The Implementation of Islamic Education: The Process of Instilling Akhlakul Karimah (Noble Characters) for Madrasah Tsanawiyah Students

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Abstract: Islamic Religious Education is an important and inseparable part of the educational curriculum in Indonesia. Besides being an obligation for its adherents, Islamic learning can instill the values of faith and make students possess noble morals (akhlakul karimah). This study aims to examine and discuss how the implementation process of Islamic education in instilling noble morals in students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic Junior High School). This study uses a qualitative approach with data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing as the data analysis. The sample of this study was the principal of the madrasah, vice-principal, students, and teachers of Islamic education in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Makassar. The results of the analysis of this study indicate that through the implementation of Islamic Religious Education, the students could possess noble characters. There are eight behaviors that are applied to instill the noble characters, namely habituating the smiles, salaam, and greetings, mutual respect (tolerance), sunnah fasting on Monday and Thursday, performing the Duha prayer, performing dhuhr prayers, reciting the Quran, congregational prayer, and getting used to alms giving (infak). These eight commendable behaviors are recommended for teachers and principals to be applied in their respective schools.

INTRODUCTION  
The rapid development of technology and information is currently a challenge for educational institutions, especially Islamic educational institutions. Islamic educational institutions have a crucial role to foster and run an educational process that emphasizes the aspect of instilling noble characters (akhlakul karimah) to offset the adverse effects of such progress. If not, moral and moral crises could be an unavoidable threat (Ahmad & Aljufri, 2019; S. Anwar & Salim, 2018).

Through the collaboration of parents and students, the emphasis on the inculcation of Islamic values becomes an important thing to do (Ainissyifa, 2014; Miftakhul Jannah, 2018). Aside from being a place to transfer knowledge and a place for social interaction, madrasah is expected to be a guarding against the negative impacts of the rapidly growing industrial revolution era 4.0 (C. Anwar, Saregar, Hasanah, & Widayanti, 2018; Djollong, Das, & Damayanti, 2019).

The learning process in madrasah has very complex problems because it involves many interrelated elements so
that success is also determined by these elements. These elements are the teacher, the school environment, the learning system, and so on, which play an important role in the process of fostering noble characters. Lately, there are often problems arise due to the students’ poor morality (Halimah, 2019; Mas’ud, Fahmi, & Abroza, 2018). Based on empirical data, cases involving students such as brawls, drug use, and immoral acts still occur frequently (Ginanjar & Kurniawati, 2017; Yaqin, 2016). This shows that schools are still not optimal in preparing Islamic religious education learning as a strategy for the formation of noble characters (akhlakul karimah) of students (Chontesa, Hanief, & Hasan, 2019; Zamroni, 2017).

Therefore, the solution in overcoming these problems is to internalize Islamic religious education through various positive activities to instill noble characters (Abdullah, 2018; Bafadhol, 2017; Ibrahim, 2017; Muh. Khoirul Rifa’i, 2016; Unwanullah & Zuchdi, 2017). The role of Islamic religious education’s teachers is needed to maximize the internalization process (Aşlamacı & Kaymakcan, 2016; Naidinsyam, 2018). Teachers must have the ability to instill good values in students as well as takes parts to achieve educational goals (Miftahul Jannah, 2019).

The concept of education that instills the values of noble characters is in line with the thoughts of Imam Al-Ghazali. According to Al-Ghazali, morality is a trait that is embedded in the soul that gives rise to actions without requiring thought and consideration (Haq, 2015; Imron, 2018). Therefore, to form it, it is necessary to make it a habit.

Some previous studies that have been able to improve the students’ morality through Islamic religious education, among others, the Implementation of Noble Characters Education in Schools (Arisanti, 2017), The Role of Teachers in Developing the Students’ noble characters (Miftahul Jannah, 2019), and the Role of Islamic Religious Education in Forming Students’ Morals (Hariani & Bahruddin, 2018). The difference between this research and previous ones is that this study focused on how the process of implementing Islamic religious education in instilling the values of noble characters of the madrasah tsanawiyah (Islamic junior high school) students.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing as the data analysis technique (Sugiono, 2010). The sample of this study was the principal of madrasah, vice-principal, and Islamic religious education teacher at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) Negeri 1 Makassar as the primary subject of this study. The primary data of this study are the principal of the madrasah, vice-principal, students, teachers of the Islamic religious education, the documentation of the teacher’s qualifications, teacher certification, length of service, and training that have been participated by the teacher. The secondary data is important documentation regarding the profile of madrasah, data of teaching staffs, and data of students as well as other educational supporting elements that are relevant to the studied problems.

