

## The Strategic Role of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping the Values and Character of Adolescents in Lombok

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**Abstract.** Adolescents face various social and clinical issues, including risky sexual behavior, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and other maladaptive behaviors. These problems often arise due to a lack of understanding of Islamic teachings. This study aimed to examine the relationship between Islamic knowledge and adolescent character in Lombok. A descriptive-analytic study with a cross-sectional design was conducted involving 50 adolescents selected through random sampling. Data on Islamic knowledge (independent variable) and adolescent character (dependent variable) were collected and categorized as good, fair, or poor. Data analysis included univariate descriptions of sociodemographic characteristics and bivariate analysis using the Chi-square test with a significance level of  $p < 0.05$ . The results indicated a significant relationship between Islamic knowledge and adolescent character ( $p = 0.000$ ). Adolescents with good Islamic knowledge predominantly exhibited positive character traits, while those with poor knowledge were more likely to display negative behaviors. The findings highlight the importance of Islamic education in shaping moral values, ethical behavior, and social responsibility among adolescents. Integrating Islamic education within family, school, and community settings can strengthen character development, provide moral guidance, and equip adolescents to navigate modern societal challenges, including technology and social media exposure. This study underscores the critical role of Islamic education as both a source of religious knowledge and a foundation for fostering responsible, ethical, and socially competent adolescents.

**Keywords:** Islamic education, adolescent character, moral development, Lombok

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN) defines adolescents as individuals aged 10–24 years who are unmarried. In 2017, the number of adolescents in Indonesia reached 67.36 million, approximately 25% of the total population, making this age group a significant focus, particularly regarding adolescent health (BKKBN, 2017).

Various social and health issues commonly affecting adolescents include premarital sexual behavior, unintended pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, and substance abuse. The primary factor contributing to these issues is adolescents' limited understanding of Islamic teachings (Arisjulyanto et al., 2019; Kusmiran, 2014). The advancement of technology, especially social media, has dual effects: while it facilitates communication and access to information, its negative impact on adolescent character development is more significant, including sexual behaviors through chats or exposure to pornography (Arisjulyanto et al., 2019). Therefore, effective religious education is

a crucial strategy to guide adolescents toward behavior consistent with societal and religious norms.

Education is a deliberate and planned effort to create a learning environment that allows students to develop their potential optimally, including spiritual growth, self-control, personality, moral values, intelligence, and skills necessary for themselves and society (Ghozi, 2010). Islamic religious education plays a vital role in equipping adolescents with knowledge, understanding, and skills aligned with Islamic teachings, enabling them to master science and technology without violating religious norms.

A preliminary survey in Lombok showed that most adolescents lacked basic knowledge of Islamic teachings, and some did not follow proper religious dress codes, such as covering the aurat for females. These conditions highlight the importance of research to evaluate the influence of Islamic religious education on adolescent character development in Lombok.

## **2. METODE**

This study is a descriptive-analytic research using a cross-sectional design. The research was conducted on 50 adolescents in Lombok. Random sampling was applied to meet the minimum sample requirements according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study. The study involved two variables: an independent variable and a dependent variable. Both variables were categorical. The independent variable was knowledge of Islamic religious education, while the dependent variable was adolescent character, categorized into two groups: good and poor. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 20. The analysis consisted of two stages. First, a univariate analysis was performed to describe the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender and age. Second, a correlation analysis was conducted using the chi-square test, with a significance level of  $p < 0.05$ .

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **a. Respondent Characteristics**

Based on the study results, the characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

<b>Variable</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	27	54.0
Male	23	46.0
<b>Age (years)</b>		
14	6	12.0
15	5	10.0

16	7	14.0
17	8	16.0
18	12	24.0
19	12	24.0

From Table 1, the majority of respondents were female (54%), while males accounted for 46%. The age distribution shows that the most common ages were 18 and 19 years (24% each), while the least represented age was 15 years (10%).

### b. Chi-Square Analysis

Table 2. Chi-Square Analysis

Islamic Knowledge	Adolescent Character		p-value
	Good	Poor	
Good	3 (6%)	13 (26%)	0,000
Fair	2 (4%)	3 (6%)	
Poor	9 (18%)	7 (14%)	

Based on the table above, most adolescents with good Islamic knowledge have a good character (26%), while only 6% exhibit poor character. Adolescents with fair Islamic knowledge show 6% with good character and 4% with poor character. Meanwhile, adolescents with poor Islamic knowledge are more likely to have poor character (18%) compared to those with good character (14%). The Chi-Square analysis yielded a p-value of 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ), indicating a significant relationship between the level of Islamic knowledge and adolescent character. In other words, the better the adolescents' knowledge of Islam, the more likely they are to exhibit good character.

The results of this study indicated a p-value of 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ), suggesting a significant relationship between Islamic knowledge and adolescent character in Lombok. This finding aligns with Rohima (2019), who reported that Islamic education significantly contributes to the development of adolescent character. The rapid advancement of the modern era, characterized by the proliferation of knowledge and technology, has transformed human culture. From agrarian roots to the current Industrial 4.0 era, these changes have impacted nearly every aspect of human life, including social, industrial, and educational domains.

Islamic education, as part of cultural transmission, must respond to these external pressures. The evolving technological and industrial environment demands innovation in Islamic education to maintain its relevance and efficacy. Education, inherently idealistic, continues to be a focus for scholars and practitioners seeking to enhance both its quality and quantity (Rohima, 2019).

