

Innovative learning strategies in shaping noble character based on Islamic values

Salsabila Shohifah^{a,1,*}, Suharsono^{a,2}

^a Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Muhammadiyah Paciran, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

¹ salsabilashohifah4@gmail.com* ; ² sonosuhar22@gmail.com

* corresponding author

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ABSTRACT

Education plays a crucial role in shaping students' noble character, especially in the context of Islamic education. Innovative learning strategies are essential for creating an effective and enjoyable learning environment while deeply instilling Islamic values. This study explores various innovative learning strategies that can be applied in the educational process to develop character and noble morals. The research employs a literature review method with a qualitative approach, referencing Islamic education theories and innovative learning models. The findings indicate that integrating technology into Islamic education enhances students' understanding and internalization of noble character values. Additionally, the role of teachers as facilitators, motivators, and role models is pivotal to the success of value-based learning. With the appropriate strategy implementation, education not only produces intellectually capable individuals but also fosters noble character in line with Islamic teachings.

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INTRODUCTION

Noble character (akhlakul karimah) is the primary foundation in Islamic education that must be instilled from an early age. As times progress, the challenges in shaping students' character have become increasingly complex. Therefore, innovative learning strategies are essential to internalize Islamic values in daily life (Masnawati & Fitria, 2024).

Education plays a strategic role in shaping students' character and morals, especially in fostering noble character based on Islamic values (Permana & Saputra, 2024). In Islam, morality holds a central position, as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who was sent to perfect human morality. Therefore, the Islamic education system must be capable of embedding these noble values in every aspect of learning (Beji, 2024).

In today's era of globalization and technological advancement, the challenges in shaping noble character are increasingly complex. Students are exposed to various external influences that can shape their character, both positively and negatively (Erhamwilda, 2021). Thus, innovative learning strategies are required not only to effectively transfer knowledge but also to build students' character according to Islamic values (Prayoga & Sahri, 2024).

Innovative learning is an approach that aligns teaching methods and strategies with current developments, students' needs, and existing socio-cultural conditions. Value-based learning models, contextual approaches, and the integration of technology in Islamic education can offer solutions for

shaping strong and virtuous character. Moreover, the role of teachers as facilitators and role models significantly influences the internalization of Islamic values (Maftuhah, 2024).

Currently, teaching moral values is an essential part of Islamic education. Value-based learning in Islamic education encompasses two key aspects: information delivery and the structuring of character in accordance with Islamic teachings (Adirza & Abdurrasyid, 2024).

Generally, akhlak can be defined as personality, etiquette, or moral values. Etymologically, the term akhlak comes from the Arabic word "khulq," which means nature or disposition. Akhlakul karimah encompasses all good and righteous actions and words that naturally emerge after practice and habituation, in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Morality forms a solid foundation for fostering good relationships between individuals and Allah (hablumminallah) as well as among people (hablumminannas). Noble character does not emerge from heredity or occur suddenly but develops through a long process such as education. Many Western systems of moral or ethical education have limitations since they are based solely on human reasoning and environmental factors, resulting in restricted knowledge. Therefore, moral education rooted in Islamic values is necessary (Muttaqin et al., 2023).

Islamic values manifest through honesty in speech, justice in actions, compassion toward others, patience in facing challenges, adherence to rules, and trustworthiness among people. In Islam, akhlakul karimah refers to good and noble conduct and character. Thus, religious teachers bear the responsibility of guiding students toward developing noble character (Mar'atus Sholihah et al., 2021).

This becomes a benchmark for how students think and respond to problems both within and outside the school environment. Therefore, innovative learning strategies must be utilized in shaping students' character, accompanied by appropriate methods to implement these strategies.

Morality is a crucial factor that influences human life, both personally and socially. No matter how intelligent a student may be, without a foundation of good character and morals, they will not reflect a commendable personality. Thus, it is essential for schools to cultivate students' character by applying suitable strategies and collaborating among school members. Instilling good morals in students will bring positive impacts to both the school and each individual.