Data collecting techniques used were natural conditions technique, primary data sources by emphasizing on observation techniques, interviews, and documentation.
Research instruments used were interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and documentation tools. Data processing and analysis were done by data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The realization of the noble characters in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar was caused by the collaboration of all school components (stakeholders), in this case, the support of the principal of the madrasah. Based on the results of interviews with the principal, it is known that 95% of students participate in carrying out all the rules set in the madrasah, including habituating the dhuhr prayer for students who study at 7.00 to 13.00 WITA (Indonesia Central Standard Time) while those who study at 13.15 to 17.30 WITA, participate in the asr prayer. Meanwhile, the students who still have not participated in the prayers are only 5%.

Based on the results of observations and follow-up interviews, it is known that the implementation of Islamic religious education is intended to increase the spiritual potential to shape the students' characters to become faithful people, pious, and noble. Akhlakul karimah includes ethics, manners, and morals as an embodiment of Islamic religious education. Increasing the potential for religiosity or spirituality includes the introduction, understanding, and inculcation of religious values, as well as experiencing these values in individual or collective social life. Increasing religious potential ultimately aims at optimizing the potential possessed by humans which in turn, reflects their values and dignity as the servant of Allah the Almighty.

Instilling the noble characters in the madrasah has certain cultural forms. One of them is a cultural form that illustrates the characteristics of teacher relationships in the madrasah, for example, the procedures of greeting by lightly kissing the teacher's hand. The culture of kissing the teacher's hand can tie the freedom of students in acting so that their politeness is maintained. Based on the results of interviews with students, the culture of kissing the teacher's hand for them has enormous benefits, such as increasing self-confidence, as a moment for teachers to give them advice, as well as familiarizing students with the teacher.

The results show that the strategy of Islamic religious education teachers in instilling noble characters to students can improve teacher professionalism, improve the quality of learning in the classroom, and to develop Islamic religious education learning through other activities. The effort to instill noble characters is an effort to collaborate traditional customs of local communities in line with Islamic religious values, such as the culture of celebrating the Prophet's birthday which is carried out in the community and also carried out in schools. This data shows that the implementation of Islamic religious education as an effort to instill noble characters is to build cooperation with the community by involving the participation of alumni in building students’ awareness.
The constraints faced are in the form of internal factors, such as the student activities, the limited allocation of Islamic religious education learning, the small size of the mosque, the existence of some teachers who seem indifferent to religious activities. The external factors are the influence of the students’ environment and the negative influence of the development of science and technology.

The results of interviews and verification through observation show that there are at least eight forms of noble characters for students of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar to apply, namely instilling 3S attitudes (smile, salaam, and greetings), fostering mutual respect and tolerance, familiarizing the students with sunnah fasting, familiarizing the dhuha prayer, familiarizing the dhuhr prayers in school, familiarizing the activities of reciting the Quran, familiarizing the congregational prayer (istighazah), and getting used to alms giving (infaq). The implementation of Islamic religious education is highly influential in instilling akhlakul karimah.

This opinion is reinforced by the results of previous studies. Then, how is the implementation process of Islamic religious education in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar? The researchers present the process as follows.

**Instilling 3S Attitudes (Smiles, Salaam, and Greetings)**

Observation results show that salaam and greetings have become a culture among the students of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. As the concrete evidence, before the students arrive, the teachers come and stand at the front gate of the school to greet the students with a smile. The students then smile back and say their greetings to the teacher, which then replied by the teachers. This has become a daily routine for every member of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. In Islam, it is highly recommended to greet others by saying salaam. Greetings, besides as a prayer for others, is a form of brotherhood between fellow human beings. Sociologically, salaam and greetings can increase interaction between people and have an impact on respect so that people could respect each other.

The application of the religious traditions in the form of smiles, salaam, and greetings in MTs 1 Makassar is running well. This can be seen by most students who make it as a habit. Those who do not implement the 3S at MTs 1 Makassar are just a minority of students. The results of the interviews show that the 3S culture has become a culture in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar even though it has not been fully implemented. As for its implementation into the teaching process based on the observation, although not yet running optimally, in the classroom when the learning process will begin, precisely when the teacher enters the class, he would greet the students and then replied by all students. Smiles and greetings are carried out by almost all stakeholders of the madrasah, especially the teaching staffs, students, students to teachers, teachers to the principal, and vice versa. Meanwhile, Islamic religious education teachers encourage each student to greet each other by saying salaam. Greetings, besides as a prayer for others, is also a form of brotherhood between fellow human beings. Sociologically, salaam, and greetings can increase interaction between people and have an impact on respect so that people respect each other.

