

The Role of Parents in Instilling Islamic Character Values in Children

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Abstract The family is the primary environment for shaping children's moral character. In Islamic education, parents are the first educators responsible for developing children's spiritual and ethical values. However, technological change and digital media exposure have created new challenges for family-based character education. This study aims to analyze the role of parents in instilling Islamic character in children, identify parenting strategies, and examine contemporary challenges. This study used a literature review method with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected from scientific publications indexed in Google Scholar, SINTA, DOAJ, Crossref, and ResearchGate from 2015–2025. The selected literature was analyzed using content analysis. The findings show that parents have a central role in children's Islamic character formation through five main dimensions: role modeling, worship habituation, value-based communication, digital supervision, and emotional–spiritual support. Parental role modeling was found to be the most dominant factor. In addition, worship habits build discipline, communication strengthens moral reasoning, and digital supervision helps children face modern challenges. In conclusion, Islamic character education must begin within the family through consistent and holistic parenting. Cooperation between family, school, and community is essential in preparing morally grounded children.

Keywords: *Parental Role, Islamic character, Parenting, Family education.*

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Abstract Keluarga merupakan lingkungan utama dalam membentuk karakter anak. Dalam pendidikan Islam, orang tua adalah pendidik pertama yang bertanggung jawab menanamkan nilai spiritual dan moral kepada anak. Namun, perkembangan teknologi dan paparan media digital menimbulkan tantangan baru dalam pendidikan karakter di keluarga. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran orang tua dalam menanamkan karakter Islami pada anak, mengidentifikasi strategi pengasuhan, serta mengkaji tantangan kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kepustakaan dengan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Data diperoleh dari publikasi ilmiah yang terindeks Google Scholar, SINTA, DOAJ, Crossref, dan ResearchGate tahun 2015–2025. Literatur yang dipilih dianalisis menggunakan analisis isi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa orang tua memiliki peran sentral dalam pembentukan karakter Islami anak melalui lima dimensi utama, yaitu keteladanan, pembiasaan ibadah, komunikasi berbasis nilai, pengawasan digital, dan dukungan emosional–spiritual. Keteladanan orang tua menjadi faktor paling dominan. Selain itu, pembiasaan ibadah membentuk kedisiplinan, komunikasi memperkuat penalaran moral, dan pengawasan digital membantu anak menghadapi tantangan modern. Kesimpulannya, pendidikan karakter Islami harus dimulai dari keluarga melalui pola asuh yang konsisten dan holistik. Kerja sama antara keluarga, sekolah, dan masyarakat sangat penting dalam menyiapkan generasi berakhlak mulia.

KKata Kunci: *Peran Orang Tua, Karakter Islami, Pengasuhan, Pendidikan Keluarga.*

INTRODUCTION

The family remains the primary and most influential environment in shaping children's moral identity, attitudes, and behavioral patterns from an early age (Hastuti & Kayyimah, 2024). Within the Islamic educational perspective, parents are entrusted as the first educators who bear responsibility not only for children's physical development but also for their spiritual and ethical formation (Jaafar, 2024). Islamic character values such as honesty (*ṣidq*), discipline (*intizām*), responsibility (*amanah*), respect, empathy, and obedience to Allah are expected to be cultivated first within the household through continuous interaction, guidance, and example (Dewita, 2024). In this regard, the family is not merely a social institution, but a strategic educational space where religious values are internalized in everyday life (Najwah, 2021). Therefore, parental involvement in character education becomes fundamental in determining the quality of children's future personality and morality (Safitri & Nora, 2023).

The urgency of parental roles in Islamic character formation has become increasingly significant in the contemporary era (Salim et al., 2024). Rapid technological

development, digital media exposure, consumer culture, and changing parenting patterns have transformed children's learning environments beyond the home (Rose, 2020). Children today are exposed to multiple external influences through smartphones, social media, streaming platforms, and peer networks from an increasingly young age (Núñez-gómez et al., 2021). While these developments provide educational opportunities, they also introduce risks such as declining discipline, reduced empathy, moral confusion, weakened religious habits, and excessive dependence on digital devices (Marasabessy & Dahinang, 2026). In many contexts, children spend more time interacting with screens than engaging in meaningful communication with family members (Adwiah & Diana, 2023). As a result, the transmission of Islamic values within families faces greater complexity than in previous generations (Jubaeli, 2024).

