

# The Concept of Early Childhood Education Curriculum from the Perspective of the Qur'an and Its Implementation in Character Formation

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the concept of early childhood education (PAUD) curriculum from a Qur'anic perspective and its implementation in character building. The research background stems from the reality that modern PAUD curricula often emphasize cognitive aspects and practical skills, while spiritual and moral dimensions receive less attention. This study uses a qualitative approach with library research and content analysis of Qur'anic verses, tafsir books, and Islamic and early childhood education literature. The results of the study indicate that the Qur'an-based PAUD curriculum is oriented towards four main aspects, namely monotheism, morals, worship, and muamalah. QS. Luqman: 13 emphasizes the importance of monotheism education as a foundation of personality, QS. Al-Isra: 23–24 emphasizes moral education, QS. Taha: 132 teaches the habit of worship, and the values of muamalah in the Qur'an are relevant to developing children's social skills. The integration of Qur'anic values with modern child development theories results in a more holistic curriculum, balanced between cognitive, social, moral, and spiritual aspects. In conclusion, the PAUD curriculum from the perspective of the Qur'an not only functions as a means of transferring knowledge, but also as an instrument for forming children's character from an early age. This study recommends that PAUD institutions and curriculum designers further integrate Qur'anic values in daily learning activities in order to produce a generation that is faithful, has noble morals, and is able to contribute positively to society.

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## INTRODUCTION

Islamic education specifically is physical and spiritual guidance based on Islamic religious laws (Mursal Aziz, 2025). Islamic education contains meaning as a system in the context of national education (Mursal Aziz et.al., 2024). The Islamic education curriculum is an important aspect in forming a generation that not only excels in academics, but also has a deep understanding of religion and noble morals (M. Aziz et al., 2025).

The Qur'an is a true guide, and its truth can be proven (Mursal Aziz & Zulkipli Nasutio, 2019). Believing in the Koran as a source of guidance that brings light and contains absolute truth (Mursal Aziz, 2020). The contents of the Qur'an contain lessons, wisdom and inspiration that can be implemented in everyday life and in Islamic education (Mursal Aziz & M. Hasbie Ashshiddiqi, 2020). The Koran, as a holy book, is a source of inspiration and guidance for life for Muslims (Mursal Aziz, 2022).

The Qur'an is the primary source for obtaining guidance and life guidelines that align with the truth (M. & Z. N. Aziz, 2020). Studying the Qur'an is crucial, both in learning activities integrated into the curriculum and in extracurricular activities (Mursal Aziz et al., 2020). Therefore, the Qur'an subject is part of Islamic Religious Education, which aims to equip students to explore and understand Islamic teachings (Mursal Aziz & Nasution, 2021).

Early childhood education is the most fundamental phase in human development. During this period, children enter a golden age, crucial for the development of their personality, intelligence, and character in the future. Therefore, education at this stage should not only focus on developing cognitive and skill aspects, but also

emphasize fostering moral and spiritual values. In the Islamic context, the Quran, as the primary source of teachings and guidance for the Muslim community, plays a crucial role in providing the conceptual foundation for early childhood education.

The Quran contains educational principles that encompass the formation of faith, morals, and noble behavior. Quranic stories, commands to educate children in monotheism, and guidance on etiquette and morals serve as important guidelines for designing an early childhood education curriculum that aligns with human nature. A Quran-based curriculum not only compiles learning materials but also guides the educational process to foster a generation of faith, morals, and responsibility.

In the realities of modern education, early childhood education curricula often emphasize cognitive aspects and social skills, while spiritual and moral dimensions receive less serious attention. Yet, character development is the primary goal of education according to the Quran. Therefore, the integration of Quranic values into the early childhood education curriculum is crucial so that early childhood education can produce a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually and morally mature.

This research seeks to examine the concept of early childhood education curriculum from a Quranic perspective and its implementation in character development. This study is expected to produce a conceptual framework that can serve as a reference in designing an early childhood education curriculum that aligns with

Quranic values, so that early childhood education truly serves as a foundation for developing a generation with noble character.

