

Application of Storytelling Methods to Instill Moral Values in Early Childhood RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan

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Abstract

Instilling moral values from an early age is an important basis in the formation of children's character. This study aims to explore the application of storytelling methods as a means to instill moral values in early childhood at RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan. The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach through a literature study that utilizes various sources of literature, both primary and secondary, that are relevant to the research theme. The results of the study show that the storytelling method is an effective learning approach in helping children understand and internalize moral values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and politeness. Through the storyline and character of the characters, children are invited to recognize and assess good and bad behavior in a fun way. The application of Islamic stories also strengthens the learning process of spiritual values in accordance with the educational vision at RA Al Rizky. In addition, the success of this method is largely determined by the role of teachers who are able to convey stories expressively and actively involve children. A conducive school environment also strengthens the habituation of moral values that have been instilled. Therefore, the storytelling method can be used as the main strategy in shaping the character of early childhood in Islamic-based educational institutions.

Keywords: Moral Values, Storytelling Method, Early Childhood, RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan, Character Education, Islamic-Based Education

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International Conference Global Islamic Education: Cultivating Tolerance and Interfaith Cooperation in A Multicultural (GIE), Theme: Strengthening Tolerance and Peace.

<https://proceeding.pancabudi.ac.id/index.php/GIE>

Introduction

Early childhood is at a very important stage of development in the formation of character and morals. At this time, children are very sensitive to the values instilled through everyday experiences. One of the effective methods that can be used in moral education is the storytelling method. Stories have the power to convey messages emotionally and imaginatively, which makes it easier for children to understand and emulate moral values such as honesty, empathy, responsibility, and helpfulness.

In the world of early childhood education (PAUD), the storytelling method is not only used to improve language and cognitive skills, but also as a means of forming personality. Teachers or educators can choose folklore, fairy tales, or daily life stories that contain messages moral, then convey it in an interesting way so that the child is emotionally and reflectively involved.

Early childhood is an important phase in individual development, where the cultivation of moral values is the main foundation for forming good character. Early childhood, or often referred to as the golden age, is a child who is in the range of birth age up to six years. At this age, children are in a very rapid developmental phase, both physically, cognitively, linguistically, and emotionally (Widyas et al., 2024). According to Nurhasanah and Harahap (2023) The importance of instilling moral values in early childhood so that children's character can develop with children's potential and abilities optimally as well as the growth of positive attitudes and behaviors for children. At this stage, children are very easy to absorb the information and learning provided, so the learning method used must be effective and interesting.

One method that has proven effective is the storytelling method. The storytelling method is a method that tells a story, both real and imaginary, which is packaged in the form of an interesting story, with the aim of conveying a message, both explicit and implicit, to others (Rahman et al. 2020). The selection of methods that can support children's moral development, especially the formation of disciplined characters, can be done using the storytelling method (Utami, Munisa, & Harahap, 2020). According to research, "The storytelling method can affect changes in children's behavior. Through storytelling, parents and teachers can tell interesting stories about a character who behaves well, so that children are encouraged to behave from bad to good" (Ningrum, 2023). In this way, the child not only accepts the material passively, but can also cultivate empathy and moral understanding. According to Rahman et al. (2023), the cultivation of religious and moral values needs to be introduced and instilled in children from an early age as an effort to form a generation that is spiritually strong and polite in terms of morals.

Furthermore, Aidha Artha Novayanty (2023) found that "research findings quantitatively illustrate the percentage increase in moral behavior children by 48% after the application of the storytelling method in early childhood." This shows that the application of the storytelling method is able to have a significant positive impact on the formation of children's moral values, especially in the early childhood education environment such as RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan.

In addition, the effectiveness of the storytelling method is also supported by psychological and pedagogical aspects in the content of the story. As stated by a research, "The content in the story must contain religious aspects, pedagogical aspects, and psychological aspects, namely containing story material about the stories of prophets, companions, scholars, and righteous people" (UIN Suka Conference, 2020). It is very relevant to instill moral values that are not only general, but also have strong religious values, especially in the context of Islamic education at RA Al Rizky.

