



## **Building Early Childhood Character through KH. Wahid Hasyim Education Model at RA Ma'arif Metro**

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### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis karakter anak usia dini melalui model pendidikan KH. Wahid Hasyim yang dilakukan di RA Maarif Metro. Penelitian yang dipergunakan merupakan deskriptif kualitatif yang menggambarkan obyek penelitian tentang nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter yang dijalankan dalam berbagai aktivitas. Penelitian ini menjelaskan bagaimana pemikiran KH. Wahid Hasyim dan relevansinya terhadap pendidikan anak usia dini. Penerapan karakter oleh KH. Wahid Hasyim meliputi delapan karakter tersebut antara lain religius, toleransi, mandiri, demokratis, semangat kebangsaan, cinta tanah air, bersahabat atau komunikatif, dan gemar membaca. Pemikiran KH. Wahid Hasyim sesuai dengan tujuan pendidikan karakter yang diterapkan di pendidikan anak usia dini. Penanaman karakter diberikan melalui keteladanan, kegiatan yang terprogram, pembiasaan, dan pengulangan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Menanamkan nilai-nilai karakter pada anak usia dini tidak hanya berharap kepada ketaatan dan kepatuhan anak, tetapi harus disadari dan diyakini oleh anak-anak sehingga mereka merasa bahwa nilai-nilai ini memang benar dan bermanfaat bagi diri dan lingkungannya.

**Kata Kunci:** *model pendidikan karakter; KH. Wahid Hasyim; pendidikan anak usia dini.*

### **Abstract**

This study aims to analysis early childhood characters through KH. Wahid Hasyim education model at RA Ma'arif Metro. The study used a descriptive qualitative to describe the values of character education in various activities. This study explains KH. Wahid Hasyim's character and its relevance to early childhood education. Application of character by KH. Wahid Hasyim consists of eight characters: religious, tolerant, independent, democratic, nationalism, love for the motherland, friendly or communicative, and fond of reading. KH. Wahid Hasyim's framework is in line with the objectives of character education applied in early childhood education. Cultivation of character is given by example, programmed activities, habituation, and repetition in daily life. Instilling character values in early childhood hopes for children's obedience and must be recognized and believed by children to feel these values are valid and beneficial to themselves and their environment.

**Keywords:** *character education model; KH. Wahid Hasyim; early childhood education.*

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## Introduction

Early childhood character development is no longer the main goal in Early Childhood Education (PAUD). Most PAUD institutions focus on children's cognitive development, such as counting, writing, and reading (Khadijah, 2016). If the child can read fluently, write correctly, and count correctly, the child is declared smart. Meanwhile, the goals of PAUD education are many things that need to be developed. These consist of several aspects, such as emotional, social, language, physical motor, and religious, moral development.

One of the developments of children's attitudes that must be applied by PAUD is character education. Character education is an essential element for educational institutions to foster the nation's young generation to behave correctly according to society's norms (Saleh, 2017). Character education is also defined as something related to behavior and good speech to the creator and creature based on religious, cultural, customary, and national norms (Apri Wahyudi, Zulela, Arita Marini, Choirudin, B. Ayshwarya, Phong Thanh Nguyen & Shankar, 2019; Yusuf, 2016). Due to character education as the primary goal of realizing the nation's ideals, early childhood education is significant as a basis for self-formation. Most educators and parents do not realize why early childhood character education is also referred to as the golden age (Prasetiawan, 2016). This encourages implementing a character-based curriculum triggered by the nation's moral degradation, starting from its leaders' behavior, people's representatives to the social strata where acting disgracefully has become a culture. It is important to study various learning models applied by the Early Childhood Education Institute.

KH. Wahid Hasyim was one of the Nahdatul Ulama educational figures who has a curriculum and learning model for children in shaping early childhood character according to the Nahdlatul Ulama understanding (Nurhabibah, 2018). KH. Wahid Hasyim was a figure who was born from among pesantren that has a moderate mindset. He made reforms in various fields, one of which was reform in Islamic education. Reforms in Islamic education were implemented by overhauling the education system at the Tebuireng Islamic boarding school founded by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, who is the father of KH. Wahid Hasyim (Muttaqin, 2017). KH. Wahid Hasyim saw the need for reform in the traditional education system that only studied the yellow book, in which the learning method only used the halaqah method, which was later transformed into more progressive learning. More critical than reform is the need to include general learning in the pesantren curriculum (Hilmy, 2019; Jaenullah & Sudadi, 2020). However, developing characters using the KH. Wahid Hasyim's model has not all been implemented in Early Childhood Education (Fauzan Muttaqin & Joko Raharjo, 2018).

