



## The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping the Character of Children in Banyuurip Village in the Digital Era

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**Abstract.** *This study aims to explore the role of Islamic Religious Education in shaping children's character in the digital era. The research involves a literature review to examine relevant studies and articles, and identify Implications for the educational world. The findings indicate that Islamic Religious Education plays a crucial role in character development for children in the digital age. In addition to teaching religious values, Islamic Religious Education also includes ethical and moral learning essential for children. The study reveals that Islamic Religious Education is effective in imparting moral values, developing digital ethics, and fostering spiritual awareness in technology use. The implications of this research include aspects of ethics and morals in technology use, the development of digital ethics, and the importance of parental involvement in shaping children's character in the digital era. This research is important for parents and teachers to understand in order to develop effective strategies for nurturing responsible, ethical, and integrity-driven character in children's digital lives. In this interconnected era, integrating Islamic moral and ethical values in education is crucial to ensure that children use technology wisely and responsibly.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic Religious Education, Digital Era, Character.*

### 1. BACKGROUND

The digital era has brought significant changes to various aspects of life, including education. Nowadays, many children in Banyuurip Village spend most of their time in the digital world, especially through social media and online games. Although technology provides easy access to a variety of information, it also has negative impacts, such as reduced social interaction, a tendency towards individualistic behavior, and an increased risk of exposure to content that does not align with moral values. This situation highlights a gap between the rapid development of technology and the capacity of Islamic religious education to provide moral protection and build strong character in children. On one hand, children are increasingly exposed to uncontrolled digital content, while on the other, Islamic religious education has not fully kept pace with the overwhelming flow of information.

The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has influenced the ways in which the younger generation learns, interacts, and behaves. In this context, Islamic religious education plays a crucial role in shaping the character and morality of Banyuurip's children, ensuring they adhere to noble values amidst the swift current of change. Islamic religious education not only emphasizes cognitive aspects but also focuses on shaping attitudes

and behaviors in accordance with Islamic teachings. Values such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and discipline serve as essential foundations for shaping the character of children in Banyuurip Village. In the digital era, the challenges faced have become increasingly complex, including the misuse of technology, access to unhealthy information, and an instant culture that can damage the morals of the younger generation.

To address these challenges, the KKN MIT Posko 80 Program in Banyuurip Village has collaborated with the local community to provide Islamic religious education that is more relevant and adaptive to the needs of the times. This program emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to religious education, which not only teaches theory but also practices religious values in daily life. Through various activities, such as Quranic recitations, public speaking contests, and religious-based educational games, children are encouraged to understand and apply Islamic teachings in a more engaging way that suits their world. The KKN program also provides training to parents and local educators on how to integrate religious values into everyday technology use, such as teaching internet ethics and how to avoid negative content.

Islamic religious education plays a crucial role in character building in the digital age (Nadeem, 2019). This education includes learning and introducing fundamental moral and ethical values in Islam. One of the main objectives of Islamic religious education is to educate children to become responsible, ethical, and integral individuals in various aspects of life, including facing challenges in the digital age (Abdullah, 2017).

With the rapid development of technology and the flow of information in the digital era, the role of Islamic religious education in shaping children's character has become more complex (Haque, 2020). Today, children are more exposed to influences from social media, the internet, and various other digital platforms. While the digital world offers many potentials and benefits, it also brings risks that cannot be ignored, such as easy access to negative content, the spread of misinformation, and threats to privacy. In this context, the KKN MIT Posko 80 Program acts as a catalyst connecting religious education with the digital context, providing children with an understanding of how to use technology wisely and in accordance with Islamic principles.

Previous research has extensively examined the role of Islamic religious education in shaping children's character, but most of these studies have not specifically highlighted the challenges that arise in the digital era. Studies on how Islamic religious education can adapt to the changing times, especially in facing the challenges of digitalization, remain limited. Moreover, few studies focus on how children in villages like Banyuurip, with limited access to

quality formal education, respond to the influence of the digital era on their character. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring more deeply the role of Islamic religious education in shaping children's character in the digital era, as well as strategies that can be applied to overcome the challenges faced.