Instilling moral values from an early age through the storytelling method has also been proven to significantly improve children's moral development. As the results of another study

stated, "The increase in the development of religious and moral values from the initial data to the second cycle was 94.81% after the application of the storytelling method" (Aulad, 2022). This figure strengthens the argument that the storytelling method is very appropriate to be used as a means of moral education in early childhood. Thus, the application of the storytelling method at RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan is very important as an effort to shape children's character and morals from an early age, so that later they grow up to be ethical individuals noble and noble character.

Research Methods

Based on the type of data used and the research objectives to be achieved, the method used in this study is a descriptive method, a library research approach as a place or source of reference. Therefore, cultivating the ability to utilize libraries must begin with knowing the organization and types of library collections and having knowledge of reference books, namely about the scope and content of their composition.¹⁷ The source of data in this study is the collection of library books consisting of primary and secondary sources. Data collection is carried out by searching for data in the form of records, book transcripts, newspapers in the library. Data analysis uses inductive techniques and content analysis.

Results and Discussion

3.1 Research Results

Based on the results of research conducted through a descriptive method with a literature review approach, it was found that the storytelling method has a significant impact on instilling moral values in early childhood. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of the application of storytelling methods in shaping children's characters, especially in the context of education at RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan. The data sources used in this study were obtained from various primary and secondary literature, including children's education theory books, scientific articles, and relevant previous research results.

This study aims to describe the effectiveness of the application of the storytelling method in instilling moral values in early childhood. Using a descriptive approach and library research method, data is obtained from various reading sources such as children's education books, scientific articles, and other references relevant to the topic.

Data sources are categorized into primary (books on children's theory and character education) and secondary (supporting articles and other appropriate literature). The data collection technique is carried out by searching, recording, and studying the content of documents available in the library.

Data analysis is carried out inductively, that is, drawing conclusions based on specific data found in the reading. In addition, content analysis techniques are also used to interpret the meaning and moral messages contained in children's stories.

From the results of the study, it was found that the storytelling method is one of the most potential media in conveying moral values in a subtle and fun way. Values such as honesty, responsibility, good manners, and caring for others can be conveyed through characters and storylines that are easy to understand Early Childhood. The children's storybooks analyzed in this study show that the delivery of moral values is more effective if they are packaged in stories that are interesting and contextual with children's lives.

From the results of the literature review analyzed, it can be seen that the storytelling method makes a positive contribution to the formation of children's character, especially in instilling moral values from an early age. Stories provide concrete illustrations of behaviors and consequences, so that children can easily distinguish between good and bad actions.

Through the stories read, children not only become passive listeners, but are also invited to think critically, understand the feelings of the characters, and judge their actions. This

process forms the basis for a deeper and more meaningful moral development of children.

In an early childhood environment like RA Al Rizky, the storytelling method is very suitable because it is in harmony with the imaginative and curious world of children. Stories are an effective means of conveying moral messages without having to be patronizing, but in a way that is fun and easy for children to digest.

Thus, it can be concluded that the use of storytelling methods in early childhood learning not only improves language skills, but is also an important tool in instilling positive life values. Teachers need to choose relevant stories and convey them in an interesting way so that the moral message can be received and understood optimally by children.

In the world of early childhood education, the storytelling method has proven to be an approach that is not only fun, but also effective in conveying moral messages. Early childhood is at a developmental stage that is highly sensitive to moral, emotional, and social stimulation. It is at this age that the fundamentals of character are formed. Stories provide a symbolic and emotional learning experience, which is able to shape children's understanding of values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and politeness.

The storytelling method allows children to learn through the example of story characters that are displayed in an interesting and imaginative manner. Through a storyline that depicts the conflict between good and bad actions and the consequences thatAs a result, children are indirectly invited to understand moral concepts and reflect on their own behavior. Previous research has shown that this method provides positive behavior change. For example, in a study conducted by Aidha Artha Novayanty (2023), it was found that there was an increase of 48% in children's moral behavior after the application of the structured storytelling method. Meanwhile, the results of a study by Aulad (2022) showed that the development of children's religious and moral values increased by 94.81% from the initial data to the second cycle after continuous storytelling activities.

