

Building Children's Spiritual Foundations: A Study on the Implementation of Islamic Religious Education in Muslim Families

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the implementation of Islamic religious education within Muslim families as a foundation for the development of children's spirituality. Utilizing a qualitative approach with a field study method, the research was conducted in the village of Pringganeh Paya Pasir Marelan. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving seven randomly selected Muslim families. The findings reveal that Islamic education in the family is implemented through four main aspects: faith (*'aqidah*), ethics (*akhlak*), worship (*'ibadah*), and social values, primarily through habituation and parental role modeling. However, the implementation faces several challenges, including limited religious knowledge among parents, reduced family interaction time due to economic demands, and the uncontrolled influence of digital media. These findings highlight the need to strengthen the family's role in religious education through structural and collaborative support, ensuring that Islamic values are internalized from an early age. This research contributes to the discourse on family-based Islamic education and offers practical implications for nurturing a devout Muslim generation in the modern era.

Keywords: *Islamic Education; Muslim Family; Children's Spirituality*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implementasi pendidikan agama Islam dalam keluarga Muslim sebagai fondasi pembentukan spiritualitas anak. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi lapangan yang dilakukan di Desa Pringganeh Paya Pasir Marelan. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi terhadap tujuh keluarga Muslim yang dipilih secara acak. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan Islam dalam keluarga diterapkan melalui empat aspek utama, yaitu *aqidah*, *akhlak*, *ibadah*, dan sosial, dengan pendekatan pembiasaan dan keteladanan oleh orang tua. Namun demikian, pelaksanaannya menghadapi berbagai hambatan seperti keterbatasan pengetahuan agama orang tua, minimnya waktu interaksi keluarga, serta pengaruh media digital. Temuan ini menunjukkan perlunya penguatan peran keluarga dalam pendidikan agama melalui dukungan struktural dan kolaboratif agar nilai-nilai Islam dapat terinternalisasi secara utuh sejak dini. Penelitian ini

memberikan kontribusi terhadap wacana pendidikan Islam berbasis keluarga serta menawarkan implikasi praktis bagi pembinaan generasi Muslim di era modern.

Kata Kunci: *Pendidikan Islam; Keluarga Muslim; Spritualitas Anak*

Introduction

Education is a process of shaping character, morality, and intellect that begins within the smallest social unit, namely the family. As the first and foremost educational institution, the family bears a significant responsibility in laying the foundation of life values, including spiritual and religious principles. In the context of Islamic education, the family serves as the initial environment where a child is introduced to concepts of faith, ethics, and worship through daily interactions with parents and the home setting. Therefore, the quality of education within the family plays a critical role in determining the direction of a child's personality and spiritual development (Mahmud et al., 2024).

Islamic religious education (PAI) in Muslim families should begin at an early age, when the child is in the phase of basic character formation and moral sensitivity. The cultivation of Islamic values at this time is essential because children are in a stage of development that is very responsive to environmental influences. Basic teachings such as monotheism, daily manners, prayer, and the values of compassion and honesty should be introduced through the example of parents. The active involvement of parents in guiding and accompanying children in religious practices is a tangible form of implementing PAI in the family environment (Dozan & Fitriani, 2020).

The relationship between family roles and children's religious development is very close and cannot be ignored. Families that consistently apply Islamic values in daily life will create a conducive environment for the growth of children's spirituality and Islamic identity. Conversely, the absence of parental roles or inconsistencies in providing religious education can hinder the formation of a strong religious foundation. Thus, emotional involvement, effective communication, and exemplary role play are key in strengthening the role of the family in children's religious education (A Rahman et al., 2020).

A number of previous studies have examined the importance of religious education in the family. For example, a study by Nurhayati (2020) shows that parental involvement in religious education has a positive impact on children's discipline and spirituality. Meanwhile, research by Sari and Hidayat (2022) revealed that communicative approaches and parental role models have a strong correlation with the formation of children's religious character. However, most studies still focus on the role of formal educational institutions, so there is a need for further research that

specifically highlighting the role of Muslim families in implementing PAI in the home environment.

The purpose of this article is to examine the implementation of Islamic religious education in Muslim families and how the process contributes to the formation of a child's spiritual foundation. Through a descriptive-qualitative approach, this study traces the practices, strategies, and challenges faced by parents in educating their children in Islam in the family environment. Thus, it is hoped that this paper can make a theoretical and practical contribution to the discourse of Islamic education, especially in the context of family-based non-formal education.

Method

This research employed a field study approach conducted in Pringgan Village, Paya Pasir, Marelan District. The study utilized a qualitative descriptive method to explore the implementation of Islamic Religious Education within Muslim families in the local context. Data were collected through a combination of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation to ensure the richness and credibility of the findings.

Primary data were obtained directly from seven Muslim families selected using random sampling techniques. These families served as key informants and provided firsthand information regarding religious educational practices within their households. Secondary data were gathered from a variety of sources including scholarly articles, undergraduate theses, master's theses, books, dissertations, and credible websites. These sources were used to triangulate and support the primary data.