The importance of the values taught in Islamic education lies in the fact that these values reflect universal principles that can be applied by all individuals. Through Islamic religious education, children can gain an understanding of moral and ethical values that are essential for developing positive character. In addition, Islamic religious education helps children understand their purpose in life and strengthens their spiritual connection with God. By practicing Islamic religious values, children can achieve inner peace, gratitude, and the ability to face challenges with an optimistic attitude.

This review includes recent studies from the past five years that are relevant to this topic. The main focus of this review encompasses three aspects: (1) Islamic Religious Education, which evaluates various approaches and methods used in Islamic religious education; (2) Character, which analyzes the character values instilled through Islamic religious education; and (3) the Digital Era, which identifies the challenges and opportunities in integrating digital technology into Islamic religious education.

Understanding the role of Islamic religious education in shaping children's character in the digital era greatly contributes to the development of Islamic religious education, enabling more relevant approaches to address the challenges faced by children in the digital era. Therefore, it is crucial to critically review how Islamic religious education can adapt and remain relevant to current conditions, as well as to understand its impact on character building in children. Islamic religious education must be able to provide children with a deep understanding of how to face and overcome challenges in the digital era (Siswadi, *Islamic Education and the Formation of Student Character in the Era of Industry 4.0*, 2020).

Thus, this study aims to understand the role of Islamic Religious Education in shaping children's character in the digital era. This article will delve deeper into the importance of Islamic religious education in character building in the digital era. The main focus will include the application of Islamic Religious Education and how children in Banyuurip Village, Ngampel District, Kendal Regency, respond to and apply the values taught in their daily lives. Additionally, this study will identify the challenges faced in Islamic religious education in the digital era, as well as the research methods used, results, and relevant discussions to support this statement. It is hoped that by considering the role of Islamic religious education in the

digital era, we can develop a comprehensive and effective approach to shaping quality children's character, ready to face the challenges of this digital era.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Islamic Religious Education**

Zakiyah Daradjat, as cited by Abdul Majid and Dian Andayani, asserts that Islamic religious education is an effort to nurture and educate students so they can comprehensively understand Islamic teachings. Additionally, this education aims to encourage students to internalize the objectives of Islamic teachings, ultimately practicing and making Islam a guide in their daily lives. Therefore, Islamic religious education not only helps students understand and internalize Islamic teachings but also serves to make Islam a fundamental guide in their lives.

Ahmad Supardi, as cited by A. Tafsir and colleagues, explains that Islamic religious education is based on Islamic teachings or religious guidelines aimed at shaping and developing a pious Muslim who loves Allah SWT, their parents, fellow human beings, and their homeland as a gift from Allah SWT. In this context, Islamic education functions as guidance aimed at forming a Muslim who cherishes their homeland and fellow humans (Ahmad Tafsir, et al., *Cakrawala Pemikiran*, p. 285). Thus, Islamic religious education is a deliberate effort by educators to prepare students to believe, understand, and practice Islamic teachings through guided, taught, or trained activities designed to achieve these goals.

### **Character**

According to the Language Center of the Ministry of National Education, character encompasses innate aspects, heart, soul, personality, morality, behavior, personal traits, habits, temperament, and character. A person with character has distinct personality traits, behavior, habits, and qualities. Some perspectives view character as a subjective assessment of a person's moral and mental quality, while others focus solely on mental quality. In this context, efforts to change or shape character are often linked to intellectual stimulation.

Coon defines character as a subjective assessment of a person's personality related to socially acceptable or unacceptable personality traits. Character reflects an individual's temperament or personality and encompasses both natural and stable dispositions, defining the individual in all aspects of their psychic behavior and making them unique in their thoughts and actions.

