

# Strategy of Character Building Based on the Love Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education Subjects

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## ABSTRACT

We are currently in an era of digitalization that has had a profound impact, both positive and negative. This has affected the character of this nation's generation, giving rise to various undesirable traits among the community, such as juvenile delinquency, illegal drug use, free sex, and other negative behaviors. This situation highlights the importance of character education. The love curriculum focuses more on character education because it is the main foundation for its implementation. This curriculum aims to shape a generation that is not only intelligent but also loving, tolerant, environmentally conscious, and embraces diversity, uniting humanity with a foundation of love. This study focuses on character-building strategies based on the Love Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education. The purpose of this study is to explore character-building strategies based on the Love Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education. The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis. The researcher obtained data through observation, interviews, and documentation of people or institutions related to this study. The results of the study prove that the Love Curriculum is a character-based curriculum and its implementation is going well because each component of the curriculum is understood and implemented to the fullest. Within the Love Curriculum components, there are five main pillars of character known as Pancacinta. The strategies for character building in the Love Curriculum learning process are teacher role modeling, cultivating a loving and caring environment, organizing activities aimed at character building, and selecting learning methods that support the character building process of students.

**Keywords:** *Strategy, Character Building, Love-Based Curriculum, Islamic Religious Education, Subjects*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The impact of globalization is like a double-edged sword, with positive and negative consequences that balance each other out. Competition, integration, and cooperation are the positive effects of globalization. Meanwhile, the negative effects include the emergence of an instant generation, moral decadence, and consumerism. Other negative effects include the emergence of violence, drug abuse, promiscuity, and crime. All of these negative things lead to a loss of character.

This situation illustrates the importance of reconceptualizing the idea of moral education or character education discourse. It is clear that national education at every level is becoming increasingly urgent, especially character education. Education is the basic capital for students to face their future world. The education referred to is holistic

and comprehensive education that prioritizes three important aspects, namely cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. The world of education is constantly evolving with the times, requiring innovation in learning methods to remain relevant and effective (Al Abror & Hosna, 2022). However, education needs to be applicable to humanize humans by not focusing on mastery of only one aspect but rather being balanced and complementary, especially in the aspect of character development and internalization.

The implementation of the love curriculum emphasizes character and moral strengthening. It involves a series of activities or learning experiences that not only focus on academic knowledge but also provide space for the development of students' character and personality (Muttaqin, 2021). One approach that is currently developing and is considered effective in character education is the Love Curriculum. The Love Curriculum does not only focus on achieving academic competence, but also on developing moral and social values that involve emotional aspects and interpersonal relationships in learning. This concept emphasizes the importance of instilling values such as compassion, empathy, tolerance, and cooperation in interactions between students, teachers, and the community (Nada and Listiana, 2025).

Islamic Religious Education attempts to present this through habituation and good ethics. Learning in Islamic Religious Education plays an important role in educating students, also because the scope of Islamic Religious Education can shape noble character that will lead Indonesians to be competent in all aspects of life, which essentially means becoming people of good character. This has been attempted in the learning process at Catak Gayam 02 Jombang Public Elementary School, particularly in Islamic Religious Education, where there is an emphasis on instilling character in students in the implementation of learning activities at school. Among other things, there is attendance using the flower line method as an effort to instill discipline, every student is required to shake hands and say hello every time they meet a teacher, This aims to improve politeness. The activity of praying together at noon trains discipline and responsibility. Commemorating important days with various methods and strategies strengthens the character of faith in students.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The research method used in this study is qualitative, which is based on various exploratory activities to understand and explain the issues that are the focus of this study. This study aims to explain and analyze the character building strategy development program for students based on the love curriculum in Islamic education at Catak Gayam 02 Jombang Public Elementary School through a process of triangulation of methods, techniques, and research subjects, with a total of 95 people interviewed. Qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form

of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. According to Bodgan and Taylor, as quoted by Lexi J. Moleong (1993:3), a qualitative approach is a basic research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Basically, this research examines the phenomenon of human social experience as seen from the participant's point of view by describing it. Understanding is obtained through analysis of various connections from participants and through an explanation of the "participant's meaning" of situations and events. Participant meanings include the feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts, and activities of participants (Sukamadinata, 2012:94).