In response to these challenges, parents are expected to perform multidimensional roles (Loiselle, 2021). They are no longer limited to functioning as providers or supervisors, but must also act as moral role models, spiritual mentors, emotional supporters, digital gatekeepers, and facilitators of value-based communication (Bikram Tikader, 2025). Previous studies consistently indicate that parental modeling remains one of the strongest determinants of children's character development (Zhu et al., 2022). Children tend to imitate what parents practice more than what parents verbally instruct (Papa et al., 2021). Religious consistency in prayer, honesty in daily interaction, respectful communication, and emotional self-control demonstrated by parents significantly influence children's behavioral tendencies (Wardana, 2025). This finding confirms that Islamic character education is most effective when values are embodied through lived experiences rather than merely delivered through instruction (Riyan Ashari, 2025).

Several studies have also emphasized the importance of habituation practices such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, daily supplication, and disciplined routines in fostering children's moral awareness. Repetitive positive practices gradually become internalized habits that shape self-regulation and responsibility. In addition, open communication grounded in Islamic values enables children to understand the moral meaning behind rules and obligations (Luthfi, 2025). Children who are guided through dialogue rather than authoritarian control tend to develop stronger intrinsic motivation and

moral reasoning (Syafei, 2025). These findings suggest that successful Islamic parenting requires the integration of behavioral example, structured habituation, and constructive communication (Rahma, 2025).

However, despite the growing body of literature on parenting and character education, several important gaps remain (Sumar et al., 2025). First, many previous studies examine parental roles only in partial dimensions, such as religious instruction, discipline, gadget supervision, or moral advice, without integrating these aspects into a holistic framework of Islamic character formation (Adzikri et al., 2025). Second, a considerable number of studies focus on early childhood settings or school-based character programs, while fewer studies critically synthesize family-based Islamic parenting across broader developmental contexts. Third, recent societal changes especially digitalization and post-pandemic parenting shifts have altered family dynamics, yet existing literature has not sufficiently mapped adaptive parental strategies in addressing these transformations. As a result, a comprehensive understanding of how parents simultaneously negotiate moral, emotional, spiritual, and technological challenges remains limited.

From a methodological perspective, many studies on this topic are empirical case studies with localized findings, making it difficult to identify broader conceptual patterns. There is still limited literature review research that systematically synthesizes findings from diverse studies to generate stronger theoretical conclusions regarding the role of parents in instilling Islamic character in children. Without such synthesis, the discourse tends to remain fragmented and descriptive (Xiao & Watson, 2019). A literature review is therefore necessary to consolidate previous findings, identify recurring themes, evaluate dominant strategies, and formulate a more comprehensive model of Islamic parenting relevant to present conditions (Snyder, 2019).

Based on these considerations, this study aims to systematically examine the role of parents in instilling Islamic character in children through a literature review approach (Sain, 2024). Specifically, this study explores the main dimensions of parental roles, the strategies employed in family-based Islamic character education, and the contemporary challenges faced by parents in the modern era (Khorri et al., 2025). The findings are

expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic education studies and practically to provide guidance for parents, educators, and policymakers in strengthening children’s character formation through family-centered approaches.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a literature review method with a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the role of parents in instilling Islamic character in children. This approach was selected to synthesize previous findings and develop a comprehensive understanding of family-based Islamic character education (Snyder, 2019).

The data consisted of secondary sources collected from Google Scholar, SINTA, DOAJ, Crossref, ResearchGate, and institutional repositories (Ahmar, 2022). The reviewed publications were limited to the period of 2015–2025 to ensure relevance to contemporary parenting issues. The search process used keywords such as parental role, Islamic parenting, Islamic character education, children moral development, and digital parenting.

The literature selection process was conducted systematically through the following stages:

<i>Identification → Screening → Eligibility → Inclusion → Final Analysis</i>
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At the identification stage, potentially relevant publications were collected from selected databases. The screening stage involved reviewing titles, abstracts, and keywords to assess relevance (Harari et al., 2020). The eligibility stage focused on evaluating methodological clarity, conceptual contribution, and accessibility of full texts. Studies that met the established criteria were included in the final review and subsequently analyzed (Schreiber et al., 2024).