The data analysis process followed three interrelated steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, all interview transcripts were coded systematically to identify recurring themes and patterns. The coded data were then organized and presented in the form of descriptive-analytical narratives to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the synthesis of findings, with the validity of the data ensured through cross-verification across the three analytical stages.

Results and Discussion

Islamic Education in Muslim Families

Islamic education in Muslim families is the main foundation for the formation of children's religious character. In Islam, the family is not only a physical residence, but also the first institution that instills the values of monotheism, morals, and worship from an early age. Parents have a moral and spiritual responsibility as the first educator (*murabbi*), who not only conveys religious teachings verbally, but also through example in daily behavior. Through this process, children learn to internalize Islamic values in a

natural and contextual, not just as memorization, but as a guideline for life (Zulfikar & Emawati, 2020).

The importance of religious education in the family is also emphasized in the Qur'an, as in Surah At-Tahrim verse 6: *"Protect yourself and your family from the fire of Hell."* This verse signals that the responsibility of religious education begins within the family. In practice, many Muslim families start Islamic education by introducing their children to daily prayers, ablutions, prayers, and the stories of the Prophet and his companions. Although it seems simple, this approach has a long-term impact on the formation of children's spirituality and Islamic identity.

In addition to the scientific aspect, Islamic education in the family is also concerned with the formation of morals. Islam strongly emphasizes the morality of *karimah* as a reflection of true faith. In the family context, moral cultivation is taught not only through counsel but also through interactions between family members—how parents speak, resolve conflicts, and treat others. It is this example that is often more effective than verbal instruction, because it is easier for children to imitate than just listen. Therefore, moral education in the family is an integral element in the implementation of Islamic education.

However, the challenges in the implementation of Islamic education in Muslim families cannot be ignored. Social changes, economic pressures, limited parental time, and the influence of digital media are real obstacles. Many parents no longer have enough time or capacity to consistently accompany their children in religious learning. This is where the importance of increasing religious literacy for parents and strengthening the function of the family as a center for non-formal education. There needs to be a collective awareness that the family is the initial basis for the formation of a spiritually and morally strong Muslim generation (Makhshun, 2020).

Thus, Islamic education in Muslim families is not only relevant, but also very strategic in facing the challenges of the times. When religious education is applied with full awareness, consistency, and example, the family will become a fertile environment for the growth of children's faith, knowledge, and morals. Therefore, strengthening the role of the family as the main actor of Islamic education is a fundamental step in building a civilized and competitive Muslim society in the modern era.

Implementation of Islamic Education in Muslim Families

Islamic education in the family environment is not only a complementary form of formal education, but also the core of the process of forming a child's Islamic identity. From an Islamic perspective, the family is strategically positioned to instill the basic values of faith and to form a sustainable spiritual character. This is in line with QS. Luqman verses 12–19 which emphasize four

Dimensions of Education: Aqidah, Worship, Morals, and Social. Based on the results of field research in Pringgana Paya Pasir Marelan Village, these four aspects have been applied by Muslim families in various capacities, according to the social and religious background of each family (Oktavia et al., 2020).

First, in the aspect of faith, education is directed at instilling faith in the pillars of faith and Islam as the foundation of religious life. The process of internalizing aqidah is carried out through the introduction of the concept of divinity from an early age, teaching about angels, books, prophets, the Day of Judgment, and destiny. Parents at the research site sought to introduce these concepts simply through daily dialogues, prophetic stories, and religious practices associated with spiritual meaning. The statements of informants such as Mrs. Fera and Mrs. Biah show that although the limitations in religious knowledge are quite visible, awareness to form the child's faith remains a priority. This strengthens the assumption that aqidah education at home is not just a matter of theological depth, but about the sustainability of the process and consistency of habituation (Bensaid, 2021).

Second, the moral aspect is a crucial dimension in Islamic education, because healthy religiosity is not only measured by religious rituals, but also by how moral values are expressed in social life. Moral education in Muslim families in this village is carried out through the example of parents, strengthening values such as good manners, empathy, honesty, and respect for others. This is in accordance with the concept of *ta'dib* in Islamic education which prioritizes the process of instilling value through living moral experiences. As expressed by Father Isa, children are educated to greet their parents, help their neighbors, and show respect to their elders. This shows that the family is an arena for the real practice of ethical values derived from Islamic teachings (Zubairi Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022).

Third, in the aspect of worship, the Muslim family plays an important role as an agent of children's worship habits. Parents introduced prayer, ablution, daily prayers, and reading the Qur'an with a gradual and repetitive approach. Field data shows that children who are accustomed to prayer from an early age show a higher level of worship independence. Even though some parents do not have a formal religious education background, they still take the initiative to teach their children to read Juz 'Amma and Iqra', and even direct children to learn from the teacher. This shows that the dimension of worship in the family is not only instructional, but also a form of emotional and spiritual relationship between parents and children. Therefore, the habit of worship in the family is not just a routine, but a process of inner education that shapes individual piety (Makhshun, 2020).

