

# Internalization Of Ukhuwah Islamiyah Values in Early Childhood Through RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan Group Activities

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## Abstract

This study aims to describe the process of internalizing the value of ukhuwah Islamiyah in early childhood through group activities at RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan. The values of ukhuwah Islamiyah include a sense of brotherhood, help, and concern for others which are instilled through playing together, group discussions, and simple social activities. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The results of the study show that through structured group activities and guided by competent teachers, the values of ukhuwah Islamiyah can be naturally embedded in children's behavior. The conclusion of this study states that group activities are effective in forming Islamic character in early childhood.

**Keywords:** *Internalization of Values, Ukhuwah Islamiyah, Early Childhood, Group Activities*

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## Introduction

Every child is born with *Fitrah*, namely purity and the potential to develop into a good person. (Al-Ghazali, 2000) At an early age, children are in a very rapid developmental phase and are sensitive to various forms of stimulation, both from the family, school, and community. (Hurlock, Elizabeth. 2003) Therefore, early childhood education does not only focus on cognitive aspects, but must also touch on moral, spiritual, and social aspects that will shape the child's personality as a whole.

One of the important values in Islam that is very relevant to be instilled from an early age is the Islamic brotherhood - the values of brotherhood among Muslims that reflect love, help, mutual respect, and not hurting others. (Department of Religion, 1998) In the context of an increasingly individualistic society, this value of *ukhuwah* is an important foundation in building a generation that has noble character and cares for others. (Zakiah Daradjat. 2005)

RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan as an Islamic early childhood education institution, has developed various group activities as a means to instill the value of *ukhuwah*. Activities such as playing together, mutual cooperation in cleaning the classroom, praying in congregation, and eating together not only stimulate children's social skills, but also become a medium for internalizing the value of *ukhuwah* contextually. (Musfiroh, Tadkiroatun. 2008) In this group activity, children are invited to interact positively, recognize differences, and learn to resolve small conflicts with the guidance of teachers.

However, grades cannot be taught verbally alone. It must be brought to life through real experience and consistent example. (Jalaluddin & Usman. 2011) Teachers in RA do not only play the role of teachers, but also as models of Islamic behavior that children can imitate. Therefore, the teacher's strategy in designing and facilitating group activities greatly determines the success of the process of internalizing the values of *ukhuwah Islamiyah*. (Wiyani, Novan Ardy.2012)

This study aims to explore how teachers' strategies in internalizing the value of Islamic *ukhuwah* through group activities, as well as the forms of *ukhuwah* attitudes that have begun to form in children at RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the practice of contextual and applicative Islamic-based character education at the early childhood education level.

## Theoretical Studies

### 1. The Concept of Value Internalization

Internalization of values is a complex and profound process, in which externally taught social, cultural, and religious values are then accepted, internalized, and become part of the individual's personality structure. (Susanto, 2011) According to Tilaar, internalization is the final stage of the value education process, after the process of socialization and enculturation, when values are no longer just understood, but also become beliefs and part of individual moral decisions. (Tilaar, 2002)

In early childhood, the internalization of values must be carried out with an approach that is appropriate to the child's developmental stage. Children cannot be forced to understand values in the abstract, but they will be more likely to grasp the meaning of values if they are associated with fun, repetitive, and concrete activities such as playing together, working in groups, and listening to stories. (Musfiroh, 2008) Therefore, a direct experiential learning strategy is the main key in instilling value from an early age.

Early childhood education aims to develop not only cognitive aspects, but also affective and psychomotor aspects related to character formation. This is where the internalization of values plays a central role as a preventive and fundamental approach to character education. (Wiyani, 2012)

## 2. Ukhuwah Islamiyah: The Social Foundations in Islam

Ukhuwah Islamiyah comes from the Arabic word *al-ukhuwwah al-Islamiyyah*, which literally means brotherhood in Islamic bonds. Ukhuwah is not just an emotional relationship, but a spiritual attachment based on faith in Allah SWT. (Daradjat, 2005) The values of ukhuwah Islamiyah include love for fellow Muslims, helping each other in kindness, not hurting others, maintaining the secrecy and self-respect of fellow Muslims. (Al-Ghazali, 2000)

The Qur'an states, "*Verily, the believers are brothers, so make peace between your two brothers and fear Allah so that you may have mercy.*" (QS. Al-Hujurat: 10). The Prophet's hadith also emphasizes the importance of ukhuwah in religious life: "*A believer towards another believer is like a building that strengthens each other*" (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

Ukhuwah Islamiyah education is very important to be introduced from an early age so that children are used to living in the spirit of togetherness, empathy, and care. This value is very relevant in the context of modern society which tends to be individualistic, so that it can prevent the emergence of selfish and intolerant attitudes from an early age. (Jalaluddin & Usman)