Publications discussing parental roles, Islamic parenting practices, family-based moral education, and children’s character development were included (Noverta et al., 2025). Meanwhile, duplicate, inaccessible, and irrelevant studies were excluded from the review process. The selected literature was analyzed using content analysis through data reduction, thematic classification, comparison of findings, and conclusion drawing (Assarroudi, 2018). The main themes identified included parental role modeling, worship habituation, value-based communication, digital supervision, emotional support, and contemporary parenting

challenges (Hilman et al., 2025). To ensure credibility, source triangulation was conducted by comparing findings across multiple studies (Xiao & Watson, 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the synthesis of selected literature, the role of parents in instilling Islamic character in children remains central in contemporary family life. Across various studies, parents are consistently identified as the first and primary educators who shape children’s moral orientation, religious habits, and social behavior through daily interaction. In the context of Islamic education, character formation is not merely delivered through verbal advice, but through consistent parenting practices that integrate example, habituation, supervision, and emotional guidance. Therefore, the family continues to function as the most strategic institution for early Islamic character development.

To strengthen the literature review findings, this study mapped previous relevant studies discussing parental roles in children’s character education, Islamic parenting, and family-based moral development. The synthesis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Previous Relevant Studies on the Role of Parents in Islamic Character Formation

Author(s)	Focus of Study	Method	Main Findings	Relevance to Present Study
Najwah (2021)	Parents’ role in children’s character building from Qur’an and Hadith perspective	Qualitative literature study	Parents shape children’s morals through role modeling, advice, and habituation	Supports theological foundation of parental responsibility
Hadi Prabowo et al. (2020)	Parents’ role during COVID-19 pandemic	Qualitative descriptive	Parents acted as educators, facilitators, motivators, and supervisors at home	Shows expanded parenting role in crisis situations
Adwiah & Diana (2023)	Gadget impact on early childhood social development	Qualitative	Active supervision is needed to reduce negative gadget effects	Supports digital parenting dimension
Safitri & Nora	Mothers’ strategies in instilling religious	Field qualitative study	Daily habituation and emotional closeness	Supports worship habituation and

(2023)	character		strengthen children's religiosity	emotional support
Wardana (2025)	Family role in Islamic educational habits	Descriptive study	Children imitate religious routines practiced by parents	Supports role modeling and family culture
Maulana (2025)	Holistic education in forming Islamic character	Conceptual study	Character education should integrate moral, emotional, and spiritual dimensions	Supports holistic parenting model
Rahma (2025)	Islamic communication in family discipline	Qualitative study	Dialogic communication strengthens discipline and internal awareness	Supports value-based communication
Ningsih (2025)	Religious value-based character education in early childhood	Descriptive qualitative	Religious routines foster discipline and social empathy	Supports habituation strategy
Author(s)	Focus of Study	Method	Main Findings	Relevance to Present Study
Najwah (2021)	Parents' role in children's character building from Qur'an and Hadith perspective	Qualitative literature study	Parents shape children's morals through role modeling, advice, and habituation	Supports theological foundation of parental responsibility

Table 1 indicates that previous studies generally agree that parental involvement significantly influences children's character development. However, most studies tend to examine specific dimensions separately, such as role modeling, communication, discipline, or digital supervision. Only limited studies provide a comprehensive synthesis integrating these dimensions into one framework of Islamic parenting. This gap strengthens the urgency of the present literature review (Kebede, 2023).

Major Dimensions of Parental Roles in Islamic Character Education

From the reviewed studies, five dominant dimensions were identified: parental role modeling, worship habituation, value-based communication, digital supervision, and

emotional–spiritual support.