## Statement of the Problem

A problem that arises in early childhood education is the dominant focus on cognitive aspects and practical skills, while spiritual and moral development often receives less attention. Yet, the Quran provides a very strong foundation for the importance of moral education, monotheism, and adab from an early age. This situation raises fundamental questions about how the concept of an early childhood education curriculum can be formulated comprehensively from a Quranic perspective, and what relevant Quranic values can be used as a reference in curriculum development.

Furthermore, the next issue is how a curriculum based on the Quran can be implemented effectively in the early childhood learning process. It is important to examine the extent to which Quranic values integrated into the curriculum can contribute to the formation of children's character, both spiritually, morally, and socially. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question of the relationship between the concept of a Quran-based early childhood education curriculum and its effectiveness in developing a generation with noble character from an early age.

## Research Questions

Based on the background and problems formulated, this research focuses on the following questions:

1. What is the concept of an early childhood education curriculum from a Qur'anic perspective?
2. What Qur'anic values can serve as a basis for developing an early childhood education curriculum?
3. How does the implementation of a Qur'an-based curriculum shape the character of early childhood children?
4. To what extent does the implementation of a Qur'an-based curriculum contribute to the spiritual, moral, and social development of children from an early age?

## Significance of the Study

This research has theoretical significance for the development of Islamic education studies, particularly regarding early childhood curriculum based on the Quran. By examining the concept of the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) curriculum from a Quranic perspective, this research is expected to enrich the academic literature on the integration of Quranic values into the education system. Furthermore, this research can serve as a conceptual foundation for academics and researchers to develop a more comprehensive theory of childhood education, encompassing cognitive, spiritual, moral, and social aspects in a balanced manner.

Practically, this research is expected to provide a tangible contribution to educators, curriculum designers, and Islamic PAUD institutions in designing and implementing curricula aligned with Quranic values. With this integration, the early childhood education process is oriented not only toward intellectual intelligence but also toward the formation of noble character. Ultimately, the results of this research are expected to help produce a young generation that excels not only academically but also possesses a strong spiritual and moral foundation in accordance with the guidance of the Quran.

## Theoretical foundation

### 1. Early Childhood Development Theory

Early childhood is in a crucial developmental phase, often referred to as the golden age (Mursal Aziz, Napitupulu, & Salim, 2025). Developmental experts emphasize that the ages of 0–6 are the most potential for instilling values, skills, and habits that will form the foundation of a child's future life. According to Piaget, during this age range, children are in the preoperational stage, where symbolic abilities develop rapidly, and they begin to understand language, images, and simple symbols. This demonstrates that educational stimulation at an early age is highly effective in shaping children's thinking, memory, and understanding of their surroundings (Risnawati & Priyantoro, 2021).

Meanwhile, Erik Erikson, through his theory of psychosocial development, explains that early childhood is in the stages of autonomy vs. shame and doubt (1–3 years) and initiative vs. guilt (3–6 years). At this stage, children learn about independence, the courage to try new things, and the importance of parental and teacher guidance to positively direct children's initiatives (Hasnawati et al., 2025). If children are properly guided, they will grow up with self-confidence, social skills, and a healthy sense of discipline. Conversely, if they lack guidance, they will easily feel embarrassed, doubtful, and even guilty when trying something.

From an educational psychology perspective, Lev Vygotsky also emphasized the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the distance between what a child can do alone and what can be achieved with the help of adults or peers. This principle emphasizes the important role of teachers and parents as companions in the early childhood learning process (Aliyatuz Zulfa et al., 2024). Therefore, the early childhood education curriculum should be designed to provide learning opportunities that are appropriate to children's developmental abilities, with an approach that is fun, contextual, and rich in moral values.

### 2. The Concept of Early Childhood Education Curriculum in the Perspective of Modern Education

In general, the early childhood education curriculum, from a modern perspective, is defined as a set of plans and learning activities aimed at developing a child's full potential, including cognitive, language, physical-motor, social, emotional, and moral aspects (Mursal Aziz et al., 2024). This curriculum must be adapted to the child's developmental stage and their daily needs.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the early childhood curriculum should be developmentally appropriate. This means that the design of learning activities must be appropriate to the child's age, needs, and developmental stage, while also taking into account the socio-cultural context in which the child grows up. In practice, learning in early childhood education is directed towards children learning through play, exploration, and direct experience (Zahra & Djamas, 2021).

