The Concept of Aqidah Akhlak Education Curriculum in Forming Istiqamah Character of Elementary School Students

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Abstract
There is a need for an aqidah akhlak education curriculum that can shape the character of istiqamah students at the elementary school level as a basic foundation for good character building. Thus, this research seeks to explore: (1) How is the concept of aqidah akhlak education curriculum in shaping the istiqamah character of elementary school students at the stage of learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation? (2) How is implementing the aqidah akhlak education curriculum in shaping the istiqamah character of elementary school students at the stage of learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation? This research uses a qualitative approach. This type of multi-site study research is chosen to provide a search for the proposed research problem. Data collection techniques were carried out by 1) in-depth interviews, 2) participant observation, and 3) documentation. The data were analyzed with an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, conclusion, and verification. Data validity checking is based on four criteria: degree of trust (credibility), degree of transferability, degree of dependability, and degree of certainty (confirmability). The results of this study were found (1) the concept of the aqidah akhlak education curriculum in shaping the istiqamah character of elementary school students at the learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation stages in two Islamic elementary schools in Situbondo and (2) implementation of the aqidah akhlak education curriculum in shaping the istiqamah character of elementary school students at the stage of learning planning, learning implementation, and learning evaluation in two Islamic elementary schools in Situbondo.

Keywords
Aqidah Akhlaq; Education Curriculum; Istiqamah Character

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1. INTRODUCTION

The discourse on curriculum development continues to be a topic of conversation due to dissatisfaction with the results of education in schools (www.kompasiana.com, 2023). The 2013 curriculum is a development of the previous curriculum, which is competency-based and through the learning process (Ikhsan & Hadi, 2018). A curriculum is an educational plan that focuses on learning experiences and teaching materials programmed, planned, and systemically designed based on prevailing values and used as the basis for implementing learning for educators.

The current paradigm shows that curriculum development is not only theoretical on micro goals, including institutional, curricular, and instructional goals. Even at a macro level, curriculum goals develop according to current trends that lead to the latest reconstruction and innovation (Bahri, 2017), balanced with the development of education in science and technology (Didiyanto, 2017). Curriculum changes always generate debate among education practitioners (Aprilliani et al., 2020). Likewise, what happens in formalistic Islamic education, which continues to experience changes, leads to development as an innovative entity in learning activities (Sulaeman, 2015). The two Islamic basic educational institutions that became research sites presented educational variations at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School and Panji Muhammadiyah 1 Elementary School, which placed istiqamah character education as one of their respective superior programs. The two Islamic educational institutions are considered successful in carrying out istiqamah character education programs so that they become characteristics that have positive values for society.

Al Abror Islamic Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School are elementary-level schools that are among the favorites of the people of Situbondo. This fact can be seen from the enthusiasm of the local people to educate their children at these schools. The initial interview with the educators of Al Abror Islamic Elementary School stated that the number of students at Al Abror Elementary School was over 500 (H, Guru SD Islam Al Abror, Wawancara, 2018). Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah Elementary School has around 350 students due to limited building facilities, each consisting of 2 classes (groups) (S, Guru SD Muhammadiyah, Wawancara, 2018). With different backgrounds, of course, the two schools have their characteristics in serving the community.

One of the hallmarks of character education at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School is material on aqidah morals, which begins with implementing the 2013 half-day curriculum and in high classes until 14.00 WIB. Learning at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School is implemented six days a week (H, Guru SD Islam Al Abror, Wawancara, 2018). Meanwhile, one of the characteristics of character education in SD Muhammadiyah can also be seen in the material of aqeedah morals with various curriculum formats, namely the 2013 and special curricula. In grade 6, the 2013 curriculum is applied to the first batch of learning, which starts at 6.45 WIB until 11.45 WIB, while in the afternoon until 15.15 WIB, the day teaches using KTSP (I, Guru SD Muhammadiyah, Wawancara, 2018).

