

Aisyiyah and Early Childhood Education: Instilling Islamic Values from an Early Age in Indonesia

Riza Awal Novanto ^{a,1,*}, Romelah ^{b,2}, M.Nurul Humaidi ^{b,3}

^a STIKes Muhammadiyah Tegal, Indonesia

^b Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

¹ riza_awal@stikesmutegal.ac.id, ² romlah@umm.ac.id, ³ mnhumaidi@umm.ac.id

* corresponding author

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ABSTRACT (10PT)

This research aims to examine the role of Aisyiyah in early childhood education (PAUD) and efforts to instill Islamic values from an early age in Indonesia through a qualitative approach using the case study method. The research focuses on PAUD institutions' management, curriculum development, and the teaching methods applied. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation at several Aisyiyah PAUD institutions in various regions in Indonesia. The research results show that Aisyiyah focuses on cognitive aspects and integrates character education and Islamic values into the curriculum. An Islamic and conducive learning environment is also created to support learning. This research also highlights the challenges Aisyiyah faces in implementing Islamic education in the modern era, such as limited resources and the influence of modern technology. Nevertheless, Aisyiyah overcame this challenge through various educational and social programs that strengthened her commitment to community development and education based on Islamic values. This research's findings can significantly contribute to developing Islamic-based early childhood education in Indonesia. Islamic religious education, starting from an early age, has a crucial role in shaping children's character and morals, ensuring they grow into individuals with strong moral and spiritual integrity.

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1. Introduction

Early childhood education (PAUD) is a critical phase in a child's development, covering the age of 06 years. At this stage, children experience a golden age in forming character, morals, and intellectual and social abilities. Therefore, education during this period must be designed carefully to ensure that children receive a strong foundation for their future development. In Indonesia, various institutions and organizations actively organize PAUD, one of which is Aisyiyah (McKay, 2016).

Aisyiyah is a women's organization that is part of Muhammadiyah, one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia. Founded in 1917, Aisyiyah has contributed significantly in various fields, including education, health, and women's empowerment (Huda, 2021). Aisyiyah's main focus is to create a society based on Islamic values through various programs and activities, including providing early childhood education. Aisyiyah understands that instilling Islamic values early is the key to forming a generation with noble, intelligent, and responsible character.

Aisyiyah founded many PAUD institutions throughout Indonesia that integrate the national curriculum with Islamic teachings. The learning methods used include introducing

worship, such as prayer and supplication, and instilling values like honesty, discipline, and mutual assistance. For example, daily activities at the Aisyiyah PAUD institution in Kendal show how these values are taught practically to children (Rachmawati et al., 2023).

Islamic values include various aspects of Islamic religious teachings, including noble morals, faith, worship, and moral and ethical principles. In the context of PAUD, these values are applied through various learning methods adapted to the child's age and development (Zulala, 2021). Children are taught to know and love Allah, perform acts of worship such as praying and reciting prayers, and imitate the morals of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Dahlia, 2021). Apart from that, values such as honesty, discipline, patience, and mutual help are also instilled through daily activities in the educational environment.

This research aims to examine in depth the role of Aisyiyah in early childhood education in Indonesia, especially in its efforts to instill Islamic values from an early age (Kusmiati, 2020). This research will explore how Aisyiyah founded and managed PAUD institutions and developed a curriculum integrated with Islamic values and the teaching methods used to achieve these goals. Apart from that, this research will also identify the challenges faced and successes Aisyiyah has achieved in running the PAUD program (Muhammadiyah.or.id, 2022).

By understanding Aisyiyah's contribution to PAUD and its impact on child development, this research can provide valuable insights into early childhood education development in Indonesia. This research also aims to provide recommendations for improving the quality of PAUD education based on Islamic values to form a superior and noble next generation.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to examine the role of Aisyiyah in early childhood education (PAUD) and efforts to instill Islamic values from an early age in Indonesia (Maryani, 2021). This method was chosen because it allows researchers to understand phenomena in depth and contextually. This research uses a case study design that focuses on one specific phenomenon, namely the role of Aisyiyah in PAUD (Agustina, 2023). The case study approach allows an in-depth exploration of various related aspects, including the management of PAUD institutions, curriculum development, and the teaching methods applied.

The research will be conducted at a PAUD institution managed by Aisyiyah in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Site selection considers geographic and demographic variations to obtain a comprehensive picture. Research subjects include Aisyiyah administrators and staff who are responsible for managing PAUD, teachers who teach at Aisyiyah PAUD institutions, parents of children who attend Aisyiyah PAUD, as well as children who attend Aisyiyah PAUD who will be observed through observation (Nurrahmah, 2023).