According to Djaelani (2013), Islamic education plays a pivotal role in shaping adolescent character, starting from the family environment. Understanding Islam comprehensively helps adolescents develop proper behavior, attitudes, and ethical conduct. Such character formation requires continuous practice, including reading and reflecting on the Qur'an, performing voluntary prayers, observing Sunnah fasting, and maintaining social connections with family and the community. Regular engagement in these practices cultivates habits that gradually integrate into daily life, strengthening moral and ethical conduct.

Izzah (2018) emphasized that knowledge, technology, culture, and religion collectively drive societal innovation, which shapes both cultural patterns and thought processes. Transforming society from a primitive state to a civically responsible and educated community (madani society) is challenging but achievable through sustained Islamic education. Formal and non-formal Islamic educational institutions, such as madrasahs and study circles, significantly influence adolescents' behavior and social interactions, reinforcing character development aligned with religious teachings (Anwar, 2016).

Adolescent character is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors stem from self-motivation and personal discipline, while external factors relate to family and educational environments. Although schools play an important role, the family remains the primary source of moral and religious education (Yuhana, 2019).

Islamic education is essential in shaping social behavior, fostering ethical conduct, and strengthening devotion to Allah SWT (Ratnasari et al., 2020). It serves as a fundamental foundation for moral and ethical education, enabling adolescents to engage respectfully and politely in social interactions (Hidayat, 2015).

Furthermore, Islamic education adapts to the demands of modern times while aiming to produce individuals who are pious, ethical, honest, just, disciplined, and socially responsible (Samsudin, 2019; Maesaroh, 2013). For adolescents in Lombok, Islamic education is critical in developing their character and guiding them to navigate societal challenges, including the risks posed by unregulated technological exposure. When properly integrated with moral and ethical guidance, Islamic education empowers adolescents to maintain self-control, make responsible decisions, and cultivate positive social interactions.

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in Lombok serves as a vital medium for the transmission of moral values and the development of adolescent character. It operates through both formal and informal systems — including madrasah, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), and family-based instruction — that intertwine Qur’anic teachings with local cultural values (Mareta, 2021). Empirical studies have shown that the integration of Islamic principles into educational practice enhances students’ religiosity, moral awareness, and social responsibility, particularly in the multicultural context of Lombok (Sobry, 2022; Rahim & Yusof, 2013). In both urban and rural madrasah, the implementation of structured moral curricula has been found to strengthen students’ ethical decision-making and civic engagement (Mareta, 2021).

Teachers, *tuan guru* (religious leaders), and educational administrators play strategic roles in translating Islamic values into daily school practices. Effective pedagogical approaches—such as storytelling, habituation, role modeling, and reflective assessment—have been found to significantly enhance internalization of Islamic ethics (Zulkifli, 2022). In Islamic boarding schools across East Lombok, consistent character development programs supported by mentorship and leadership modeling have shown a positive correlation with improved moral reasoning and behavioral discipline among adolescents (Sobry, 2022). Similarly, Abdullah and Hashim (2017) emphasized that structured leadership training and human resource management within Islamic institutions greatly contribute to institutional effectiveness and the moral formation of students.

However, the rise of digital media, globalization, and social transformation poses serious challenges to maintaining moral consistency among adolescents. Studies have revealed that moral degradation and exposure to inappropriate content can erode adolescents’ Islamic identity (Pakpahan et al., 2025). To respond to this, Islamic educators in Lombok are incorporating digital literacy and contextualized moral instruction, including the use of local folklore such as the *Putri Mandalika* legend, to make values education more relatable and engaging (Zulkifli, 2022; Mareta, 2021). Karim and Rahman (2020) further argue that innovation and technological adaptation in Islamic schools not only strengthen educational competitiveness but also serve as moral safeguards in the digital era.

Sustainable character development requires collaboration among families, schools, and the community. Studies in Lombok and other Indonesian provinces

demonstrate that when parents and community stakeholders actively participate in Islamic education programs, the impact on students' moral behavior is significantly greater (Sulaiman & Noor, 2021; Rahim & Yusof, 2013). Effective institutional governance and teacher professional development are therefore essential components in maintaining the quality and relevance of Islamic character education (Abdullah & Hashim, 2017). This collaborative approach aligns with the concept of "shared moral ecology," where home, school, and society co-create moral environments for adolescents (Sobry, 2022).

In conclusion, the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education in Lombok lies in its ability to combine traditional religious values with modern educational strategies to shape the moral integrity and global competitiveness of adolescents. The literature consistently indicates that the integration of *sharia*-based ethics, visionary leadership, innovative pedagogy, and digital literacy are key to achieving sustainable character development (Fadhil & Setiawan, 2023; Karim & Rahman, 2020). Strengthening teacher capacity, community participation, and evidence-based policy frameworks can further enhance the transformative potential of IRE in building morally grounded and socially responsible youth in Lombok.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that Islamic education plays a significant and strategic role in shaping the character of adolescents in Lombok. Adolescents with good knowledge of Islam are more likely to exhibit positive character traits, including ethical behavior, self-discipline, and social responsibility. Conversely, limited understanding of Islamic teachings is associated with weaker character development and a higher risk of engaging in negative behaviors. Furthermore, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating Islamic education from both family and community environments, as well as formal and non-formal educational institutions. Continuous engagement in religious practices, moral guidance, and ethical learning contributes to the cultivation of habits that form the foundation of adolescent character. In the context of modern challenges, including technological advancements and social media exposure, Islamic education provides adolescents with the knowledge and moral framework necessary to navigate social and cultural pressures. By fostering both spiritual and ethical development, Islamic education ensures that adolescents are better equipped to make responsible decisions, maintain self-control, and participate positively within their communities.

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