However, in practice in many educational institutions, the early childhood curriculum tends to emphasize mastery of cognitive aspects such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, while moral and spiritual development is often neglected. In fact, early childhood education should emphasize a balance between intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual intelligence. This is where the relevance of the Qur'an as a primary source of values lies, which can be the basis for compiling a more holistic PAUD curriculum.

### 3. The Concept of Education in Islam

In an Islamic perspective, education is not just a process of transferring knowledge, but also a process of forming a complete

personality (syakhshiyah), based on the value of monotheism (Indayani & Hartati, 2023). The main aim of Islamic education is to form humans as obedient servants of Allah ('abd) as well as caliphs on earth (khalifatullah fil-ardh). Thus, Islamic education always emphasizes a balance between the development of the mind, heart and behavior.

Several Islamic scholars and educational figures such as Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Khaldun emphasized the importance of moral education from an early age (Umar et al., 2021). Al-Ghazali stated that children are like white paper that can be colored with education. If educated well, children will grow up with noble morals, but if they are misdirected, then children can become morally corrupt individuals. Therefore, the role of the family and educational institutions greatly determines the direction of children's development.

The Islamic education curriculum must basically instill the values of faith, worship and morals. Education is not only directed at intellectual intelligence, but also emphasizes the habituation of worship, the formation of good manners, and the development of noble morals (Pulungan & Hayati, 2024). This principle aligns with the function of early childhood education, which is to develop strong character and personality from an early age.

#### 4. Educational Values in the Qur'an

The Quran, as a guide for Muslims, provides a clear theoretical and practical foundation for children's education. Some Quranic values relevant to the Early Childhood Education (ECED) curriculum include:

- a. Tawhid – Tawhid education is crucial from an early age. Surah Luqman: 13 emphasizes that children must be introduced to Allah and kept away from idolatry. Tawhid is the primary foundation for developing a child's personality, ensuring a clear direction in life based on faith.
- b. Morals – Surah Al-Isra: 23–24 teaches the importance of respecting parents and being humble. Other verses also emphasize honesty, patience, and compassion. These values can be internalized in the curriculum through daily practices.
- c. Worship – Surah Taha: 132 emphasizes the command to accustom children to prayer. This emphasizes the importance of introducing worship from an early age, which can be achieved through simple habit-building activities in ECED institutions.
- d. Muamalah – The Quran also teaches the importance of good social interactions, mutual assistance, and avoiding hostility. These values are highly relevant to developing social skills in early childhood.

Therefore, the Quran-based Early Childhood Education curriculum not only teaches knowledge but also instills fundamental values that shape children's morals and spirituality (Merlina et al., 2022).

#### 5. Integration of Child Development Theory with Qur'anic Values

The integration of child development theory with Quranic values creates a more holistic framework for early childhood education (Mursal Aziz, Napitupulu, & Khairani, 2025). Modern developmental theory emphasizes the importance of cognitive, social, and emotional stimulation, while the Quran emphasizes the values of monotheism, morals, worship, and social interactions. These two perspectives can be combined in an early childhood education curriculum that emphasizes a balance between intellectual and spiritual aspects.

For example, play-based learning can be linked to Quranic values such as cooperation, honesty, and compassion. Habitual worship

from an early age (based on Surah Taha: 132) can be designed as a fun routine activity appropriate to the child's developmental stage. In this way, children not only learn through direct experience but also internalize Quranic values in their daily lives.

This integration also supports the goals of character education. From a Quranic perspective, these three aspects align with the instilling of faith, fostering morals, and cultivating the habit of worship. This means that the Al-Quran-based PAUD curriculum is able to produce children who are intellectually intelligent as well as morally and spiritually mature.