In the discussion of character education, eight-character values in education were initiated by KH. Wahid Hasyim. The eight-character values include: 1) religious character, 2) tolerant character, 3) independent character, 4) democratic character, 5) nationalism spirit character, 6) loving homeland character, 7) friendly or communicative character, and 8) loving to read the character (Departemen Agama RI, 2016). Children's character education and the inculcation of values in children will lead the nation towards renewing life together from a moral perspective. The long-term goal is none other than preparing individuals to face a more complex social life, which in essence could be a continuous process of self-development (Serdyukov, 2017).

In the development of character education in the perspective of KH. Wahid Hasyim. It is hoped that early childhood education (PAUD) teachers will develop children's character. Through character-building carried out in every learning in PAUD, it can contribute to students' fostering good character in early childhood in line with Nahdatul Ulama's teachings (Maryatun, 2016). The role of PAUD teachers in building children's character through the KH. Wahid Hasyim's approach method completed the repertoire of knowledge in early childhood teacher learning development in Indonesia.

Development of early childhood character values through habituation, and exemplary by Arriani emphasizes that character education for early childhood is delivered through habituation methods and exemplary attitudes shown by teachers to students. Character education is applied to young people to shape the nation's children's character in the future.

Character education for children is intended to instill good values as a basis for further personal development (Arriani, 2014).

Some studies that discuss and develop the importance of character education, among others, are (Aniek Irawatie, Iswahyuni Iswahyuni, 2019; Artini & Padmadewi, 2019; Chumdari et al., 2018; Filasofa, 2017; Hakam, 2018; Sa'diyah, 2019; Suciptaningsih et al., 2017). This study's strength compared to previous studies is that it uses character education that adopts an approach to a public figure KH. Wahid Hasyim is one of the prominent figures of character and moral education in Islam and is better known as the father of Islamic education. This is because Indonesia has deviated dramatically from various norms, legal norms, social norms, and even religious norms. We must take advantage of this golden age as a period of coaching, directing, and shaping early childhood character (Machmud & Alim, 2018; Riezky, 2019).

## Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach related to people's ideas, perceptions, opinions, or beliefs and obtains a complete picture of something in line with what humans see (Moleong, 2009; Sugiyono, 2019). In this qualitative research, it describes the application of character building for early childhood through the KH. Wahid Hasyim's education model. This study was conducted at RA Ma'arif Metro, located at Jalan Walet no. 80 Purwosari, North Metro District, Metro City. The subjects in the study were RA Ma'arif Metro students.

The technique of data collection is the most important step in research (Sugiyono, 2019). This study uses the following data collection methods: 1) Interview is a data collection method carried out orally and face-to-face meetings, both individuals and groups. (Moleong, 2009; Sukmadinata, 2005) Interviews were conducted with the head of RA Ma'arif Metro and the teacher council to obtain data about students' activities regarding character both in class and outside the classroom. 2) Observation is a person's ability to use their observations through the work of the sense of sight and is assisted by the other five senses (Bungin, 2017; Narbuko & Achmadi, 2013). The observations carried out focused the researchers directly on children's daily activities to determine RA Ma'arif Metro's real condition in building students' character. 3) Documentation is a record of past events. The documents used by the researchers here are archives of writings/notes, photos, images, recordings, and other data related to the research focus (Sugiyono, 2019). Documentation is done to get notes while researching children's character education.

## Results

Based on the interview with the head of RA Ma'arif Metro, character values for children are given through habituation, modeling, and various activities that are programmed for early childhood life in their daily activities. In instilling character values in RA Ma'arif Metro, it is hoped for children's obedience, but must be believed and realized by the children to feel right and benefit themselves and the surrounding community. At RA Ma'arif Metro, the application of character education values is carried out with programmed activities and habits. All school components are responsible for instilling character both inside and outside the classroom.

In building early childhood character through the KH. Wahid Hasyim's educational model at RA Ma'arif Metro is explained as follows:

### Religious Character

The essential thing in character education for Early Childhood, according to KH. Wahid Hasyim is a religious character. In early childhood education, it is appropriate to foster good school values in religious character education. Implementing religious character values in PAUD is carried out in all places, both in the classroom, outside the classroom, and even outside of school.

The implementation of character values includes each designed main learning activity (Kemendiknas, 2010). Based on an interview with the Head of RA Ma'arif Metro (WKR, 2020),

the implementation of religious character values that each student experiences before entering the school gate, teachers are on standby at the gate to greet and shake hands with the students.