This research is qualitative research with a descriptive approach that aims to describe existing phenomena, which are happening at the present time or in the past. From Islamic Education Teachers as implementers of the Curriculum in classroom learning activities, it is hoped that data will be obtained on the substance of policies related to the Curriculum Development program for Love in Islamic Education Learning in character building for students. From the Principal, data can be obtained on how the Curriculum Development programs for Love in Islamic Education Learning in character building for students are implemented and evaluated.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1. Components used to instill character in students in the learning process based on the Love Curriculum for Islamic Religious Education at Catak Gayam 02 Public Elementary School in Jombang**

Discussing the implementation process of a curriculum means discussing the four important components of a curriculum. These four components are objectives, content, strategies, and evaluation. Therefore, this study will discuss the objectives contained in the Love Curriculum. The objectives we discuss start from national education objectives, the objectives of an educational institution, to the objectives in the learning process. This curriculum aims to produce individuals who are humanistic, nationalistic, naturalistic, tolerant, and always prioritize love as a basic principle in life (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2025). The objective of the Love Curriculum is to shape a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also emotionally and spiritually mature, which is realized through the strengthening of tolerance, nationalism, and compassion. This curriculum aims to educate students to love others in diversity, respect differences, and contribute to the integrity of the nation. In addition, this curriculum also serves as a bulwark against radicalism and violence.

After discussing the characteristics of the objectives, the next discussion is the content of the Love Curriculum. The characteristics that are highlighted in the Love Curriculum are humanism, tolerance, empathy, love for others, care for the environment, and nationalism. These characteristics are instilled through the integration of values of

love and care in every aspect of learning, with a focus on respect, togetherness, and responsibility. Furthermore, this study discusses the strategies used as efforts to achieve character building in students by integrating the values of love (towards God, others, oneself, the environment, and the country) into all aspects of learning, both through pedagogical approaches such as project-based learning and habituation, and through the active role of stakeholders (teachers, parents, and the community) to set an example and create a conducive environment. Finally, the last aspect is the form of character-based evaluation in the implementation process of the Love curriculum. The evaluation of character education in the love-based curriculum can be carried out through the assessment of student behavior (such as empathy, concern, and social interaction), analysis of student work (e.g., writing or social projects), and self and peer assessment to measure self-awareness of character using authentic assessment.

### **3.2. Strategies in the learning process based on the Love-Based Curriculum for Islamic Religious Education as an effort to instill character in students**

Strategies in PAI learning based on the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) focus on character building through learning centered on love, empathy, and compassion. Some of the main strategies are integrating the value of love into each subject, using methods that create positive interactions and set direct examples, involving students in social activities, and developing a systematic schedule of activities to monitor their learning progress.

Strategies in PAI learning based on the Love-Based Curriculum

1. Integrating the value of love: Incorporating the values of love, empathy, and compassion into every PAI subject. This can be done by telling stories of prophets who were full of compassion, such as the story of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, to set an example for students.
2. Using teaching methods that reflect compassion: Teachers can be direct role models by showing compassion, care, and empathy to students. This method can create positive relationships and motivate students to do the same.
3. Encouraging social interaction: Inviting students to participate in social activities based on the values of the Qur'an, such as social service. Through these activities, students learn to show compassion and care for others.
4. Developing schedules and monitoring progress:
  - o Systematically scheduling learning activities and recording student progress through comprehensive and periodic assessments.
  - o Managing student motivation by creating ways to increase their enthusiasm for learning.
  - o Supervising learning by giving students the freedom to choose learning activities that suit their characteristics.

5. Collaborative approach: Building synergy with other parties for the reform of teacher recruitment and training policies based on ethical-spiritual competencies.
6. Emphasis on five main themes:
  - Love for Allah
  - Love for others
  - Love for oneself
  - Love for the environment
  - Love for the nation and country

By implementing the above strategies, it is hoped that students will have strong character and good morals.

The strategies used in the implementation of the Love Curriculum learning process, especially in Islamic Religious Education, are divided into strategies based on the Love-Based Curriculum, specifically PAI, which includes strategies based on character development and values of love, as well as learning strategies that focus on interaction, experience, and reflection. Learning strategies through:

1. Cooperative learning: Encouraging students to work together in small groups to improve team performance, even though they are tested individually.
2. Problem-based learning: Involving students in solving real problems to improve their understanding and skills.
3. Innovation and adaptation: Educational units can adopt or adapt existing models and approaches to produce a curriculum that is more suited to their needs.

Strategies in character building of students and strategies in the learning process. According to Kemp (in his book *Vina Sanjaya*, 2008), there is a difference between strategy and method. Strategy involves planning, so strategy is the planning of an activity to achieve a goal, while method is the means used to implement the plan to achieve the predetermined goal.

Based on this theory, this strategy component is divided into two types, namely strategies for instilling character in students, which will discuss the plans used to realize character education in students. The second strategy is the learning strategy used for classroom activities, commonly known as the learning method, which aims to instill character in students at Catak Gayam 02 Jombang Public Elementary School. Strategies in the process of instilling character in students can be seen from the following:

1. Teacher role modeling

The attitudes and behaviors of students arise from imitating the behaviors and attitudes of teachers and educational staff at school. This role modeling can include attitudes in speaking, politeness in conveying something, manners in discipline and responsibility, modesty in dress, persistence in working hard, and so on. The basic behavior of a child is to imitate and follow what they see and hear. Therefore, teacher

role modeling is essential in shaping student character. In this case, a teacher who has the spirit of an educator, better known as *ruhul mudarris*, is needed. That is, a teacher who is sincere, faithful and pious, resilient, honest, polite, confident, hardworking, and loves their work so that whatever they do is for the sake of worship.