Data will be collected through several techniques, including in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with Aisyiyah administrators, teachers, and parents to obtain information about the management of PAUD institutions, curriculum, and teaching methods, as well as their experiences and perceptions regarding cultivating Islamic values (Rivai et al., 2021). Participatory observations were carried out in PAUD classes to see firsthand how Islamic values are taught and applied in daily activities and to understand the dynamics of interactions between teachers and children (Bidayati, 2023). Documentation includes collecting related documents such as curriculum, teaching materials, activity reports, and other relevant records to understand the structure and content of education at PAUD Aisyiyah.

The data obtained will be analyzed using the thematic analysis method. The steps include initial coding, namely identifying and coding the main themes that emerge from interview data, observations, and documentation. Then, these themes were grouped into larger themes to facilitate analysis (Soesantari, 2023). Furthermore, these themes are organized into categories relevant to the research focus, such as PAUD management, curriculum

development, teaching methods, and challenges faced. Finally, the data is interpreted in the context of early childhood education theory and Islamic values and compared with existing literature.

This research uses triangulation techniques to ensure the data's validity and reliability. Source triangulation compares data obtained from various sources to ensure consistency, while method triangulation uses various data collection techniques to obtain a more comprehensive picture (Wijiseno, 2023). In addition, member checking is carried out by asking respondents to review and confirm initial findings to ensure the accuracy and validity of the data.

This research complies with the principles of research ethics, including obtaining written consent from all informants before conducting interviews or observations, maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities and the data obtained, and explaining the purpose of the research and how the data will be used to all parties involved (Rahadi, 2020). With this research method, it is hoped that the research can provide a comprehensive and in-depth picture of Aisyiyah's role in early childhood education and the cultivation of Islamic values in Indonesia.

In addition, NVivo software will be used to assist in the qualitative data analysis process. NVivo will make it easier for researchers to organize, code, and interpret data so that analysis can be carried out more systematically and in-depth (Ploin et al., 2022). This software enables the management of complex data and assists in developing key themes and relationships between themes (Pranata & Husain, 2022). Thus, using NVivo will increase accuracy and efficiency in analyzing the qualitative data of this research.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Findings

3.2. Islamic Religious Education from an Early Age

The instilling of Islamic values in PAUD Aisyiyah is carried out through various structured and holistic methods. One of the main methods is the habit of daily worship, where children are taught to perform prayers, read prayers, and recite the Koran. This activity becomes a daily routine that strengthens their faith and forms strong spiritual habits from an early age. Also, teaching noble morals is essential in the Aisyiyah PAUD curriculum (Mahfud, 2023). Through stories, educational games, and practical daily activities, children are taught values such as honesty, discipline, and mutual respect. Aisyiyah PAUD teachers use a developmentally appropriate approach to ensure these values are well embedded in their character.

The learning environment at PAUD Aisyiyah is also designed to be Islamic and conducive to learning. Classroom decoration, activities, and daily interactions are all geared toward reflecting and reinforcing Islamic values (Surya, 2020). By creating a supportive environment, children learn theory and practice Islamic values in their daily lives.

Islamic religious education, starting from an early age, has a very crucial role in shaping children's character and morals. This education focuses on religious knowledge and the formation of noble morals and good behavior in ceramic teachings (Slamet, 2021). Children can grow into individuals with strong moral and spiritual integrity by instilling religious values from an early age (Soesantari, 2023).

Instilling Islamic values in PAUD is carried out through various methods, including the habit of worship, teaching noble morals, and creating an Islamic learning environment. Worship habits such as prayer, praying, and reciting the Koran are introduced early to form spiritual habits. Teaching noble morals is done through stories, educational games, and daily activities that teach values such as honesty, discipline, and mutual respect.

3.3. The Role of Aisyiyah in Early Childhood Education

Aisyiyah, Indonesia's most prominent Islamic women's organization, has significantly contributed to early childhood education. They founded thousands of PAUD institutions throughout Indonesia and developed a curriculum that integrated religious education with general education (Jenner, 2023). This effort aims to provide a holistic education based on Islamic values, ensuring children receive a strong foundation for their future development. Aisyiyah has made a significant contribution to the development of early childhood education in Indonesia. They established many PAUD institutions across various regions, focusing on holistic education that integrates Islamic values.

The instilling of Islamic values in PAUD Aisyiyah is carried out through a holistic and structured approach. The habit of worship is one of the main methods, where children are taught short prayers appropriate to daily activities, such as praying before eating, waking up, and studying. The teaching of prayer is introduced in a fun way, using songs and movements to help children remember prayer movements and readings. Through this routine, children get used to worship sincerely and regularly (Huda, 2021). Apart from that, reciting the Koran is taught in stages, starting with introducing the hijaiyah letters and continuing with a more complex reading. This teaching uses interactive methods and tools such as hijaiyah cards and digital applications that attract children's interest.