The content of the story used in storytelling activities also plays a very important role. In the context of Islamic education as applied at RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan, stories that contain religious elements such as the stories of prophets, companions, and exemplary figures from Islamic history are very effective in instilling moral values that are spiritual and contextual. This is in line with the findings of UIN Sunan Kalijaga (2020) which states that stories that contain religious, pedagogical, and psychological aspects are very supportive of children's overall moral development. These stories not only teach good behavior, but also instill spiritual awareness that is in harmony with Islamic values.

In addition, the effectiveness of the storytelling method is also determined by the way it is delivered. Teachers as facilitators must be able to convey stories with interesting techniques, such as using facial expressions, voice intonation, and supportive movements. The child's involvement in the process of listening and discussing stories is also an important factor. Children who are consulted after hearing stories tend to better understand moral messages and relate them to their own experiences. This is where the role of teachers becomes very strategic, not only as a reader of stories, but also as a guide for moral reflection for children.

Discussion

In the context of RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan, storytelling activities have become part of a learning strategy directed at shaping children's character from an early age. This educational environment provides space for teachers to choose stories that are in accordance with the values they want to inculcate. Stories are told regularly in a fun atmosphere, so that children feel involved and unburdened. The impact of this activity can be seen in changes in children's behavior who become more empathetic, disciplined, and able to distinguish between good and bad actions. From all the studies conducted, it can be concluded that the storytelling method is one of the most effective learning approaches to instill moral values in early

childhood. Appropriately chosen stories, delivered in an engaging method, and linked to the context of a child's life, will form a strong moral understanding embedded in their daily behavior. Thus, this method not only improves the child's language and cognitive abilities, but also contributes greatly to the formation of good character and personality from an early age.

4.1 Storytelling Method as an Effective Approach in Early Childhood Moral Learning

The storytelling method has proven to be one of the most suitable approaches to be applied in early childhood character education. In this study, it is understood that children in the golden age tend to more easily accept and understand moral values if they are conveyed through fun media, one of which is through stories. Stories have a narrative structure that arouses children's emotions and imagination, so that moral messages can be conveyed more subtly and touchingly.

Early childhood is not yet able to understand values logically or abstractly, because their cognitive development is still in the pre-operational stage according to Piaget. Therefore, the use of narrative media such as stories is very helpful for children to capture moral messages through concrete characters and events. Stories allow children to see firsthand the impact of good and bad behavior through the storyline presented.

4.2 Improvement of Children's Moral Behavior After the Application of the Storytelling Method

One of the important results of this study is the finding of a significant impact on children's behavior after the application of the storytelling method in learning. Based on the studies cited, such as research conducted by Aidha Artha Novayanty (2023), there was an increase of up to 48% in early childhood moral behavior after they engaged in story-based learning. In fact, other studies that

conducted by Aulad (2022) showed an increase in children's moral values of up to 94.81% from the initial data to the second cycle.

This shows that the storytelling method not only conveys a message, but is also able to change children's attitudes and habits in daily life. When children are often exposed to stories that contain values such as honesty, responsibility, or compassion, these values will gradually be embedded in them and become part of real behavior.

4.3 Stories Support the Process of Internalizing Moral Values

The process of internalizing value through stories does not happen instantly, but rather through several important stages. First, the child receives information or messages from the story that is conveyed. Second, children identify the characters or events in the story with the situation they themselves experience. Third, they reflect on the actions in the story and consider whether they are good or bad. Fourth, the values they learn begin to be applied in daily life.

Thus, the storytelling method works on the affective aspect of the child, not just providing information. Stories provide emotional experiences that encourage children to better understand and appreciate moral values. This makes the storytelling method not only a learning tool, but a deep character building process.

4.4 The Relevance of Islamic Stories in the Context of RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan

The application of the storytelling method at RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan is increasingly relevant because the stories used are full of Islamic values. The stories of prophets, companions, and other exemplary figures became the source of stories used in learning, so that the moral values instilled were not only universal, but also spiritual.