Fourth, the social aspect in Islamic education is reflected in the formation of children's social sensitivity in interaction with the surrounding environment. Values such as solidarity, care, and collective awareness are instilled through the habit of sharing, being fair, and respecting diversity in society. Mrs. Aini, for example, emphasized the importance of teaching children about harmonious social relationships, from how to interact to neighboring etiquette. This aspect shows that Islamic education in the family is not only oriented to individual spirituality, but also directed at the formation of social human beings who are able to live ethically in society. In this context, the family carries out social functions that are in line with the overall goal of Islamic education, which is to create *righteous* people who are not only obedient to Allah, but also useful for their environment (Risnawati & Priyantoro, 2024).

Overall, the findings in the field show that Islamic education applied in Muslim families in Pringgan Paya Pasir Village reflects the integration of monotheistic, ethical, worship, and social values in children's lives. Despite the variety of approaches and limited resources, the similarity of spiritual orientation shows that the family remains a strategic institution in passing on Islamic values across generations. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of Islamic education in the family is not only a practical necessity, but also part of the long-term educational strategy in building a moral, faithful, and empowered Muslim society.

Inhibiting Factors

Muslim families in Pringgan Paya Pasir Village show awareness and commitment in instilling Islamic education in their children, the implementation process does not always go smoothly. Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, a number of inhibiting factors were found that affect the effectiveness of Islamic education in the family. These factors are related to internal aspects of the family as well as broader social conditions. In this context, barriers are understood not only as technical constraints, but also as a reflection of socio-religious dynamics that require systemic attention.

First, the limited religious understanding of parents is one of the main obstacles. Most informants admitted that they did not have an adequate formal religious education background. Knowledge about the pillars of faith, the pillars of Islam, the procedures of worship, and moral values is only obtained from generation to generation without a structured methodological approach. As a result, religious teaching to children is simple and tends to be verbalistic. This shows the weak pedagogic capacity of religion in

family which ultimately affects the quality of internalization of Islamic values in children.

Second, the lack of interaction time between parents and children is also a significant factor that hinders. Some of the families encountered showed a fairly dense economic life pattern, where parents worked most of the day to make ends meet. This situation causes supervision and assistance of children's worship practices and behavior to be limited. Within the framework of *learning by modeling theory*, active involvement and direct role models from parents are crucial for the effectiveness of Islamic education. So, when this interactive relationship is disrupted by economic busyness, the quality of religious education at home also decreases.

Third, the uncontrolled influence of technology and digital media is a new obstacle in the context of the Muslim family today. Information from interviews with neighbors shows that some children spend more time with gadgets in public areas (such as public WiFi), rather than participating in religious activities such as reciting or praying in congregation. Dependence on media without value control causes children to be exposed to content that is not in line with Islamic values. In this situation, the family loses its role as a moral and spiritual filter, so the challenges of Islamic education come not only from within, but also from outside the family system.

Fourth, the imbalance in the division of roles between mothers and fathers in children's education is also an important note. In some cases, religious education is more imposed on the mother, while the father plays a passive role. In fact, in Islam, both parents have equal responsibilities in educating and guiding their children. This inequality causes the burden of education to be disproportionate, and children lose masculine figures as role models in carrying out religious teachings, especially in terms of worship and spiritual leadership.

Finally, the lack of support from the surrounding environment, such as limited access to teachers, madrasas, or active religious communities, makes Islamic education in the family run individually and not networked. In Islam, ideal education takes place through three main environments: family, school, and community. When two of the three wards are inactive, the burden of education is entirely on the family, who do not necessarily have sufficient resources to carry it out optimally.

Thus, the obstacles to the implementation of Islamic education in the family cannot be seen as a purely individual problem, but rather part of a broader structural and cultural challenge. Therefore, the strategy of strengthening Islamic education at the family level needs to involve a holistic approach that includes increasing parents' religious literacy, timing of interactions.

family, media control, and community support. Without these integrative efforts, the potential of the family as a major educational institution will continue to be under pressure amid increasingly complex modernity and digitalization.

Conclusions

The findings of the study show that the implementation of Islamic education in Muslim families in Pringgan Paya Pasir Marelان Village has included four main aspects, namely aqidah, morals, worship, and social. Parents play an active role in introducing Islamic values to children through habituation, example, and simple dialogue methods according to their respective abilities. However, the implementation of this education is inseparable from challenges, such as limited religious understanding, limited interaction time due to economic demands, and the negative influence of digital media that has not been fully controlled.

The implications of these findings show the importance of structural support to strengthen the function of Islamic education in the family. Efforts to increase religious literacy for parents, involvement of religious communities, and synergy between families, schools, and communities are strategic steps so that Islamic education is not only sporadic, but also directed and sustainable. Thus, the family can truly function as the first and foremost institution in shaping a generation of Muslims who are faithful, moral, and socially caring.

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