This study examines a novel approach to shaping akhlakul karimah through integration with innovative learning. This approach differs from previous research that focused solely on separate strategies for character development.

Additionally, the dynamics of education in the digital era demand more creative and interactive approaches in the learning process (Arribathi et al., 2021). Conventional one-directional methods are deemed less effective in fostering student engagement and deeply instilling moral values. Therefore, innovation in learning strategies is essential to ensure Islamic education remains relevant and capable of addressing contemporary challenges.

Some innovative learning strategies for shaping akhlakul karimah include value-based learning, project-based learning (BK & Hamna, 2022), and the utilization of digital technology in Islamic education. These approaches emphasize not only content delivery but also deep learning experiences that help students internalize Islamic values more effectively (Hermawan, 2024).

Furthermore, the role of teachers as facilitators, motivators, and role models is crucial for the effectiveness of value-based learning. Teachers are not merely tasked with imparting knowledge but must also inspire students to practice Islamic teachings in daily life ((Adirza & Abdurrasyid, 2024). Therefore, innovative learning strategies must be supported by teachers' competencies in managing classrooms, utilizing technology, and creating a conducive and inspiring learning environment.

Moreover, the development of akhlakul karimah through education is inseparable from the role of the environment, including school, family, and community. A supportive environment for implementing Islamic values will strengthen the internalization process of noble character in students. Therefore, innovative learning strategies must also consider collaboration between schools, parents, and the community to holistically implement Islamic values in daily life (Saputra, 2023).

Another challenge in implementing value-based innovative learning strategies is educators' readiness to adopt more creative and interactive teaching methods. Not all teachers possess adequate competencies and skills in utilizing digital technology or applying experiential learning models. Thus, strengthening teachers' capacity through training and professional development becomes essential to support the success of innovative learning strategies (Maftuhah et al., 2023).

In addition to teachers, the curriculum plays a strategic role in ensuring that value-based Islamic learning can be implemented systematically and sustainably. A curriculum designed with an integrative approach enables students not only to understand Islamic concepts theoretically but also to apply them in real life. Therefore, innovative learning must align with a curriculum that incorporates Islamic values to achieve the desired educational outcomes (Iskandar et al., 2023).

This study aims to examine and analyze various innovative learning strategies that can be applied in Islamic education to develop students' *akhlakul karimah*. By understanding and applying appropriate strategies, it is hoped that Islamic education will not only produce intellectually superior individuals but also cultivate characters aligned with Islamic teachings, contributing positively to society and the nation (Inovasi et al., 2024).

Considering these aspects, this study will discuss how innovative learning strategies can be effectively applied to shape students' *akhlakul karimah*. Through a comprehensive approach, it is hoped that the findings of this research can provide recommendations for educators, policymakers, and related stakeholders in developing a more progressive Islamic education system oriented toward strong Islamic character development.

METHOD

The integration of Islamic values in education plays a crucial role in shaping students with noble character (*akhlakul karimah*), critical thinking skills, and strong spiritual awareness. This process involves the curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture, instilling values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. The success of this integration heavily relies on the role of teachers as role models, a conducive educational environment, and parental support in instilling Islamic values at home. Despite challenges such as a lack of understanding of integrative methods and limited Islamic teaching materials, the synergy between curriculum, educators, and families can produce intellectually superior and morally upright generations ready to face global challenges with ethical and moral Islamic values (Natalia et al., 2024).

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to explore innovative teaching strategies in shaping *akhlakul karimah* based on Islamic values. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to comprehensively understand phenomena and analyze the effectiveness of strategies implemented in educational institutions.

The research was conducted in formal educational institutions such as *madrasahs* and *pesantren* that have adopted Islamic value-based learning. The research subjects included school principals, teachers, and students directly involved in the learning process.