Based on the research conducted at MTs Negeri 1 Makassar, it is found that the culture of smiles, salaam, and greetings (3S) has indeed been practiced in everyday life by every school member, although not every time. Based on the finding, the most commonly practiced by members of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar, especially students, are shaking hands and then chatting, not saying the salaam. The culture of salaam, as explained earlier, just seems to be done and running when the classroom learning process about to
begin and end. Researchers suggest that the culture of greetings should be practiced daily in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar since it is an Islamic that contains good prayers for someone who is greeted.

**Fostering Mutual Respect and Tolerance**

Mutual respect and tolerance are part of the material for Islamic learning and civic education. The learning implementation is applied in the form of theory with lecturing method and practice in daily life.

Observation data obtained by researchers at MTs Negeri 1 Makassar illustrates the polite and tolerant behavior among students, students, and teachers, among teachers, teachers, and the principal has been running optimally or well. Since the beginning of the observation activities, the stakeholders’ characteristics are never contradictory. All school members, especially in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar, live in peace, living in an atmosphere of mutual respect and mutual understanding or tolerance between one another. Based on the results of interviews with several students, it is discovered that as long as the students study there, they have never seen unnatural things in their schools, such as brawls or other deeds that are against the general behavior. Still based on interviews, the students are invited to respect each other by not distinguishing status or differences, let alone economic status. It is not permissible to humiliate or insult one another.

The implementation of Islamic religious education learning that can be put forward based on the results of observation is an attitude of respect and tolerance and encouraging the realization of peace as the implication of Islamic values that always advocates peace, calmness, and happiness or better known as conducive. A conducive environment is one of the determining factors in the success of a learning process in education. So, this attitude of respect and tolerance becomes a necessity for the realization of a conducive, safe, and peaceful learning process so that the learning process could run optimally. Through the inculcation of tolerance and respect from an early age, it is hoped that students will be able to carry these attitudes to adulthood. So that there will be no more news about disputes or riots that occur in the community.

**Familiarizing the Monday and Thursday Sunnah Fasting**

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it is found the fact that this process is still not done well. Monday and Thursday sunnah fasting are still not entrenched for the students. Therefore, this practice is still in the appeal stage. This is proven by only a few students who routinely fast while there are still many students who have not carried it out. Islamic religious education teachers have set an example for their students to routinely carry out Monday and Thursday fasting. It is hoped that with this example, students will follow the good deeds of their teacher.

Monday and Thursday sunnah fasting material is found in Islamic religious education material in the field of *fiqh* studies. The implementation of learning is carried out by Islamic religious education teachers in the classroom by explaining the virtues of fasting including the sunnah fasting and after they learned the importance of fasting, the teachers and even other subject teachers practicing it.

Other learning implications of fasting are to show the feeling of someone in hunger, to improve physical condition, and to control desires which then give birth to tolerance and mutual respect.

**Familiarizing the Dhuha Prayer**

*Dhuha* prayer material is not found and taught in Islamic religious education subjects, especially the *Akidah Akhlak.*
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The implications of learning are carried out in the classroom in the form of discussion, especially the functions and virtues of the dhuha prayer in life by reading and then discussing.

Based on the results of observations, dhuha prayer has become a routine in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. The routine aims to instill the custom of sunnah prayer, especially dhuha, to maintain students' sense of faith and piety. Based on observations, the results of this activity have taken place quite well even though there are still not routinely performed. Dhuha prayers are held at the madrasah's praying center. In the implementation, there is no special time provided. Students and teachers perform dhuha prayer according to their wishes. Some do it when they arrive at school, some do it during the shift between the third period and the fourth period, and some do it during the first break around 9 a.m.

Based on the results of interviews with the school principal and teachers, students in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar do the dhuha prayer, not because of the teachers' orders but they do it because of their own volition, not because of coercion. The students who perform dhuha prayer because of their desires and awareness can be said to have carried out the deeds modeled by the Prophet Muhammad. Besides that, they can also benefit from performing the dhuha prayer like inner peace, calmness during learning activities, and comfortable when they study.