#### Research Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with library research. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on a conceptual study of early childhood education curriculum from a Qur'anic perspective and its relevance to character formation. The primary data source was the Qur'an and relevant commentaries, while supporting data was obtained from books, journal articles, and previous research related to early childhood education, Islamic education, and character education theory. Data collection was conducted through documentation, which involved reviewing, recording, and organizing information from various sources relevant to the research focus.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis, which examined Qur'anic verses and related literature, then grouped them according to research themes such as monotheism, morality, worship, and social interactions. The results of the analysis were systematically compiled to answer the previously formulated research problem and questions. To maintain validity, the researcher used source triangulation by comparing understandings from various commentaries and scientific literature, resulting in more objective and comprehensive interpretations. In this way, the research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive picture of the concept of the Qur'an-based PAUD curriculum and its implementation in forming children's character from an early age.

#### Discussion of Findings

The results of a study of Quranic verses, tafsir literature, and various studies on early childhood education indicate that the concept of the PAUD curriculum from a Quranic perspective emphasizes a balance between the development of intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social aspects (Zahroh et al., 2024). In contrast to the tendency of some modern curricula that emphasize cognitive skills, the Quran places a strong emphasis on monotheism education, the habituation of worship, moral development, and the strengthening of manners in daily life. For example, verse 13 of the Quran, Luqman, emphasizes the importance of introducing monotheism from an early age as the primary foundation of personality. This verse demonstrates that children's education should not stop at the transfer of knowledge but should be directed toward strengthening the child's relationship with God as the foundation of their spiritual identity (Risnawati & Priyantoro, 2021).

Furthermore, Surah Al-Isra', verses 23–24, demonstrates the importance of moral education through the command to be devoted to parents and to be humble. This is relevant to modern character education theory, which emphasizes the importance of moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action. The Quran places the role models of parents and teachers as the primary factor in shaping children's morals. This finding confirms that a Quran-based Early Childhood Education (PAUD) curriculum should integrate learning activities that instill the values of compassion, respect, and social awareness through simple activities such as group games, the practice of greeting, sharing, and helping each other (Pulungan & Hayati, 2024).



Another significant finding is the importance of cultivating the habit of worship from an early age, as mentioned in Surah Taha, verse 132, which commands families to practice prayer. This verse legitimizes that the PAUD curriculum should not ignore the dimension of worship but rather make it part of the educational routine. Implementation in PAUD institutions can include introducing daily prayers, practicing simple prayers, and memorizing short verses. With an approach that is appropriate to their developmental stage, children will become accustomed to seeing worship not as a burdensome obligation, but as a fun activity that builds closeness to Allah (HalimatuZuhrotulaini, 2020).

In addition to aspects of monotheism, morality, and worship, the findings of this study also demonstrate the relevance of muamalah values in the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) curriculum. Children from an early age need to be accustomed to social skills such as cooperation, sharing, and resolving conflicts effectively. These values align with the Quran's message to foster solidarity and brotherhood among humans. Implementation in PAUD classes can take the form of collaborative games, simple project-based learning, or social activities such as sharing food. Thus, a Quran-based PAUD curriculum significantly contributes to the development of children's social character.

The integration of child development theory with Quranic values demonstrates their complementary nature. Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories emphasize the importance of cognitive and social stimulation through play, while the Quran provides a framework of spiritual and moral values that serve as the soul of the educational process. By combining the two, the PAUD curriculum can produce a generation that is intellectually intelligent, emotionally mature, socially skilled, and possesses noble morals. This finding confirms that early childhood education from the perspective of the Qur'an does not merely increase knowledge, but forms a complete human being in accordance with the nature that Allah has instilled.

## Conclusion

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that the concept of the early childhood education curriculum from a Qur'anic perspective is oriented towards character formation through the integration of the values of monotheism, morals, worship, and social interactions. These Qur'anic values serve as an important foundation in developing a curriculum that not only focuses on cognitive intelligence but also emphasizes spiritual, moral, and social aspects. The implementation of a Qur'an-based curriculum in early childhood has been proven to be able to shape individuals who are faithful, have noble morals, and possess good social skills, so that education truly serves as a foundation for children's future lives.

## Recommendations

This study recommends that early childhood education institutions, teachers, and curriculum designers further integrate Quranic values into all learning activities, whether through the practice of worship, moral modeling, or educational play activities. The government and education policymakers also need to provide support through the development of a national curriculum that emphasizes Quranic-based character education from an early age. This is expected to produce a generation that excels not only in academics but also spiritually strong, morally upright, and able to contribute positively to society.

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