## 2. Giving Rewards and Punishments

Praise and rewards are a positive reinforcement strategy. Children who do good deeds will receive recognition from their environment and will learn to always do good, thus forming good character. Conversely, children who do wrong but are not reprimanded or punished will continue to grow with negative character traits because there is no response to their mistakes. Therefore, rewards and praise are necessary to foster good character in children.

## 3. Character Education Socialization

Posting signs that encourage children to always do good will help them to develop good character. Examples of signs containing messages of kindness and aimed at shaping character include: honest people live prosperous lives, cleanliness is part of faith, a quiet classroom is a comfortable place to study, and so on.

## 4. Cultivating a Character-Building Environment

Instill habits or routines in students to regularly do things that have moral value. Good deeds that become daily habits and are done repeatedly will shape good character. Examples include discipline in maintaining environmental cleanliness by doing classroom cleaning every morning, and the flower parade tradition, where children who arrive early are entitled to have their flower pots, labeled with their names, placed in the first row, neatly lined up in front of the classroom. This trains students to be disciplined in arriving early and on time.

## 5. Organizing School Activities that can Shape Character.

For example, commemorating Islamic holidays, such as the slaughter of sacrificial animals on Eid al-Adha, is expected to shape the character of willingness to sacrifice, as exemplified by the Prophet Ibrahim. Poetry reading and public speaking competitions are a means of training courage and creativity, while performing the midday prayer in congregation trains orderly and disciplined worship. As well as other activities aimed at character building for students.

## 6. Selecting appropriate learning methods that are active, innovative, creative, and enjoyable.

With this strategy, it is hoped that learning activities that take place in the classroom can realize the objectives of the Love Curriculum, namely to shape students with character.

Teaching methods that are appropriate for the material in Islamic Education subjects that can shape the character of students are:

a. Lectures

The lecture teaching method is used to deliver teaching material and motivate students to always behave well and correctly. Islamic Education material that needs to use the lecture method includes explanations about the example set by the Prophet Muhammad, the correct procedures for performing prayers, etc.

b. Question and answer

The question and answer method used in Islamic Religious Education learning activities aims to stimulate students' reasoning and creativity.

c. Matching/sequencing pictures

This method can be used to train students' memory in memorizing one of the pillars of worship, such as the pillars of wudhu, the pillars of prayer, etc.

d. Demonstration

This method is used when presenting material that must be demonstrated by the teacher or by inviting an expert, so that students can better understand what the teacher is explaining. For example, inviting a qari to demonstrate how to read the Quran, or inviting a doctor to explain how to maintain health and personal hygiene.

e. Discussion

The discussion method aims to build character traits such as courage, caring for others, respecting others, honesty, and politeness in expressing opinions.

f. Role-playing

This method is very effective when the material presented is related to Islamic role models. By presenting it in the form of a drama or other performance, students will be more impressed and will remember it more easily.

g. Storytelling

This method is very good for conveying stories of the exemplary lives and struggles of Islamic figures, such as the stories of the Wali Songo, the stories of the Prophets and Messengers, and so on.

In the Love Curriculum, teachers are required to have PAI teaching methods that are no longer boring and overly dogmatic. PAI teachers in the Love Curriculum are required to conduct integrated moral and character supervision. Assessment is not only based on cognitive abilities in PAI grades, but also on the affective and psychomotor aspects of students.

The learning process in educational units is conducted in an interactive, inspiring, enjoyable, and challenging manner, motivating students to participate actively and providing sufficient space for initiative, creativity, and independence in accordance with the talents, interests, and physical and psychological development of the students. To that end, each educational unit plans, implements, and assesses the learning process to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of graduate competency achievement. With the selection of appropriate strategies and correct learning methods, it is hoped that the perfect character of students can be formed and the national education goal of forming intelligent and competitive Indonesian individuals (perfect individuals) who are spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and kinesthetically intelligent can be realized.

### **3.3. Assessment methods for Islamic Religious Education based on the Love Curriculum for character building among students at Catak Gayam 02 Public Elementary School in Jombang**

The assessment methods for Islamic Religious Education based on the Love Curriculum at Catak Gayam 02 Public Elementary School in Jombang use authentic assessment. The assessment of Islamic Religious Education based on the Love Curriculum includes the assessment of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that focus on the values of compassion, empathy, and humanity. The assessment can take the form of behavioral observation, student work portfolios, social projects, self and peer assessment, story and essay assignments, as well as discussions and presentations that reflect the character of love.