Data collection was carried out using multiple techniques, namely: (1) Observation, to directly observe the innovative learning processes, methods used, and interactions between teachers and students. (2) In-depth Interviews, with teachers and school principals to gather information on teaching strategies, challenges faced, and their success in shaping *akhlakul karimah*. (3) Documentation, involving the collection of data from learning documents such as syllabi, lesson plans (RPP), and learning activity records. (4) Focus Group Discussions (FGD), engaging students to gain their perspectives on the learning process and its impact on character development.

The data collected was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three stages: (1) Data Reduction – filtering and simplifying data relevant to the research focus. (2) Data Display – organizing information in a descriptive narrative format to facilitate conclusion drawing. (3) Conclusion Drawing – identifying patterns and relationships between data that align with the research objectives.

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques by comparing data from various sources, such as observation, interviews, and documentation.

The success indicators of innovative teaching strategies in shaping *akhlakul karimah* based on Islamic values were assessed based on changes in students' behavior reflecting *akhlakul karimah* values, teachers' satisfaction with the effectiveness of the strategies applied, and the consistency of Islamic value integration in the learning process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Concept of Akhlakul Karimah in Islam

Akhlakul karimah is a fundamental concept in Islamic teachings, emphasizing the importance of noble character as a reflection of a Muslim's faith. This concept encompasses not only a person's relationship with Allah SWT but also interactions with fellow humans and the environment. Linguistically, the term derives from *akhlaq*, meaning character or behavior, and *karimah*, which means noble or praiseworthy. Thus, *akhlakul karimah* refers to the commendable traits that a Muslim is obligated to possess.

The primary sources for the values of *akhlakul karimah* are the Qur'an, which provides foundational principles for virtuous conduct, and the Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad SAW, who exemplified the practice of noble character in various aspects of life. The Prophet himself stated, "Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character." (HR. Ahmad)

Examples of *akhlakul karimah* taught in Islam include honesty (*shidq*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), patience (*sabr*), humility (*tawadhu'*), generosity, and forgiveness. The implementation of these values extends beyond personal interactions to various aspects of life. Within families, *akhlakul karimah* is demonstrated by respecting parents and showing affection to family members. In society, these values manifest as maintaining good relationships, avoiding harm to others, and acting justly. In professional environments, *akhlakul karimah* requires professionalism, honesty, and accountability. In worship, noble character is reflected in sincere and devoted acts of worship.

The application of *akhlakul karimah* brings numerous benefits to both individuals and society. Good character fosters positive social interactions, creates a harmonious and blessed life, and serves as a testament to strong faith while paving the way to attain Allah's pleasure. Therefore, nurturing and upholding noble character is an obligation for every Muslim in their worldly journey.

2. Innovative Learning Strategies

Innovative learning strategies refer to educational approaches aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process by leveraging methods, techniques, and technology that prioritize learner engagement. Innovation in learning strategies facilitates a more interactive, enjoyable, and adaptive learning environment tailored to students' needs and characteristics. Some common innovative learning strategies include project-based learning, collaborative approaches, technology-based learning, and problem-based learning.

In practice, these strategies offer several positive impacts. First, they increase student engagement, making them more active in exploring knowledge. Second, they foster critical and creative thinking skills, which are essential for navigating modern challenges. Third, they enable more contextual and relevant learning experiences, allowing students to connect theoretical knowledge with real-life applications. Additionally, innovative strategies provide educators with the flexibility to adjust teaching methods based on students' needs, thereby optimizing learning outcomes (Maftuhah dan Ikhwanudin, 2024).

However, there are challenges to implementing innovative learning strategies, such as limited infrastructure, the readiness of educators, and student acceptance of new methods. (Wahyuni et al., 2024). Therefore, support from educational institutions, the government, and society is essential to ensure successful implementation. By embracing innovation, education can not only improve in quality but also shape a generation prepared to face the demands of an ever-evolving world.