Figure 1. Teachers greet students in front of the school's gate

Besides worship practices, students are also taught to line up before entering the classroom by shaking hands with teachers, praying before and after learning, praying before and after eating, memorizing short verses, practicing prayers together/congregation, and reading Asmaul Husna (WKR, 2020).



Figure 2. Students pray in congregation

### Tolerant Character

One of the types of character education in Early Childhood, according to KH. Wahid Hasyim is tolerance. Tolerance in early childhood is implemented in early childhood education. This section discusses the results of research in PAUD, which includes religious tolerance in early childhood education. Learning in character education is directed to respect each other, not to criticize others, and for the students to have the willingness to share.



Figure 3. Students learn tolerance with parents

Based on interviews with teachers, the character of tolerance to children is taught how to share with friends who need or have needs, such as lending a pencil or crayon if one of the friends forgets to bring it. If there are friends who do not bring lunch, they are also willing to share with friends. Another character of tolerance is shown when a friend in the class cries. The other friend calms them down, helps a friend take out the trash, and helps a friend complete tasks such as coloring or arranging games. Also, tolerance in PAUD is how to learn and play together as a form of social interaction at school (WGR, 2020).



Figure 4. Students playing outside school

This attitude of tolerance that is taught well to PAUD students positively impacts high social values. Besides, they are also taught the other aspects of tolerance, such as mutual respect, respect, and want to share.

### Independent Character

The habit of behaving independently is shown in children when removing and storing their shoes in early childhood in PAUD. The habit of children's independent behavior when removing and storing their shoes in early childhood in PAUD occurs where the teacher provides an example and directs the child to take off and store their shoes on the shoe rack and tidy up their clothes. With the attitude of getting children to take off and take care of their shoes and tidy up their clothes repeatedly, children get used to doing it.



Figure 5. Student independence activities

The habit of behaving independently in children is also shown when taking and opening their food storage in early childhood in PAUD. The habit of behaving independently in children can also be shown when washing hands before and after doing activities in early childhood in PAUD. Children's habit of behaving independently is further seen when tidying and storing their food in early childhood in PAUD. The habit of behaving independently is also reflected when throwing garbage in its place in early childhood in PAUD (WGR, 2020).

Regarding children's independent behavior habits, one of the researcher's questions is what factors cause children to be unaccustomed to independent behavior in early childhood in PAUD. Habituation of independent behavior in early childhood in PAUD is done by providing guidance, explanation, direction, and motivation. Teachers have an essential role in fostering independent behavior in children. Teachers must motivate children so that children are encouraged and appear to be willing to do all activities based on their abilities, and they do not depend on others.

### Democratic Character

Based on observations at the research site, democratic character education implemented in RA Ma'arif Metro is carried out through self-development programs, including activities carried out regularly. These activities are students taking turns lining up in front of the class before entering, praying before and after learning and reading short *surah*. Spontaneous activities are practiced by giving warnings and advice if the behavior of students is not right,

exemplary by the teacher by conditioning group formation and lining up positions, queuing while waiting for their turn such as ablution, teaching tidying up the arrangement while sitting and making groups neatly while studying (ORA, 2020).



Figure 6. Students marching as a form of democratic attitude

### **Nationalism Spirit and Love for the Motherland**

The inculcation of the country's nationalism spirit and love in RA Ma'arif Metro students is carried out through prayer activities before and after learning. The inculcation of the value of the nationalism spirit and an attitude of love for the country applied to all students at RA Ma'arif Metro during outside learning activities is carried out ten minutes before entering, teachers together with the students recite Pancasila, reading prayers, read Asmaul Husna, and sing the national songs and the anthem, Indonesia Raya (WKR, 2020).



Figure 7. Students sing the national anthem and flag ceremony

### **Friendly/Communicative**

Every teacher must teach students to be able to respect the teacher and love each other. This is also one of the values of character education taught by KH. Wahid Hasyim, especially in Early Childhood, was implemented at RA Ma'arif Metro by implementing various character education strategies. The RA Ma'arif Metro teachers often teach how to communicate well with various Prophet/Rasul stories and teach how to behave to teachers, friends, peers, and parents. Inculcating other friendly or communicative character education is also done by teaching through games that require cooperation between friends so that PAUD children can communicate well with their peers (WKR, 2020).



Figure 8. Communication activities in RA Ma'arif Metro

### Loving to read

The final character education in Early Childhood, according to KH. Wahid Hasyim is a reading behavior that should be made a habit from an early age. Teachers at RA Ma'arif Metro always teach students to read books, magazines, or other useful reading materials. Reading activities at RA Ma'arif Metro are carried out in various places, including the classroom, outside the classroom, or on school grounds. When the researchers carried out the observation, the researchers found reading activities outside the classroom. It can be seen that there is an awareness of the importance of reading in PAUD students (WGR, 2020).



