthens their ability to create a learning environment that supports students' overall character building. Periodic evaluation and adjustment of the strategies based on feedback and practical results will ensure their continued effectiveness and improve the quality of character education in the teacher education curriculum.

Challenges in Implementation:

While the integration of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum has significant benefits, the implementation process faces complex challenges. One of the main challenges identified in the literature review is the lack of specific training on character education. Many teacher training programs have not thoroughly or specifically incorporated aspects of character education into their curriculum (Hayya & Fauzi, 2023). Most of the available training tends to be general in nature and does not address the specific needs and context of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. As a result, prospective teachers may not gain a deep understanding of how to effectively apply character values in the learning environments they encounter, which in turn may limit their ability to apply character principles in their teaching practices.

Another challenge is limited resources, both in terms of training materials and logistical support. Character education programs often require adequate teaching materials and facilities, such as special training modules, visual aids and technology resources. However, in many cases, especially in madrasahs with limited budgets, resource allocations for character education are inadequate (Lukman et al., 2021). These limitations can include shortages in relevant teaching materials, lack of access to additional training or workshops focused on character education, as well as limited time available for prospective teachers to engage in in-depth character development activities. The impact of these limitations is that the implementation of character education programs becomes less than optimal and cannot achieve the expected results (“Challenges in the Implementation of Character Education in Elementary School: Experience from Indonesia,” 2021).

Lack of support from the madrasah management is also an important obstacle in implementing character education. Weak managerial support can affect the success of character education programs in significant ways. For example, madrasah management that does not give sufficient priority or budget to character education programs may hinder the effective implementation of these initiatives (Fakhrurazi et al., 2022). In addition, a lack of involvement and commitment from the management may lead to a lack of coordination and integration between the character education program and the broader academic curriculum. Failure to get active support from management may also result in a lack of monitoring and evaluation of the program's effectiveness, hindering continuous improvement and adaptation to learners' needs (Effendi et al., 2020).

In addition, some other challenges faced in implementing character education include resistance to change and a lack of awareness of the importance of character education among educators and stakeholders. Some teachers may feel reluctant to adopt new approaches or feel that character education does not align with their academic priorities. To overcome these challenges, it is important for relevant parties to make greater efforts to socialize the benefits of character education, provide relevant and continuous training and ensure that managerial support is adequate to make the designed programs a success.

Impact on the Quality of Education and Student Character:

Findings from the literature review indicate that the effective implementation of character education in the teacher education curriculum has a significant impact on improving the quality of education and students' character development. When prospective teachers are trained with approaches that emphasize character education, they are better able to implement teaching strategies that promote students' positive character development (Hermino & Arifin, 2020). This includes creating a learning atmosphere that supports and stimulates students to develop positive attitudes such as responsibility, honesty and empathy. This supportive learning atmosphere is crucial as it provides a safe and inclusive environment where students feel valued and motivated to learn.

As a result of effective character education, students' attitudes towards learning tend to improve significantly. Students exposed to character education-focused approaches show an increase in their engagement in learning activities, which is reflected in more active participation and higher motivation to achieve academic goals (Dewi & Alam, 2020). They were more likely to show initiative in completing tasks, cooperate in groups, and show respect for the opinions and contributions of their classmates. This increased engagement not only contributes to a more dynamic learning environment but also to better academic outcomes.

In addition to improved attitudes and engagement, students also experienced positive developments in their academic outcomes. Character education that is well integrated in the teaching and learning process not only supports academic achievement but also contributes to the formation of effective study habits. With support from teachers who implement character values, students can develop time management skills, resilience to challenges, and a strong work ethic, all of which contribute to better academic performance. Furthermore, consistent implementation of character education helps students in developing strong ethics and good moral attitudes. Students learn to understand and apply values such as fairness, honesty and empathy in their daily interactions, both in school and outside the school environment. This process supports the formation of a solid character, which is an important foundation for long-term success in their personal and professional lives.

Discussion

The contribution of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum reveals that character education plays a crucial role in shaping the pedagogical competence of prospective teachers and has a significant impact on the quality of education as well as students' character development. The integration of character education in the curriculum not only enriches teaching approaches but also strengthens teachers' ability to guide students with important moral and ethical values. The results of the literature review indicate that well-implemented character education can help prospective teachers develop skills in creating positive, supportive and inclusive learning environments. One of the main contributions of character education is in reinforcing ethical and moral values in the classroom. Training programs that include character education provide prospective teachers with tools and strategies to implement these values in teaching and learning. Strategies such as case-based learning and self-reflection have proven effective in helping teachers internalize character principles and integrate them in their daily teaching practices. This enables teachers to face educational challenges with a more holistic

approach, which not only focuses on academic aspects but also on shaping students' positive attitudes and behaviors.

However, the challenges in implementing character education cannot be ignored. This study identified several obstacles, including a lack of in-depth training on character education, limited resources and inadequate managerial support. These challenges hinder the effective integration of character education in the teacher education curriculum. For example, without sufficient support from madrasah management and adequate resource allocation, character education programs often cannot be implemented optimally. This results in limited opportunities for prospective teachers to receive quality and in-depth training on character education. Despite these challenges, the positive impact of character education in the teacher education curriculum is significant. Prospective teachers trained in character education tend to be more effective in shaping student character, which in turn contributes to improved learning outcomes and positive student behavior in the classroom. This suggests that character education is not only important for teachers' personal development but also for creating a better educational environment for students.

To improve the contribution of character education in the teacher education curriculum, several steps can be taken. First, there is a need to develop more specific and comprehensive training modules on character education that include practical applications in the context of madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Secondly, support from madrasah management should be improved, including the provision of sufficient resources and policies that support the integration of character education. Thirdly, continuous evaluation and monitoring need to be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the character education program and make necessary improvements. These steps are expected to strengthen the contribution of character education in the teacher education curriculum and improve the overall quality of education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

CONCLUSION

The contribution of character education in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teacher education curriculum has proven to be very significant in improving teaching quality and student character development. The integration of character education in the curriculum helps prospective teachers to internalize moral and ethical values, which are then applied in their teaching process. Despite challenges in its implementation, such as lack of in-depth training, limited resources and inadequate managerial support, effectively implemented character education can create a more positive and supportive learning environment. To maximize the contribution of character education, there is a need to develop more comprehensive training modules, increase support from madrasah management and continuous evaluation of existing programs. With these efforts, character education can strengthen the quality of education and support students' character building optimally.

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