Teaching noble morals is also an essential focus at PAUD Aisyiyah. Children are introduced to stories of the Prophets, friends, and Islamic figures who teach the values of honesty, courage, and compassion. These stories are told through various media, such as picture storybooks, animated videos, and short dramas involving children as actors (Hidayah, 2020a). Educational games teach Children values such as cooperation, mutual respect, and sharing. These games are designed to encourage children to interact and solve problems together so that these values can be practiced in real situations.

The learning environment at PAUD Aisyiyah is designed to be Islamic and conducive to learning. Classes are decorated with Islamic decorations such as calligraphy, pictures of mosques, and posters containing verses from the Koran and hadith (Ambarwati, 2024). This creates a conducive atmosphere and reminds children of the importance of Islamic values in everyday life. Every day starts with prayer together and continues with tadarus or reading the Koran together. There is also a particular schedule for worship activities, such as Dhuha and midday prayers in the congregation (Dahlia, 2021). This activity helps children understand the importance of worship and apply it to their lives. Apart from that, PAUD Aisyiyah also invites parents to be involved in their children's education process through programs such as parenting classes and activities with the family, ensuring that the values taught at school are also applied at home (Sandy, 2020).

Through this comprehensive approach, PAUD Aisyiyah has effectively instilled Islamic values in yn, forming them into individuals with noble character, faith, and responsibility (Agustina, 2023).

3.4. Discussion

Interviews were also conducted with Aisyiyah administrators, teachers and parents to find out and examine in depth Aisyiyah's role in early childhood education.

3.5. Interview result

From the results of interviews conducted, it was found that instilling Islamic values in Aisyiyah PAUD is very influential in shaping children's character. Methods of habituating worship, teaching noble morals, and creating an Islamic learning environment are applied well and consistently. Aisyiyah PAUD teachers and administrators use an interactive and fun approach so that children learn theory and practice Islamic values in everyday life (Hidayah, 2020b). Parents are also actively involved, supporting the school's efforts to instill Islamic values at home. As a result, children show a good understanding of religion and

In line with that, *"implementing Islam from an early age will greatly influence the child's psychological and emotional condition, which will later have an impact on daily life. This is why early childhood is an important period,"* said Esty, when she was a speaker at the West Java 'Aisyiyah Koran Dawn Movement' event (Muhammadiyah.or.id, 2022).

4. Conclusion

The research results show that Aisyiyah does not only focus on cognitive aspects but also integrates character education and Islamic values in the curriculum. The innovative programs run by Aisyiyah in various regions in Indonesia have succeeded in creating a learning environment that is holistic, child-centered and based on Islamic values. One of the main methods used is the habit of daily worship, where children are taught to perform prayers, recite prayers and recite the Koran. This activity becomes a daily routine that not only strengthens their faith but also forms strong spiritual habits from an early age.

Apart from that, teaching noble morals is an important focus in the Aisyiyah PAUD curriculum. Children are taught values such as honesty, discipline and mutual respect through stories, educational games and practical daily activities. Aisyiyah PAUD teachers use a developmentally appropriate approach to ensure that these values are well embedded in their character. The learning environment at PAUD Aisyiyah is also designed to be Islamic and conducive to learning. Classroom decoration, activities, and daily interactions are all geared towards reflecting and reinforcing Islamic values. By creating a supportive environment, children not only learn theory but also practice Islamic values in their daily lives. This research also highlights the challenges Aisyiyah faces in implementing Islamic education in the modern era, such as limited resources and the influence of modern technology which sometimes conflicts with Islamic values. However, Aisyiyah has succeeded in overcoming these challenges through various educational and social programs that strengthen her commitment to community development and education based on Islamic values.

The findings of this research can significantly contribute to the development of Islamic-based early childhood education in Indonesia. With a holistic approach and involvement of various parties, including parents and teachers, education at PAUD Aisyiyah is designed to provide a strong foundation for intellectually and spiritually developing children. For example, one of the parents of Aisyiyah PAUD students, Hartono, stated: "Yes, sure. My child has become more disciplined, honest, and polite. He is also more diligent in praying and reciting the Koran at home without being asked. Values such as mutual respect and cooperation are also increasingly visible daily."

Islamic religious education, starting from an early age, has a very crucial role in shaping children's character and morals. Children can grow into individuals with strong moral and spiritual integrity by instilling religious values from an early age. In line with that, Esty, at the West Java 'Aisyiyah Koran Subuh Movement' event, stated that "the application of Islam from an early age will have a great influence on the psychological and emotional condition of children which will later have an impact on everyday life."

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