3. Integration of Islamic Values in Education

The integration of Islamic values in education has a positive impact on shaping students with noble character (*akhlakul karimah*), critical thinking skills, and strong spiritual awareness. These values are embedded in various educational aspects, such as the curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture. A curriculum based on the integration of Islamic values does not only directly incorporate religious content but also instills values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance in general subjects like science and language.

The discussion highlights that the success of this integration is significantly influenced by the role of teachers, who act as educators and role models in daily life. Teachers who can effectively relate learning materials to Islamic values enable students to better understand the relationship between knowledge and religious teachings. Furthermore, a conducive educational environment, such as a religious culture in schools, strengthens the internalization of Islamic values.

However, there are challenges in implementing this integration, including the lack of understanding among some educators regarding effective integrative methods and the scarcity of teaching materials based on Islamic values that align with modern developments. Therefore, teacher training and the development of innovative teaching materials are essential to provide contextual and relevant guidance for integrating Islamic values. With a strong synergy between the curriculum, educators, and the environment, integrating Islamic values in education is believed to create a generation that excels intellectually while possessing noble character and the capability to face global challenges.

Additionally, the involvement of parents in supporting the integration of Islamic values in education is another significant finding. Parents who actively participate in their children's education, through intensive communication with teachers and the implementation of Islamic values at home, are proven to strengthen the outcomes of Islamic value-based education. A harmonious collaboration between schools, families, and communities forms an ideal ecosystem for nurturing students with holistic character rooted in Islamic values.

Further discussions reveal that integrating Islamic values in education is not merely about the transfer of knowledge but also about fostering positive behaviors sourced from Islamic teachings. For instance, the value of honesty can be demonstrated through assessment activities that avoid dishonest practices, while discipline is taught by managing study and worship time in a balanced manner. On the other hand, values of tolerance and mutual respect are introduced through healthy social interactions among students from diverse backgrounds.

Thus, an effective strategy for integrating Islamic values requires a comprehensive approach that covers cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students. Through this approach, education not only produces intellectually skilled individuals but also cultivates individuals with high ethics and morality in line with Islamic teachings. The integration of Islamic values in education can serve as a strong foundation for building a cultured, religious society capable of making positive contributions in a modern era full of challenges.

CONCLUSION

The concept of *akhlakul karimah* in Islam emphasizes the importance of possessing noble character as a reflection of a Muslim's faith. The values of *akhlakul karimah*, derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, encompass praiseworthy traits such as honesty, trustworthiness, patience, humility, generosity, and forgiveness. The application of *akhlakul karimah* is not limited to interpersonal relationships but extends to family life, society, the workplace, and worship. By practicing noble character, individuals gain benefits such as harmonious living, positive social relationships, and a blessed life accompanied by strong faith in Allah SWT. Therefore, cultivating *akhlakul karimah* is an obligation for every Muslim to achieve a better life in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Innovative teaching strategies aim to enhance the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process through interactive, enjoyable, and adaptive approaches that meet students' needs. These approaches include project-based, collaborative, technology-driven, and problem-solving learning that encourage active student engagement, the development of critical and creative thinking skills, as well as contextual learning relevant to real life. Despite challenges such as limited facilities, educator readiness, and student adaptation, support from various stakeholders can ensure their success. When optimally implemented, these strategies not only improve the quality of education but also help shape competent generations prepared to face evolving times.

The integration of Islamic values in education plays a significant role in shaping students' character with *akhlakul karimah*, fostering critical thinking, and enhancing spiritual awareness. This process involves the curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture, instilling values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. The success of this integration greatly depends on the role of teachers as role models, a conducive educational environment, and parental support in instilling Islamic values at home. Despite challenges such as a lack of understanding of integrative methods and limited Islamic teaching materials, the synergy between the curriculum, educators, and families can create intellectually superior and morally upright generations ready to face global challenges with ethical and Islamic moral values.

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