Figure 9. Teachers teaching students to love reading

### Discussion

Moral education is also often referred to in society as character education. Character education is a term that is increasingly getting recognition from Indonesian society today. This is especially important with the perceived imbalance in educational outcomes seen from current formal education graduates' behavior, such as corruption, the development of free sex among adolescents, fights, drugs, robbery, and murder perpetrated by students. Students and unemployed middle and secondary school graduates. Everything feels stronger when this country is hit by a never-ending crisis (Kesuma, 2011).

According to Megawangi, character education is an effort to educate children to make wise decisions and practice them in everyday life to make a positive contribution to their environment (Megawangi, 2004). Another definition by Gaffar sees it as a process of transforming the values of life to be developed in a person's personality so that they become one in that person's life behavior (Gaffar, 2010).

As defined by Ryan and Bohlin, characters contain three main elements, i.e., knowing what is right, loving what is good, and doing what is right (Majid, 2011). In character education, kindness is often summed up in a series of good qualities. Thus, character education is an attempt to guide human behavior towards the standards set by norms. Character strengthening programs for schools include character integration into the curriculum, integration of existing subjects, maintenance of intellectual priorities, self-development, and local content (Baehr, 2017). The central values of integrating strengthening character education in schools are achieved through learning activities in the classroom, the school environment, and the surrounding community's participation (Banamtuan & Natonis, 2019).

Students' character growth from the beginning is built from within the classroom because what children do will affect behavior both when they are at school and when they return home. The learning atmosphere at RA Ma'arif Metro supports religious values through various activities in the classroom. Culture in RA Ma'arif Metro is embodied in routine activities at school. The implementation of character in RA Ma'arif Metro functions well because of the habituation of school activities that supports character implementation. School culture has much influence on character implementation because school culture is adapted to school objectives. The character implementation in RA Ma'arif Metro functions well because of the school culture that supports character implementation. School culture has much influence on implementation because school culture is adapted to school objectives. Character education is carried out at RA Ma'arif Metro through self-development programs consisting of routine activities, spontaneous activities, and exemplary.

Early childhood character through the KH. Wahid Hasyim's education model at RA Ma'arif Metro is described as follows:

### **Religious Character**

Implementing a religious character to the value of character education is as follows: 1) The teacher's mindset about the importance of religious values in character education is one source that education underlies character and is paramount to instill in students from an early age. This is because strong religious provisions, which are instilled early, will strengthen students' moral foundation in the future. Students will not be easily affected by bad things. 2) The role of schools in supporting the implementation of religious character values in character education is to provide facilities that are used to support the implementation of programs held at schools, give permission to teachers who have ideas to organize program activities, support activities outside of school, and provide good role models for students. 3) Implementation of religious values in character education consists of routine activities in schools. Spontaneous activities carried out by teachers to students, role models provided by teachers, and school conditioning made in such away. Implementation can also be done by including subject matter or moral messages from teachers and through school culture, which consists of cultures that exist in the classroom, school, and outside of school.

The main religious character developed in PAUD is the obligation as a Muslim. Activities carried out by teachers carry out the habit of behaving independently in early childhood (Zubaida, 2016). These are as follows: by fostering self-confidence and a sense of responsibility to children, among others by way of teachers telling stories, providing explanations, and providing supporting facilities such as trash cans, shoe racks, posters, soap, a place for running water, so that they are expected to provide ease in habituation implementation of independent behavior. The habit of behaving independently must be instilled from an early age with the hope that one day the children will become a more responsible generation, who has a sense of care and empathy for themselves, others, and the environment.

### **Tolerant Character**

The next early childhood character building through the implementation of KH. Wahid Hasyim's education model in RA Ma'arif Metro is the character of tolerance. Of course, tolerance needs to be applied in every lesson because children will have good social-emotional values. After all, social-emotional attitudes include many aspects of tolerance, such as mutual respect, wanting to respect, and wanting to share. The fundamental attitude of tolerance is how children can appreciate differences when interacting with others to create good communication by children, parents, and teachers. It is straightforward to apply it to children because with continuous habituation, children will be trained and get a positive response from the child or parents (Fauzan Muttaqin & Joko Raharjo, 2018).

### **Independent Character**

The teacher's attitude of independence through habituation can be seen from the change in children's attitude who can carry out their activities without others' help, maintain personal hygiene and the environment without being instructed by the teacher. Habits and training will shape individual attitudes in children, gradually becoming more precise and more robust, eventually not shaken anymore because they have become part of their personality.