Based on the description above, the authors are interested in researching the phenomenon of implementing the Aqidah Akhlak education curriculum, which impacts the character of elementary school students and has become a separate trend in responding to the demands of the times. It is proven that the character education program has long been one of the leading programs whose results can slowly be felt by the community through the attitudes and behavior of students after studying at school. Of course, the character education program implemented by the school will receive special attention and become a separate brand so that it indirectly becomes the main attraction for parents to send their children to these educational institutions. This situation is a positive thing for the progress of educational institutions. Keller in Hilmi et al. (2023) said that the strength of a brand profile is a view for consumers to assess the quality of something offered so that this quality will later form in the minds of consumers and beliefs will always be remembered.

Educational institutions can develop and implement a theoretical curriculum in everyday life (Silitonga et al., 2022). Moreover, Islamic education is currently faced with the challenges of
globalization (Bashori, 2017), which demands that Islamic education continue to make improvements. The study of the Aqeedah Akhlak education curriculum phenomenon is very important in its relevance to student character. This study covers the education plan for aqeedah morals, which has the core of learning experiences and teaching materials that have been programmed, planned, and systemically designed based on prevailing values and used as a basis for implementing more specific learning on inculcating truth beliefs originating from Islamic teachings as efforts to mature attitudes and behavior to form a commendable personality.

There is a shift in the era that is developing rapidly, which impacts student morale. Character education is expected to be the main driver in instilling good character from an early age. Of course, basic education is very decisive in determining the attitude of students in the future. In this way, the study of the aqeedah moral education curriculum is of particular concern to continue to be developed, given the importance of student morals amid the current rapid progress of science and technology. Previous character education studies have been studied dominantly and normatively. Previous research results have illustrated that the Aqeedah Akhlak curriculum can be developed through Islamic extracurricular activities (Mahmudah et al., 2021). In addition, the application of character education can also be integrated with subjects through lesson planning (Maskun et al., 2015). The integrated subjects are expected to be tools and opportunities for students to develop various characters (Agung, 2018).

Based on the description of the phenomenon above, this research requires an education curriculum for aqidah morals that can indeed be used to form istiqamah character because so far, the character education recommended by the government has not emphasized the existence of istiqamah character in perfecting the 18 characters that protege must possess. This research has a specialty as a basis for consideration to be carried out. Al Abror Islamic Elementary School and Muhammadiyah Elementary School are elementary-level schools that are among the favorites of the people of Situbondo. This fact can be seen from the enthusiasm of the local people to educate their children at these schools. It can be seen that the number of students at Al Abror Elementary School is already over 500 students. Meanwhile, Muhammadiyah Elementary School has around 350 students due to limited building facilities, each consisting of 2 classes (study groups). Therefore, both are currently alternative education for the people of Situbondo.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to discover and describe an activity narratively (Fadli, 2021), with the type of case study as an empirical study that investigates contemporary phenomena (Nur’aini, 2020). This study was also designed using multiple cases, considering that there are two loci for the locus of research carried out at SD Islam Al Abror and SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji. The two Islamic elementary schools are superior elementary schools in Situbondo.

Furthermore, as Denzin & Lincoln in Kaharuddin (2021), qualitative work is a way to discover and describe an event narratively. With this approach, the facts on the ground will be revealed in depth regarding the Islamic religious education curriculum, which leads to moral education in shaping the istiqamah character of elementary school students in Situbondo.

Data was obtained through credible sources from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include Principals, religion teachers, class teachers, students, and guardians of students from SD Islam Al Abror and SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji. Secondary sources were obtained from archives, manuscripts, and photographs related to school profile documents, work programs, and books related to the conceptualization of the Islamic religious education curriculum applied at SD Islam Al Abror and SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji.