Familiarizing the Congregational Dhuhr Prayer

This prayer is certainly on the subject of Islamic religious education. The way of teaching is done by reading and discussing. Students can explain the meaning of prayer, show their arguments, and explain the function of prayer in the congregation through learning with a discussion approach.

Based on the results of the interviews, the principal of the madrasah has succeeded in building a system of implementing dhuhr prayer in congregation in an orderly and smooth manner. The success of the system is based on togetherness, not based on the work of one or two people, especially relying only on the principal. Although the principal of the madrasah may change, the system will continue to work whoever the leader is.

It affects the sense of togetherness and discipline to pray on time. The custom of praying in congregation makes every student in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar feel the togetherness (ukhuwah) between students, teachers, and other school members.

Based on interviews, it is known that the dhuhr prayer in the congregation has become a culture in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. Dhuhr prayer in congregation is held during the second recess. It is held at 12.15 p.m. to 12.40 p.m. or according to the time of the dhuhr prayer. The dhuhr congregational prayer is supported by the students' rules of discipline at MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. Each student must carry out the dhuhr congregational prayer in accordance with a predetermined schedule. This also proves that MTs Negeri 1 Makassar has a high commitment to the cultivation of moral behavior. Therefore, all MTs Negeri 1 Makassar students must submit and comply with the rules that have been mutually agreed upon.

Familiarizing the Quran Recitation

The learning material for reciting the Quran is found in the Islamic religious subject, namely in the field of study of the Quran Hadith. However, the form of learning is done in tadarrus, especially for students who are fluent in reading the Quran.

Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted, the culture of the reciting the Quran in MTs Negeri 1...
Makassar has been going well, although not perfect. Before starting to recite the Quran, the teachers do not advice the students to do the requirements before reading the verses of the Quran, such as taking ablution and so on. However, when reading the verses of the Qur'an, the students do it seriously. The students do not do other activities such as chatting, joking, and so on. The students read the verses of the Qur'an together, tarteel (slow and measured rhythmic tones), and solemnly.

Familiarizing the Istighazah (Joint Prayers)

The istighazah is not found in the Islamic religious education subject but based on observations; the researchers found the prayer activity is done at the beginning of the Islamic religious education subject and other learning activities. Joint prayer is led by a student designated by the teacher, or sometimes prayer is led directly by the teacher.

Based on the interviews, it can be stated that joint prayer has become a routine in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar. This activity is carried out not only at the beginning of the learning process but also when the ninth-grade students will face the national exam, on the last day of school orientation, and also during the flag ceremony. This prayer is led by Islamic religious education teachers or other trusted teachers and is also done by students, especially during the flag ceremony.

Familiarizing the Alms Giving (Infaq) Activities

This infaq material is found in Islamic religious education materials together with the discussion of zakat. The learning activities encourage students to understand and explain infaq. The students can explain the provisions of infaq and understand its benefits through reading and question and answer activities.

Based on the observations, it is found that there are students’ activities where they collect the infaq from their peers in each class. This infaq collection activity is carried out once a month, with an amount of five thousand rupiahs for each student. This activity is managed by students who have also been appointed to manage the mosque activities at the school.

Based on the description of the activities carried out in MTs Negeri 1 Makassar, it can be seen that there has been a process of planting noble characters (akhlakul karimah) through the practices of religious activities. The routinely and spontaneously conducted activities are expected to become students' habits so that, in their daily lives, they are accustomed to displaying their noble characters (akhlakul karimah).

The success of the commendable moral inculcation process depends on the ability of Islamic religious education teachers to convince the entire academic community in the educational institution, especially the principal of madrasah regarding the importance of applying religious culture in schools or madrasah. When the principal of the madrasah as both the policyholder and the person in charge already has the same commitment in creating religious culture, the implementation will be easier.

CONCLUSION

Instilling the noble characters (akhlakul karimah) to the students of MTs Negeri 1 Makassar was run well because the efforts of the Islamic religious education teachers received full support from all school members, including students themselves as the objects or targets of implementation. There are eight forms of activities in instilling the noble characters to students, namely
implementing the 3S attitudes (smiles, salaam, and greetings), fostering mutual respect and tolerance, accustoming students to fasting on Monday and Thursday, familiarizing dhuha prayers, accustoming congregational dhuhr prayer at school, reciting the Quran (tadarrus), familiarizing the praying together activities (istighazah), as well as familiarize the almsgiving (infaq). The successful implementation of akhlakul karimah in this school is due to the cooperation of all stakeholders.

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