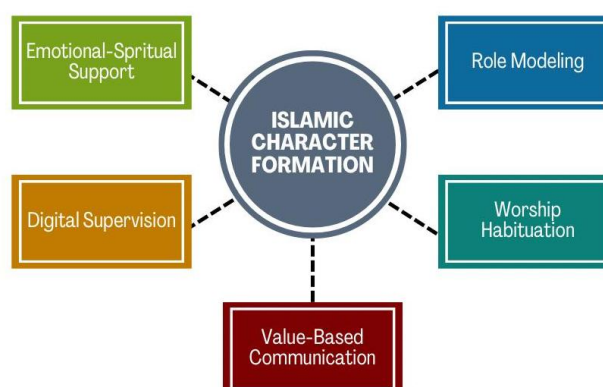


Fig 1. Islamic Character Formation

Parental Role Modeling

Parental role modeling emerged as the most dominant theme in the literature. Children tend to imitate behaviors repeatedly demonstrated by parents, including honesty, discipline, prayer consistency, respect, and emotional control. This confirms that moral messages become effective when embodied through daily practice rather than delivered solely through instruction (Pring, 2010).

Worship Habituation

Many studies found that routine religious practices such as prayer, Qur’anic recitation, supplication, and fasting training contribute significantly to discipline and self-control. Through repeated worship routines, children gradually internalize responsibility and spiritual awareness.

Value-Based Communication

The reviewed literature also shows that communication grounded in Islamic values helps children understand the moral meaning behind rules. Families practicing open dialogue tend to produce children with stronger empathy, responsibility, and reflective thinking than families relying solely on punishment.

Digital Supervision

Recent studies highlight that technological development has changed parenting responsibilities. Parents are now required to guide children’s digital behavior by setting screen-time limits, selecting content, and discussing online ethics. This indicates that Islamic

parenting today must adapt to digital realities (Bukhari, Bastiar, 2024).

Emotional–Spiritual Support

Warm, respectful, and spiritually supportive homes were found to strengthen children’s receptiveness to moral education. Emotional attachment enables children to accept parental advice more positively and develop resilience against negative external influences.

Critical Discussion

Although many studies acknowledge the importance of parents, most still examine parenting roles partially. Some focus only on worship routines, while others emphasize gadget supervision or discipline. In reality, Islamic character formation requires an integrated parenting model. Role modeling without communication may become rigid, while discipline without affection may lead to resistance. Therefore, this study argues that effective Islamic parenting must combine example, habit formation, emotional warmth, and adaptive strategies simultaneously (Ghani, 2025).

The findings imply that strengthening children’s Islamic character cannot rely solely on schools or religious institutions. Family-based intervention remains essential. Parenting education programs should therefore equip parents with competencies in moral communication, digital mediation, and emotionally supportive parenting. By doing so, families can remain resilient centers of Islamic character education amid rapid social change (Nurafni, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this literature review, it can be concluded that parents have a fundamental and irreplaceable role in instilling Islamic character in children. The family remains the first and most strategic educational environment where children initially learn moral values, religious habits, and social behavior through continuous interaction with parents. Islamic character formation cannot be effectively developed through verbal instruction alone, but requires consistent parenting practices reflected in everyday family life.

This study identified five major dimensions of parental roles in children's Islamic character development, namely parental role modeling, worship habituation, value-based communication, digital supervision, and emotional-spiritual support. Among these dimensions, parental role modeling emerged as the most dominant factor, as children naturally imitate behaviors repeatedly demonstrated by their parents. Worship habituation contributes to discipline and spiritual awareness, value-based communication strengthens moral reasoning and responsibility, while digital supervision and emotional support help children remain resilient amid contemporary social challenges.

The study also found that previous research often discussed parental roles in partial ways, focusing only on specific aspects such as discipline, religiosity, or gadget control. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of a holistic Islamic parenting model that integrates exemplary behavior, religious routines, emotional warmth, and adaptive strategies toward modern technological developments.

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations are proposed. Parents are encouraged to strengthen family-based character education through consistent example, meaningful communication, and wise supervision of children's digital activities. Schools and educational institutions should build stronger collaboration with families through parenting programs and character education partnerships. Policymakers are also encouraged to support family empowerment initiatives that enhance parenting competence in moral and digital guidance. In addition, future researchers are recommended to conduct empirical studies to further examine the practical implementation of Islamic parenting strategies in diverse social contexts.

In conclusion, the successful development of children's Islamic character requires synergy between family, school, and community environments, with parents remaining the central actors in preparing morally grounded generations for the challenges of modern life.

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