In the context of Islamic education, the formation of morals is one of the main goals. Therefore, Islamic stories are a very strategic medium to form children's religious character

from an early age. In addition to values such as honesty, patience, and trust, children are also invited to understand values such as piety, gratitude, and tawakal through stories that are appropriate to their age.

4.5 The Role of Teachers as Value Facilitators in Storytelling Activities

The storytelling method will only succeed if it is supported by the teacher's skills in telling stories. It is not enough for teachers to read texts, but must be able to bring stories to life through expressions, voice intonation, movements, and interactions that involve children. Teachers also need to adjust the content of the story to the moral needs of children in the classroom.

Furthermore, the teacher is in charge of guiding the child to understand the moral message after the story is finished. This can be done through question-and-answer, light discussion, or having your child retell their favorite part and why they like it. In this way, the teacher helps the child to reflect and relate the story to everyday life.

4.6 A Learning Environment That Supports Value Creation

Storytelling activities will have a more optimal impact if the values conveyed in the story are also instilled in the child's learning environment. RA Al Rizky provides an educational atmosphere that supports the formation of children's character through a consistent approach between the content of the story, school rules, and daily habits. Children are taught to greet, apologize, help friends, and be polite—all of these in accordance with the values that often appear in stories. With a supportive environment, the process of moral learning through stories does not stop only in the classroom, but continues to be strengthened through children's daily interactions with teachers, friends, and routine educational activities.

4.7 Fun and Meaningful Learning for Children

One of the advantages of the storytelling method is its ability to create a fun and meaningful learning atmosphere. Children enjoy the learning process because they feel like they are playing while learning. Without realizing it, they absorb the positive values wrapped in an entertaining story. In this atmosphere, children do not feel patronized, but are actively involved emotionally and intellectually.

Through this method, learning is not only cognitive, but also touches the social and emotional realm of children, which is actually an important foundation in character education.

Conclusion

Based on the results of a literature review conducted through a descriptive approach, it can be concluded that the storytelling method is one of the most effective learning approaches in instilling moral values in early childhood. Children in the early stages of development are very responsive to imaginative and emotional approaches, such as stories, because they are still in the pre-operational stage according to Piaget's theory of development. At this stage, children's understanding of abstract concepts is still limited, so concrete narrative media such as stories become very relevant and effective.

The storytelling method allows the delivery of complex moral messages to be simple and easily accepted by children through storylines, characters, conflicts, and solutions that describe good and bad behavior and its consequences. Thus, children not only become passive listeners, but also emotionally engaged, learn through example, and form moral understanding through the process of identification and reflection on the characters in the story. This research shows that storytelling methods can have a significant impact on the formation of children's character and moral behavior. This is evidenced by the results of previous research, such as an increase in children's moral behavior by 48% (Novayanty, 2023) and an increase in children's moral

values by up to 94.81% (Aulad, 2022) after the application of continuous storytelling methods. These findings confirm that stories are not only entertainment media, but also a very powerful and strategic means of character education.

In the context of RA Al Rizky Padang Sidempuan, the use of storytelling methods is not only adjusted to the stages of child development, but also to Islamic values that are the basis of education in the institution. Islamic stories that tell the stories of prophets, companions, and exemplary figures are very effective in instilling moral values that are universal as well as spiritual, such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and obedience to God. The effectiveness of the storytelling method is also influenced by the active role of the teacher as a facilitator. Teachers are not only in charge of reading stories, but also must be able to bring the story to life through expression, intonation, and interaction that builds the child's emotional engagement. Teachers also need to guide children to understand the moral meaning of stories through discussion, reflective questions, and strengthening values in daily life. In addition, a supportive learning environment, such as positive habits at school and consistency between the content of the story and the values instilled in daily life, are important factors in optimizing story-based learning outcomes. Overall, the storytelling method not only plays a role in improving children's language and cognitive abilities, but is also an important means in deep character formation. With stories that are interesting, relevant, and interactively conveyed, life values can be instilled in a fun and meaningful way. Therefore, this method is very feasible to continue to be developed and integrated into the early childhood education curriculum as part of the strategy of forming a moral, empathetic, and responsible generation from an early age.

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