Cultivating the character of independence is found in KH. Wahid Hasyim's work entitled "Abdullah Ubaid as an Educator." This article begins by telling how KH. Wahid Hasyim received a guest named Abdullah Ubaid with his two children. In this meeting, a powerful but straightforward educational story occurs when the host provides tea and guests, especially children, want to drink it (Atjeh, 2015).

### **Democratic Character**

The nationalism spirit is described as a way of thinking, acting, and insight that places the nation's interests and the state above oneself and their groups' interests. The description above does not explain the character of a good nationalism spirit. Therefore, it is necessary to



study how the ethics or morals of a good nationalism spirit originate from the Al-Qur' an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which are based on faith and piety to Allah SWT.

KH. Wahid Hasyim emphasized being democratic, not afraid of other people's opinions who have different directions (Chodir, 2010). Democratic character develops mutual understanding, respect, or tolerance between one person and another, especially concerning rights and obligations. Without this democratic character, there will be a pattern of life that is mutually coercive, does not respect the rights and obligations of others, and prioritizes one's interests (Azzet, 2011; Subandi et al., 2020).

### **Characters of Nationalism spirit and Love for the motherland**

The character of love for the motherland is to maintain sustainability on earth, including its land and water. Love for the homeland is manifested by not destroying the environment but by providing benefits. On the other hand, prohibited bad morals are causing damage to the earth, including its land and water. Friendly or communicative is described as an act that shows a pleasure to talk, socialize, and cooperate with other people. The description of establishing a harmonious relationship does not explain how friendly/communicative characters are. Therefore, it is necessary to study how the good and bad morals of friendly/communicative character come from the Qur' an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad based on faith and piety (Sa'diyah, 2019).

Love for the motherland is an attitude of respect that is taught to students in early childhood education. This expressed through how to show the Indonesian state through various activities such as protecting the environment, appreciating the struggles of heroes who have fought for Indonesian independence, and giving thanks to Allah *subhanahu wataala* for a peaceful country and prosper with all the wealth of the tribe, nation, language and religion. The implementation of character education and love for the motherland and the spirit of nationality is expressed through singing the national songs. RA Ma'arif Metro students have done these well, such as flag ceremonies, singing national songs and the anthem Indonesia Raya, reading prayers, and Asmaul Husna.

In line with the spirit of nationality, love for the motherland is described as a way of thinking, behaving, and acting, which shows loyalty, concern, and high respect for language, the physical, social, cultural, economic, political, and national environments. However, this description does not explain the excellent character of loving the motherland from an Islamic perspective. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study of how good and bad morals are related to the character of love for the country. Good morals from loving the country are a caring attitude towards the surrounding environment, including its land (earth) and water.

### **Friendly/Communicative Character**

Friendly or communicative, i.e., a student's activities to fellow friends both in class, outside the class, and even communicative, are taught to students in the community. Friendly or communicative character is about how to educate a student in PAUD. Efforts to develop friendly and communicative character attitudes in PAUD are taught through group games and require team cohesiveness. Therefore, from the start, children can actively communicate with their peers in achieving common goals. Friendly or communicative character attitudes also teach how to respect various ethnicities, languages, races, and even religions without differentiating oneself (Riezky, 2019).

Good morals are helping each other in acts of virtue and being obedient to Allah. Meanwhile, bad morals are helping to commit sins and transgressions. Furthermore, regarding the good and bad morals of the communicative character in the Al-Qur' an, Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

It means: "O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." (QS 33: 70) (Departemen Agama RI, 2016).

The bad morals of the communicative character that someone is prohibited from doing are saying useless and misleading words (humans) from Allah SWT.

## Loving to Read Character

Loving to read is studying and enriching information and knowledge obtained from books and other reading sources. Reading activities for students in PAUD are carried out by teachers and carried out independently in the classroom, outside the classroom, library, and even in the schoolyard. This effort is to equip students to sharpen their literacy skills to be useful in the future (Zubaida, 2016). Literacy activities in PAUD are carried out to instill a character of loving to read, which is carried out by telling stories or storytelling and changing the atmosphere not to be bored. Telling the story of the prophets and teaching how to behave to parents, teachers, and peers can be performed by reading the archipelago tales, such as Malin Kundang, who was cursed to be a stone when he disobeyed his parents. Therefore, they are always good friends with classmates without ever discriminating.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that, in building early childhood character, RA Ma'arif Metro uses eight values of character education, i.e., religious character, tolerant character, independent character, democratic character, nationalism spirit character, loving motherland character, friendly or communicative character, and loving to read character. RA Ma'arif Metro also uses habituation methods, exemplary attitudes, and various activities that are programmed for early childhood life in their daily activities.

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