### **Digital Era**

The digital era is a period marked by rapid technological advancements, aligning with the progress of time. Technology is no longer a rarity but has become an integral part of almost every aspect of life, including education, social interactions, culture, sports, economics, and politics. The sophistication of technology is utilized for information retrieval and problem-solving. In this digital era, technology has significant impacts on society, both positive and negative. Positive impacts include easier access to information, entertainment, and knowledge. However, negative impacts are evident in children's behavior and manners, with tendencies to imitate and follow Western culture. Children can be influenced by this behavior as they are exposed to images, music, videos, and games, both online and offline. Given children's high curiosity and tendency to imitate what they see and watch, parental supervision becomes crucial. Parents need to ensure that technology is used as an educational tool, allowing children to be more selective in their usage.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a qualitative approach using a case study method. The research is conducted in Banyuurip Village, Ngampel District, Kendal Regency, focusing on elementary and junior high school children, as well as their parents and teachers. The selection of these subjects is based on the consideration that they are at a critical phase in character formation. A qualitative approach is chosen to explore various aspects of the research object, grounded in postpositivist philosophy. This method employs triangulation, or the integration of multiple data sources, to achieve a deeper understanding. Thus, qualitative research involves descriptive data collected in the form of words from informants.

Subsequently, the researcher organizes and synthesizes the findings into a structured and systematic discussion. The researcher compares and integrates results from various studies, identifying patterns and trends emerging in the reviewed literature. During this process, it is crucial for the researcher to utilize high-quality and reliable literature. Therefore, the researcher ensures that the sources used have undergone peer review and are authored by credible experts or researchers in the fields of Islamic religious education, character education, or related areas.

The findings of the research are then presented in narrative form. The study is carried out through direct observation, interviews, and document analysis in the field to monitor occurrences or findings. The collected data is analyzed descriptively to identify key themes related to the role of Islamic religious education in character formation and strategies for integrating technology. This analysis aims to formulate recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of Islamic religious education in the digital era.

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping Children's Character**

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has the primary goal of instilling Islamic religious, moral, and ethical values in children through a learning process that encompasses various aspects, such as *aqidah* (belief), *ibadah* (religious practices), *akhlak* (morals), and *muamalah* (social interactions). This goal is to shape individuals who are faithful, pious, and possess noble character, as well as being capable of applying Islamic teachings in their daily lives. This education not only conveys religious values but also emphasizes the development of strong ethics and morality. In the digital era, where children are frequently engaged with electronic devices and have wide access to the internet, Islamic moral and ethical values can serve as an essential foundation for shaping responsible and ethical behavior in digital interactions.

Here are some key points relevant to the role of the KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program in providing Islamic Religious Education in Banyuurip Village:

##### **Instilling Moral Values**

The Islamic Religious Education delivered by KKN students provides a solid foundation for children to understand and apply moral values and ethics in their lives, including in the digital world. Islamic teachings provide principles that guide ethical and responsible behavior, such as respecting others' privacy, avoiding the spread of false information, and behaving courteously on social media. Through religious activities such as *Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah* (MDA) and *Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran* (TPQ), children are taught to understand and apply religious teachings that encompass values like honesty, politeness, justice, and responsibility. They are educated to distinguish between right and wrong and to understand the consequences of their actions.

##### **Teaching Digital Ethics**

The KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program plays a crucial role in teaching children about good digital ethics. They are provided with an understanding of how to use social media wisely, avoid spreading negative content, and not engage in cyberbullying practices. This education provides a strong moral foundation to face challenges and complex situations in the digital world. Children are also taught the importance of maintaining privacy, protecting personal data, and using technology for positive and beneficial purposes, both for themselves and the community.

##### **Building Spiritual Awareness**

One of the main focuses of the religious education provided through the KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program is to build children's spiritual awareness. In an increasingly digital world, children are often caught up in technological distractions and may lose touch with spiritual values. Islamic Religious Education helps them internalize religious teachings in their daily lives, including how to handle distractions from the digital world and maintain their spiritual balance. Through a deep understanding of the importance of their relationship with Allah and the fulfillment of religious obligations, it is hoped that children can avoid negative behaviors and cultivate a positive culture in the use of technology.

