

Islamic Religious Education as a Foundational Basis for Adolescent Behavior in Central Lombok

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Abstract. *This study explores the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) as a foundational basis for adolescent behavior in Central Lombok. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage where individuals begin to form moral values, identity, and behavior. Islamic Religious Education plays an essential role in guiding adolescents to develop ethical awareness, discipline, and responsibility according to Islamic principles. This descriptive study involved 65 adolescents in Central Lombok, with data collected through a Google Form questionnaire focusing on knowledge of Islamic teachings and behavioral practices. The findings describe adolescents' understanding of Islamic education, daily religious practices, and moral conduct in social life. The study emphasizes that effective Islamic Religious Education delivered through schools, families, and community institutions can strengthen adolescents' moral values, self-control, and social responsibility. Strengthening collaboration between educators, parents, and religious leaders is crucial in fostering adolescents who are morally grounded and capable of adapting to modern social and technological challenges.*

Keywords: *Islamic Religious Education, adolescent behavior, character formation, Central Lombok, moral values*

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, representing approximately 25% of the total population, making this age group a significant demographic segment, particularly in relation to adolescent health and behavior (BKKBN, 2017).

Adolescents often face various social and health-related issues, such as premarital sexual behavior, unintended pregnancies, abortion, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, and substance abuse. One of the main underlying factors contributing to these problems is the lack of comprehensive understanding and internalization of Islamic teachings among adolescents (Arisjulyanto et al., 2019; Kusmiran, 2014). The rapid advancement of technology, particularly the widespread use of social media, has also brought dual effects. While it facilitates communication and access to information, it simultaneously exerts a stronger negative influence on adolescent moral development, including exposure to pornography and risky sexual interactions via online platforms (Arisjulyanto et al., 2019).

Education serves as a deliberate and systematic effort to create a learning environment that enables learners to develop their potential optimally spiritually, morally, intellectually, and socially thus equipping them with the competencies needed to contribute positively to

themselves and their communities (Ghozi, 2010). In this regard, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) plays a strategic role in providing adolescents with knowledge, understanding, and ethical guidance grounded in Islamic principles. Through effective Islamic education, adolescents are expected to acquire the ability to engage with science and technology while maintaining behavior that aligns with religious and societal norms.

A preliminary observation conducted in Central Lombok revealed that many adolescents demonstrated limited understanding of fundamental Islamic values and practices. Moreover, some female students were observed not adhering to Islamic dress codes, such as covering the aurat properly. These findings underscore the urgent need to examine how Islamic Religious Education can serve as a foundational basis for shaping adolescent behavior in Central Lombok.

2. METHODE

This study employed a descriptive-analytic research design with a cross-sectional approach. The research was conducted among 65 adolescents in Central Lombok. Sampling was carried out using a random sampling technique to meet the minimum sample requirements in accordance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form to ensure accessibility and wider reach among respondents. The study consisted of two main variables: an independent variable and a dependent variable, both categorical in nature. The independent variable was knowledge of Islamic religious education, while the dependent variable was adolescent character, classified into two categories: good and poor. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 20. The analytical process included two stages. First, a univariate analysis was conducted to describe the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender and age. Second, a bivariate analysis using the chi-square test was performed to assess the relationship between Islamic religious education knowledge and adolescent character, with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$.

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

Variable	n	%
Gender		
Female	35	53.8

Male	30	46.2
Age (years)		
14	7	10.8
15	6	9.2
16	9	13.8
17	10	15.4
18	16	24.6
19	17	26.2

Based on the table above, it can be seen that out of a total of 65 respondents, the majority were female (35 respondents or 53.8%), while male respondents totaled 30 (46.2%). This indicates that female participation in this study was slightly higher than that of males. In terms of age distribution, most respondents were 18 years old (24.6%) and 19 years old (26.2%), representing the late adolescent age group. Meanwhile, the smallest proportion was found among respondents aged 15 years (9.2%). Overall, these data show that the majority of participants were between 17 and 19 years old, a period typically characterized by upper secondary education and the formation of personal values and moral character

The results of this study show a significant relationship between Islamic religious education and adolescent behavior in Central Lombok, as indicated by a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). This finding demonstrates that a higher level of Islamic knowledge is strongly associated with more positive behavioral patterns among adolescents. These results align with Rohima (2019), who stated that Islamic education plays a crucial role in shaping adolescents' moral character and guiding them to behave according to Islamic values.

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) serves as the foundation for moral and ethical development, particularly amid the challenges of modernization and digital transformation. The rapid advancement of technology and the influence of social media have created both opportunities and threats to adolescent character. Without sufficient religious understanding, adolescents are more vulnerable to negative influences such as moral degradation, substance abuse, and deviant social behavior (Arisjulyanto et al., 2019; Kusmiran, 2014). Therefore, strengthening Islamic education becomes essential to reinforce moral awareness and self-control.

According to Djaelani (2013), character formation begins within the family environment through consistent religious practice, including prayer, Qur'anic study, and moral habituation. These practices foster personal discipline and instill ethical values that influence adolescents' daily interactions. Izzah (2018) adds that religion,

culture, and knowledge interact to form a civilized society (madani), highlighting the transformative potential of Islamic education in building moral communities.

In Central Lombok, formal and informal Islamic institutions—such as madrasahs, pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), and community study groups—play a pivotal role in shaping adolescents’ religious behavior. Teachers and *tuan guru* (religious leaders) act as moral guides, translating Qur’anic teachings into practical ethics through storytelling, role modeling, and reflective learning (Zulkifli, 2022; Mareta, 2021). Research in East Lombok further shows that consistent mentoring and leadership modeling in pesantren settings are associated with higher levels of moral reasoning and behavioral discipline (Sobry, 2022).