This research was carried out using open interviews to study and understand the attitudes, perspectives, feelings, and behavior of a person or group of people (Moleong, 2014). Researchers, as key
instruments in the data collection process, apply techniques that have been planned previously through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Then, the data obtained is analyzed in detail using a case study draft with a multi-case design, which is analyzed through single and cross-case data.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Concept of Aqidah Akhlak Education Curriculum in Forming Istiqamah Character

The concept of istiqamah character education learning planning at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School begins with the teacher’s activities in making plans in the form of systematically arranged curriculum documents. The school curriculum document has been explained regarding the vision, mission, goals, and targets to be achieved, including elements that support the formation of the istiqamah character in learning activities. Noorzanah (2017) views the curriculum as all the activity plans contained in the learning process. In addition, the curriculum is also a program that is planned and implemented to achieve educational goals (Yudi Candra Hermawan et al., 2020).

The learning tools compiled in the Al Abror Islamic Elementary School curriculum document are then included in moral education, incorporated into Islamic religious education and noble character. Fulfillment of learning tools is prepared through MGMP activities so that the documents prepared by the teacher are uniform throughout the respective educational KORWIL. Remembering character is a psychological trait, morals/ethics that identify a person/group of people in behavior (Andayani, 2010). Furthermore, the values of moral education in shaping the istiqamah character of Al Abror Islamic Elementary School are then embedded in the material plans and positive activities to be carried out at the school by what is written in the curriculum documents (learning tools).

Meanwhile, the learning planning carried out by SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji has also been well and systematically arranged about curriculum documents and their attachments. This is evidenced by the school curriculum documents prepared as a whole. Moreover, this year, Muhammadiyah 1 Panji Elementary School passed the driving school program, which emphasized the development of a new curriculum as an adjustment effort because it was included in the driving school program.

The curriculum document explains that the school’s efforts to shape the istiqamah character of students are carried out in various ways, both through academic and non-academic processes. The academic process described in the curriculum document explains that learning in schools is carried out in a full day (full day) for high grades and half days for low grades. This is not without reason. The strong basis they provide is to build character continuously. In daily learning, students will be under the guidance and supervision of the teacher. Every behavior will be supervised and directed towards good things. The extension of learning time for one day is expected to deepen the internalization process and formation of the istiqamah character.

Implementing learning is an ongoing learning activity that starts from the preliminary stages of learning, the core learning activities, and the final or closing learning activities. In the implementation concept, each school has different characteristics. Aqidah moral education is integrated into Islamic religious education, and noble character is realized at the Al Abror Islamic Elementary School, carried out actively by each subject teacher.

Learning in class is started by the teacher by carrying out pre-learning activities, followed by core learning activities, which are filled with core material from aqidah moral education that is integrated into Islamic religious education and noble character, then learning ends with closing learning activities by evaluating strengthening learning and pray together to end the study.
In connection with variations in learning, some teachers use lecture methods and storytelling or tell stories. Each method is adapted to the content of the material being delivered. Thus, this concept later became a distinct characteristic of Al Abror Islamic Elementary School in learning aqidah morals.

Meanwhile, implementing learning in aqidah moral education integrated into Islamic religious education and noble character at Muhammadiyah 1 Panji Elementary School is carried out solemnly and calmly. It can be seen that students obey the teacher, so when learning takes place, the atmosphere is really quiet. Only the teacher’s loud voice is heard telling the story of the example of the prophets.

Learning aqeedah moral education is also integrated into Islamic religious education and noble character taught by one civil servant teacher who the Ministry of Religion seconds to support learning in low and high grades. In addition, other religious teachers teach learning branches of Islamic religious education other than those taught in Islamic religious education subjects and noble character. In addition, the media and learning resources used by the teacher, blackboard media, subject matter books, and worksheets or student worksheets remain the main reference in the learning process. The lecture method still dominates the core learning activities carried out by teachers at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji.