### **Cultivating Noble Character**

The KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program in Banyuurip Village also focuses on developing noble character among children. They are taught to internalize qualities such as compassion, social justice, simplicity, friendliness, strong character, and kindness. By learning from the teachings and examples of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and historical figures in Islam, children receive inspiration and guidance to cultivate good character. The program also encourages children to apply these noble traits in their daily lives and face social challenges and technological advancements with moral integrity.

### **Teaching a Global Perspective**

Islamic Religious Education through the KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program also teaches children to appreciate cultural, religious, and worldview differences. They are taught principles of mutual understanding, tolerance, justice, and peace in their interactions with others. By understanding diversity and participating in intercultural dialogue, children can develop an attitude of respect and tolerance for differences, which is essential in an increasingly interconnected era of globalization.

The KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program in Banyuurip Village plays a key role in strengthening Islamic religious education in the village. The KKN students implement various innovative and relevant learning methods, such as holding sermon contests, Quran memorization, and other creative activities that attract children's interest in learning. With a more practical and interactive approach, this program not only enhances children's understanding of Islamic teachings but also motivates them to apply these values in their daily lives. The program also provides opportunities for children to receive direct guidance from the students, who serve as mentors and guides in overcoming life challenges in the digital era. Thus, the KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program not only serves as a medium for knowledge transfer but also as a tangible effort to shape children's character in alignment with the desired religious and moral values.

### **Positive Response and Application of Values in Daily Life**

Islamic Religious Education is applied through various methods and media in schools, families, and social environments. In schools, Islamic Religious Education is delivered through structured subjects that cover aspects of faith, worship, morals, and social interactions. Teaching methods often involve lectures, discussions, worship practices, and the delivery of ethical and moral values. In this digital age, children respond to and apply the values taught in religious education in various ways influenced by their environment, access to technology, and teaching approaches. One positive response from children to religious education can be seen in their acceptance of moral values such as honesty, discipline, mutual help, and respect for parents and peers. With widespread access to digital devices, children in Desa Banyuurip are exposed to religious content through social media, Islamic apps, videos, and online educational platforms. They tend to favor interactive and enjoyable learning methods.

In line with this, the program initiated by KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 focuses on enhancing understanding and practice of Islamic values among children through educational activities based on digital platforms. For example, the use of digital media to deliver Islamic stories, prayers, and worship practices interactively has received positive feedback from children. One child, Clarissa, mentioned that religious teachings are very helpful in understanding how to behave well, and she feels that values like honesty and respecting parents are very important. Clarissa added that learning religion has made her better at interacting with others and more diligent in being honest and helping her friends.

Additionally, children often show the application of religious values in their daily lives. They behave politely towards parents, friends, and teachers, and engage in worship routines like prayer and recitation. Values such as empathy and compassion are also reflected in their interactions with friends at school and home. For instance, a mother named Ibu Siti observed that her child has started displaying behaviors reflecting religious values, such as helping his younger sibling without being asked and sharing with friends. Children have also become more diligent in reciting the Quran every afternoon after playing, though they occasionally need reminders.

KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 also plays a crucial role in supporting the application of these values by organizing various activities in schools and communities involving local religious figures. The KKN students frequently invite local ustadz to give lectures and teachings about the importance of values such as honesty, patience, and respect for parents. This not only supports school programs but also reinforces values taught at home and in the community. For example, a teacher of Islamic Education at SDN 1 Banyuurip, Pak Dul, noted that children are



increasingly interested in the stories of the prophets and often ask about these stories, indicating that they are beginning to internalize the values taught.

Parents also play a significant role in shaping their children's character in this digital age. They can engage in cultural and character-building activities by being good role models, communicating openly, providing emotional support, and guiding children in the use of technology. Pak Ferry, one of the parents, mentioned that although children often use phones to watch YouTube or play games, they make efforts to set time limits and monitor the content their children watch. Thus, technology can be a good tool as long as parents also guide its use. Through collaboration between KKN MIT 18 Posko 80, schools, families, and communities, Islamic religious education can be more effective in shaping children's character in Desa Banyuurip in the digital era. The activities conducted by KKN MIT 18 Posko 80, such as using technology for religious education and engaging directly with the community in teaching religious values, contribute to the development of positive character among children. This is crucial to ensure that, despite growing up in a challenging digital era, children are able to maintain and practice religious values in their daily lives.