However, globalization and digital exposure remain major challenges to sustaining adolescent morality. The spread of inappropriate content and shifting cultural values can weaken Islamic identity if not countered with strong moral education (Pakpahan et al., 2025). In response, educators in Lombok have begun integrating digital literacy and local wisdom such as the Putri Mandalika legend into moral instruction to make religious values more relatable and culturally grounded (Zulkifli, 2022; Mareta, 2021). Similarly, Karim and Rahman (2020) emphasize that innovation and technological adaptation within Islamic schools are vital for maintaining moral integrity in the digital era.

Sustainable character formation requires collaboration among families, schools, and communities. Studies show that when parents and community leaders actively participate in religious education, adolescents’ moral development is significantly stronger (Sulaiman & Noor, 2021; Rahim & Yusof, 2013). Therefore, improving teacher competence, institutional governance, and curriculum innovation is essential to strengthen the role of Islamic education in guiding adolescent behavior in Central Lombok.

In conclusion, Islamic Religious Education functions as the moral compass for adolescents in Central Lombok, fostering honesty, discipline, respect, and social responsibility. The integration of Islamic values with modern educational strategies supported by digital literacy, community engagement, and effective pedagogy can ensure that adolescents not only grow intellectually but also uphold the ethical and spiritual values that form the foundation of a balanced, moral society (Fadhil & Setiawan, 2023; Karim & Rahman, 2020).

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) has long been recognized as one of the primary means of shaping adolescent character, particularly in the moral and ethical dimensions. This study confirms that understanding Islamic education not only functions as a component of religious knowledge but also shapes values such as honesty, responsibility, respect, and discipline among adolescents in Lombok. The study *Analysis of the Role of Islamic Religious Education in the Formation of Adolescent Character* found that IRE provides a strong moral foundation when taught holistically through family, school, and community environments findings that are consistent with the present research (Asty Wieke et al., 2024).

Furthermore, effective models of Islamic Religious Education emphasize strong internalization strategies for religious values. For instance, *The Roles of Islamic Education in Building Students' Character within Indonesia Public Schools* demonstrates that integrating character education into Islamic Studies curricula and extracurricular programs enhances student discipline, empathy, and social responsibility. This highlights the need for educational institutions in Lombok to strengthen both curricular and extracurricular religious activities as an integral part of character education (Darlan et al., 2021).

Adolescent character development is highly influenced by the formal Islamic education environment. In Islamic schools and boarding institutions across Lombok such as MTs Nurul Islam Radungkal research has shown that Islamic-based learning significantly enhances students' honesty, discipline, responsibility, and empathy (Rahmawati, 2024).

Equally important is the role of the family as the primary environment for early character formation. The study *The Foundation of Developing Character Building in Hamzanwadi NWDI Islamic Boarding School in East Lombok* highlights that Islamic boarding schools such as NWDI do not only teach religious knowledge but also life philosophy and practical experiences through daily worship, moral discipline, and exemplary leadership by the kyai (Badrin, 2022).

In the digital and globalized era, IRE faces major challenges. The study *Character Education in Islam: The Role of Teachers in Building Islamic Personality in Elementary Schools* suggests that teachers must integrate technology wisely while using thematic approaches to maintain student engagement and relevance of Islamic values in contemporary contexts (Saepudin et al., 2023).

Innovative teaching strategies are therefore essential. Methods such as storytelling, role modeling, real-life examples, and moral reflection have proven effective in various studies. For example, *The Role of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers in Building Students' Islamic Character Through Integrative Thematic Learning in the Digital Era* revealed that thematic learning integrating Islamic values into general subjects reinforces the internalization of students' character (Chika Gianistika et al., 2024).

The local context of Lombok holds significant potential for strengthening Islamic education as a foundation for adolescent behavior. Islamic boarding schools, madrasahs, and religious communities serve as vital spaces for the transmission of Islamic values. However, as highlighted in the NWDI study, there remains a need to improve pedagogy, teacher training, and character evaluation methods to ensure that Islamic education genuinely becomes the foundation for healthy behavior (Badrun, 2022).

Integrating formal Islamic education with informal and real-life practice is also essential. For example, the study *Strengthening Character Education Through Islamic Religious Education: A Case in Indonesian Context* emphasizes that synergy among schools, families, and communities through extracurricular activities such as Rohis groups, habituation, and documentation of students' character development creates more tangible and lasting moral outcomes (Furqon & Hanif, 2022).

Overall, IRE not only teaches rituals and doctrines but also holistically develops moral, social, and spiritual character. In Lombok, strengthening Islamic education through collaboration among schools, families, and communities can enhance adolescents' religiosity, integrity, and social responsibility. Challenges such as technological influence, declining student interest, and curriculum integration must be addressed through innovative and adaptive approaches to ensure IRE remains relevant and effective. Numerous studies such as those by Darlan et al. (2021), Badrun (2022), Rahmawati (2024), and Saepudin et al. (2023) consistently show that Islamic values, when properly implemented, have a profound positive impact on adolescent character formation.

4. CONCLUSION

Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic and foundational role in shaping the behavior of adolescents in Central Lombok. The study's findings indicate a significant

relationship between Islamic knowledge and positive adolescent behavior, emphasizing that a strong understanding of religious values fosters moral awareness, discipline, and social responsibility. Strengthening Islamic education through family involvement, innovative teaching methods, and community collaboration is essential to counter the moral challenges posed by modernization and digitalization. Therefore, integrating Islamic values with contemporary educational practices can build a generation of adolescents who are not only intellectually capable but also spiritually grounded and ethically responsible members of society.

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