The concept of learning evaluation is the final stage of the learning process. The teacher must take several steps at the evaluation stage, namely:

a. Develop an evaluation plan for learning outcomes
b. Collect data
c. Perform data verification
d. Processing and analyzing data
e. Provide interpretation and draw conclusions
f. Follow up on evaluation results

Learning Evaluation of Aqeedah Akhlak education integrated into Islamic religious education and noble character at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School and Panji 1 Muhammadiyah Elementary School is done through daily tests, assignments, midterm assessments, and final semester assessments. The assessment process tends to lead to a cognitive aspect because learning outcomes are measured from the tests carried out in the recap of daily test scores, assignments, PTS, and PAS.

The role of the teacher in the learning process is very important, considering that the teacher cannot only transfer knowledge and transfer values. However, teachers are also expected to be able to assess students’ success levels to find out changes in student learning abilities. The concept of assessing the final results in a lesson can be explained through evaluation steps, namely:

a. Preparatory stage
1) Formulate goals
2) Determine evaluation aspects
3) Choose and determine the technique
4) Develop measuring devices
5) Setting benchmarks
6) Determine the frequency. Sawaluddin inside Sawaluddin & Siddiq (2020)
b. Implementation Stages
c. Inspection stages

The assessment of the affective aspect is still limited to teacher observation and is concluded in an assessment with a good enough and not enough predicate. In this case, the researcher believes that it would be better if the assessment of this affective aspect were assessed through observation and written
results in each student’s development so that the development of the behavior or character of the students would be clearly described in a student character development report book.

It is necessary to have a separate report book related to the character development of students or students so that all character development of students will be recorded and recorded in the report book. This character development report book will be a foundation for teachers and parents in guiding and directing children to better character development. From this character development report book, students will also get an overview of their character and attitude so that they will try to reflect on maintaining their morals.

The school continues to carry out efforts to build this istiqamah character since the child enters grades one to six. When researchers conducted interviews with religious teachers, the first was at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School. The religion teacher at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School explained that at the stages of grades 1, 2, and 3, the children still do not show the character of istiqamah, so they must always be directed in carrying out worship and their responsibilities. In grade 4, children have become aware of carrying out their duties without being ordered to complete responsibilities without being asked and forced.

In addition, at SD Muhammadiyah 1, Panji explained that students had begun to form istiqamah characters in grade 2, although not all of them, but most had started to form. If you are still cultivating morals or habituation in grade one because you are still new, you must first get to know friends, teachers, and the school situation. The point is that in grade 1, students are still relatively new and learning to adapt to new situations from their previous school.

There are different explanations regarding the formation of the istiqamah character of students at SD Islam Al Abror and SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji. In Al Abror Islamic Elementary School, students have formed an istiqamah character in grade 4, and Muhammadiyah Elementary School students have seen an istiqamah character in class 2. According to the observations made, it is clear that students differ in the learning process at SD Islam Al Abror and SD.

The difference in the maturation of the istiqamah character of these students depends on the individual student and everything that influences it. Information was obtained from the parents of Muhammadiyah Elementary School students that students had started to istiqamah their character in grade 3, and this was proven when he was left alone at home and ordered to pray in the congregation mosque. This child performs congregational prayers at the mosque even though his parents are not supervising him. However, another story with the guardians of other students at the same elementary school and class stated that my child was still not used to praying without being ordered by his mother. He still had always to direct.

**Implementation of Aqidah Akhlak Education Curriculum in Forming Istiqamah Character**

Implementing curriculum planning at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School at the learning planning stage was done by compiling school curriculum documents. The school curriculum has systematically detailed the programs that will be carried out in implementing the school curriculum, either in the form of a core or hidden curriculum.

The learning tools at Al Abror Islamic Elementary School have been well structured and standardized because the learning tools were prepared jointly with the religious teacher working group.
at the sub-district level. The Al Abror Islamic Elementary School curriculum document has two designs: the curriculum for the pandemic period and the curriculum during normal times. This curriculum document was prepared to adjust the learning process during the pandemic and the post-pandemic period.

The research results show that Al Abror Islamic Elementary School has tried to prepare the curriculum as well as possible, trying to adapt to current conditions during a pandemic and during normal times. Learning during a pandemic was designed using a blended learning method between online and offline by applying alternating learning shifts based on the percentage of the number of students present in class.

SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji has also conceptualized a good learning plan listed in the curriculum document book and designed a half-day learning plan for low and one full day for high grades. In the curriculum document, what is visible is the design of normal learning, which has a full-day learning plan. Even after school, there are additional activities for reading, writing, and memorizing the Koran until 16.30 WIB.

Documents on teaching materials for aqeedah moral education that are integrated into Islamic religious education have also been standardized in the activities of teacher working groups at the sub-district level so that religious teachers can directly use these learning tools in teaching in class.

From the learning design that has been carried out by SD Muhammadiyah 1 Panji, the school indeed spends more time supervising and building students’ istiqamah character when students are at school, but on the other hand, this design must also pay attention to students’ abilities in carrying out a full day of learning. So that students cannot experience boredom for those who are less successful in learning, or students will experience rapid progress in learning because the learning time is longer.

Implementing an integrated moral education curriculum into Islamic religious education in shaping the istiqamah character of Islamic elementary school students in Situbondo at the implementation stage of learning has an implementation concept directed at forming the istiqamah character in students.

At Al Abror Islamic Elementary School, it can be seen that the implementation of learning is done using massive in-class learning. Morning learning begins by entering the school environment by shaking hands with the teachers who have welcomed them at the school entrance. After entering the classroom, students are directed and led to read short letters aloud and start learning, which begins with a prayer together. The teacher always greets students and asks how they are today. As an example of being friendly to others, learning is always interspersed with a smile. After learning, students are directed to the mosque to carry out Duha prayers in the congregation. Duha prayer in congregation is divided into two shifts between low and high classes: low-class Duha prayer at 07.00 WIB and high-class Duha prayer at 09.00 WIB. Likewise, when it is time for the midday prayer, students are directed to pray the midday prayer in congregation at the mosque. The position of SD Al Abror next to the Al Abror mosque makes it easier to teach students to like going to the mosque. Learning at school ends at 14.00 WIB with students being escorted by each class teacher to leave school, and the teacher will wait for the students until their families pick them up.

From the description above, it appears that the efforts of Al Abror Islamic Elementary School in conditioning learning so that students have good habits or istiqamah, both in doing good, in studying, and in worship. The class teacher always upholds these efforts under the principal’s direct supervision.

Likewise, at Muhammadiyah 1 Panji Elementary School, learning is carried out all day long for high-grade students starting in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, and for grades 1 and 2, only carrying out half a day of learning. The activity begins with students shaking hands with the teacher at the gate, heading to class, and preparing to go to the mosque to carry out the Duha prayer and read hadith together. After that, continue to class and continue with reading juz amma, then carrying out learning.
After the character-building activities, it continued by carrying out midday prayers in the congregation at the mosque. It continued with learning until 14.30 WIB around Asar. All students prepared for the Asr prayer, and after Asr, BTHQ activities continued until 16.30 WIB. After the activity was over, new high-class students began to be allowed to go home. However, class teachers have not been allowed to go home by the school principal before their students go home or are picked up by their families. And for other supporting activities, extracurricular activities are held, which schools carry out during school hours.

In enforcing school rules and regulations at Muhammadiyah Elementary School, they look firm, so many students tend to comply. A high learning target requires students to study harder. For example, the target for memorizing the Koran targets grade 6 graduates who have memorized at least two juz. So, students have to work hard to achieve these targets.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the data and the implications of the research, the authors conclude that first, the planning of the curriculum for akidah akhlaq education that is integrated into Islamic religious education, which is implemented jointly with PAI teachers in the sub-districts that produce uniform learning tools. Second, the aqeedah akhlaq education curriculum is implemented by internalizing istiqamah characteristics in learning in and outside the classroom through a core and hidden curriculum. Third, learning in the aqeedah akhlaq education curriculum is evaluated by conducting daily assessments and observing student character development, midterm assessments, and final semester assessments.

REFERENCES


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