### **Challenges in Applying Values**

Although technology can support religious education, the implementation of the KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program in Desa Banyuurip faces several challenges in applying religious values, particularly in the context of the digital era. One major challenge is the influence of social media, which often features negative or conflicting content with religious values. Social media and other digital platforms have the power to shape children's attitudes and behaviors, frequently showcasing trends that contradict the moral principles taught in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Children may be tempted to follow these trends, which can ultimately impact the moral and ethical values they have been taught.

In this digital age, significant changes are occurring in various aspects of life, including education. Rapid advancements in information and communication technology have had a significant impact on how the younger generation learns, interacts, and behaves. One major effect of technology on education is the ease of access to information. However, this convenience also presents a challenge, as the information available is not always accurate or beneficial. Children in Desa Banyuurip, like in many other places, are frequently exposed to various digital content that can influence their social and moral values. For example, they may be exposed more often to content that does not align with religious norms or that encourages unethical behavior.

This challenge is further exacerbated by the changing learning styles in the digital era. Technology allows for more interactive and personalized learning but requires adjustments in teaching approaches, especially in the context of religious education. For instance, while technology can be used to make religious learning more engaging and interactive, improper use can lead to technology addiction or exposure to inappropriate content. Children may spend hours in front of screens on unproductive activities, such as playing games or watching non-educational videos, rather than engaging in healthy learning or interactions.

Moreover, technology misuse also poses significant digital security risks. Many children are not fully aware of how to protect themselves online, making them vulnerable to various threats, such as digital scams or cyberbullying. In this context, PAI must provide strong moral guidance so that children can use technology wisely and responsibly.

To address these challenges, KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 is working to integrate religious values into children's daily use of technology. One effort involves using digital media to deliver engaging and relevant religious content, such as educational videos teaching daily prayers or stories of the prophets. However, while this approach yields positive results, there remains an urgent need to continuously develop teaching methods that can adapt to the dynamics of the digital era

Collaboration between schools, families, and communities is also crucial in addressing these challenges. KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 works with teachers, parents, and community leaders to ensure that religious education is not only taught in schools but also practiced in daily life. They strive to build awareness of the importance of each element's role in supporting the moral and spiritual development of children amidst technological advancements. This involves training parents on how to monitor and limit children's use of technology and teaching them how to be good examples in using technology wisely and in accordance with religious values.

With this approach, it is hoped that children in Desa Banyuurip can be more resilient in facing negative influences from the digital era and can use technology as a positive tool for character and spiritual development. KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 remains committed to finding innovative and effective ways to support relevant and impactful Islamic religious education in this digital age.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program has successfully demonstrated the vital role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in shaping the character of children in Desa Banyuurip in the digital era. Through various media, models, and teaching methods, the program has instilled robust values and ethics, such as integrity, honesty, empathy, justice, and responsibility. PAI helps the children of Banyuurip develop their spirituality, strengthen their relationship with God, and perform religious practices with full awareness. Additionally, the children are taught to respect others, use polite language, avoid negative behaviors, and promote constructive communication—all crucial aspects in this digital age.

Through PAI, children are instructed to avoid harmful behaviors such as lying, cheating, stealing, or engaging in violence, and are encouraged to act kindly, help others, and uphold justice. This contributes to the formation of a character that is honest, responsible, and has integrity. Furthermore, the program plays a role in increasing social awareness and appreciation of diversity by teaching values of mutual respect, tolerance, and inclusivity. Thus, Islamic Religious Education not only strengthens the moral foundation of children but also prepares them to be caring individuals capable of living harmoniously in a diverse society. The KKN MIT 18 Posko 80 program in Desa Banyuurip is a concrete example of how appropriately and relevantly applied religious education can positively shape the character of the younger generation in the digital era.

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