Forms of PAI assessment based on the Love Curriculum

1. Behavioral observation: Teachers directly observe students' behavior in interacting with others, the environment, and God, such as showing love, empathy, tolerance, and responsibility.
2. Portfolio: Collecting student work such as writing, drawings, or video recordings that demonstrate understanding and application of the values of love.
3. Social projects: Assessment of student participation in social activities such as community service, helping others in need, or environmental conservation projects.
4. Self and peer assessment: Students assess themselves and their classmates based on the criteria of love, such as honesty, empathy, and cooperation.
5. Story and essay assignments: Students are asked to write stories or essays describing their experiences in applying the value of love or analyzing characters who reflect this character trait.

6. Discussions and presentations: Assessment of students' ability to convey their ideas and opinions about the importance of love and how to apply it in everyday life.

The main objective of character building is to develop students who have humanistic, nationalistic, naturalistic, and tolerant characters, as well as love for God, others, themselves, the environment, and the country. From this explanation, it can be concluded that in the Love Curriculum, the assessment focuses not only on the results but also on the process during the learning process, from planning and implementation to the final stage of learning, namely evaluation. All of these are part of the assessment, so that the character development of students is truly taken into account.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH RESULTS**

The deterioration of national character in this country indicates that one of the causes is the failure of education. By thoroughly studying a curriculum that serves as a barometer for the implementation of education, it is hoped that a quality learning process will occur. With a quality learning process, it is hoped that a quality generation will be formed and the goal of education will be realized, namely to develop well-rounded individuals who are physically healthy and have good character.

After undergoing a thorough planning process, selecting appropriate learning methods, continuous professional development for teachers, the creation of a character-building environment, and the provision of character-based evaluation at Catak Gayam 02 Jombang Public Elementary School, several implications or benefits were obtained from this study, namely quality Islamic Religious Education learning that is able to shape the character of students and fulfill the spiritual, social, knowledge, and skill aspects of students, including:

##### **4.1. The creation of quality Religious Education learning**

For an Islamic Religious Education teacher, understanding the components that support the implementation of a curriculum will enable them to create good and quality learning. Teachers will make careful learning plans, thoroughly understand the content and material of their lessons, choose good learning methods and strategies in the implementation process, and conduct proper evaluations.

##### **4.2. The formation of professional Islamic Religious Education teachers**

Professional Islamic Religious Education teachers understand the importance of good preparation in the planning process and are able to choose appropriate and effective learning strategies and methods. because choosing the right learning strategies will create active, innovative, creative, and enjoyable learning for students, supported by leadership that encourages teacher involvement in decision-making and provides support in the form of training and ongoing mentoring. This is what will become the capital for the successful implementation of an effective curriculum, which

must be supported by leadership that encourages teacher involvement in decision-making and provides support in the form of training and ongoing mentoring.

#### **4.3. Monitoring the development of students' character**

The final stage in a learning process is the evaluation or assessment stage. The Cinta Curriculum uses authentic assessment, an assessment technique that evaluates the entire learning process, from preparation and implementation to the final results of learning activities. This means that the development of all aspects of students will be monitored, from their spiritual and social aspects to their knowledge and skills, so that the development of their character can be monitored continuously. This will certainly be very beneficial for students, parents, and education stakeholders.

#### **4.4. The formation of students with good character**

With the proper implementation of a curriculum, the expected outcome is the formation of students with well-rounded characters in terms of physical and spiritual aspects, namely spiritual, social, knowledge, and skills.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

There are four components used to instill character in students in the learning process based on the Love Curriculum for Islamic Religious Education at Catak Gayam 02 Public Elementary School in Jombang, namely curriculum objectives, curriculum content, strategies, and evaluation in the learning process, namely planning, implementation, and assessment. The strategies used in the learning process based on the Love Curriculum in Islamic Religious Education as an effort to instill character in students at Catak Gayam 02 Jombang Public Elementary School are divided into two, namely strategies for instilling character in students, including the exemplary behavior of teachers and all parties involved in the learning environment, giving rewards and punishments, socializing good character through billboards or writings on wall magazines, cultivating a character-building environment, holding activities that can shape student character, and choosing active, innovative, creative, and fun learning methods. Furthermore, the strategy in Islamic Religious Education learning is to select learning methods that are appropriate for the material being studied. The form of assessment for the Islamic Religious Education subject based on the Love Curriculum as an effort to instill character in students at Catak Gayam 02 Jombang Public Elementary School uses an authentic assessment approach, which is a comprehensive assessment starting from the preparation process, during the activity, and at the time of final evaluation. The selected assessment techniques can be in written, oral, product, portfolio, performance, project, observation, and self-assessment forms, and at the

elementary education level, character building is prioritized over academic development.

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