## 3. Early Childhood and Its Potential for Social Development

Early childhood (0–6 years) is in a rapid and critical stage of development, including in social and emotional aspects. At this age, children begin to learn to recognize others, show empathy, and establish simple social relationships. (Hurlock, 2003) According to Erikson, early childhood is in the *initiative vs guilt* stage, where they begin to learn social initiatives, including cooperation and social responsibility in groups. (Erikson, 1993)

Piaget's theory classifies early childhood into the pre-operational stage (2–7 years), which is the period when the child begins to use symbols (language and images) to understand the world around him, but is not yet able to think logically. Therefore, the cultivation of social value must be carried out through concrete media, repetitive activities, and direct examples. (Piaget, 1969)

A conducive social environment will greatly help the development of children's social values, especially if children are given the opportunity to be actively involved in group activities and learn from their social interactions. Education at RA (Raudhatul Athfal) is an ideal environment to instill ukhuwah values because of its structured nature but still flexible and child-friendly. (Nofianti, 2021)

## 4. Group Activities as a Medium for Internalizing Values

Group activities in early childhood education are learning activities that involve social interaction between students to complete a common task or achieve a common goal. (Mulyasa, 2009) Group activities are an effective means to develop social skills, communication skills, and values such as cooperation, mutual respect, and empathy.

Through activities such as role play, cooperative games, cleaning the classroom together, sharing toys, and mini group projects, children are indirectly taught the values of ukhuwah Islamiyah. (Sujiono, 2009) In this process, children are not only told what ukhuwah is, but also experience these values directly in real life.

In Vygotsky's view, social learning occurs through interaction with others in the context of culture and language. This means that through group work, children not only learn from teachers, but also from their peers in a very meaningful collaborative process. (Vygotsky, 1978)

## Research Methods

This research uses a type of descriptive qualitative research, because it aims to describe in depth the process of internalizing the value of Islamic ukhuwah in early childhood through

group activities. Qualitative research allows researchers to understand the meaning, perspective, and experience of subjects in their natural context. (Creswell, 2014)

The approach of this research is a case study, namely intensively examining a program or activity in one particular educational institution (RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan) which is considered representative in instilling the value of ukhuwah through group learning. (Yin, 2013)

The research was conducted at RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan, which is an early childhood education institution that implements learning based on Islamic values through group activities. The research took three months, starting from May to July 2025, to obtain sufficient data through periodic observations and in-depth interviews.

The subjects in this study are classroom teachers at RA Lestari (as the main informant), Head of RA (as policy information supporters), students aged 5–6 years (as the focus of behavior observation), and parents of children (to find out the results of internalization at home). The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling, which is based on certain objectives and criteria that are relevant to the focus of the research (Sugiyono, 2019)

Data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman technique which includes three main stages, namely Data reduction: sorting and simplifying relevant information, Data presentation: compiling data in narrative and thematic form, drawing conclusions and verification: building a deep understanding of the process of internalizing ukhuwah values in children. (Miles, 2014)

## **Results And Discussion of the Research**

### **Research Results**

This research was conducted at RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan with the aim of identifying and understanding the process of internalizing the value of Islamic ukhuwah in early childhood through group activities. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation.

#### **1. Group Activities that Encourage Ukhuwah Islamiyah**

The results of observations show that group activities carried out regularly at RA Lestari include:

- Lunch sharing activity every Friday.
- Play in groups (legos, stacking blocks, social roles).
- Group work makes handicrafts.
- Get into the habit of greeting, apologizing and thanking you.
- Small social activities such as the "Daily Infaq Movement".

In these activities, children seem to show positive development in social interactions, such as helping each other while playing, lending toys, or encouraging friends who are sad.

#### **2. The Role of Teachers in the Value Internalization Process**

Teachers play an active role in the process of forming the value of Islamic ukhuwah. They not only deliver verbal instructions, but also set an example in person. Teachers use a dialogical approach, for example by inviting children to discuss after a conflict, then directing children to reconcile and forgive each other.

#### **3. Children's Response to Value Learning**

The children responded to the activity with enthusiasm. They seem to begin to understand the meaning of cooperation, demonstrate empathy, and develop good social skills. Some children who were previously individualistic began to show changes in attitudes to become more cooperative after being repeatedly involved in group activities.

#### **4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors**

The supporting and inhibiting factors in this study can be described as follows:

Supporting factors

- The curriculum has Islamic nuances that is integrated with social values.
- Teachers' competence in guiding children affectively.
- Parental support for habituation at home.

Inhibiting factors

- Different characteristics of the child (e.g. a shy or aggressive child).
- Lack of awareness among some parents of the importance of ukhuwah values.
- Limited learning time at school.

## **Discussion**

### **1. The Concept of Ukhuwah Islamiyah in the Context of Early Childhood**

Ukhuwah Islamiyah in early childhood education is not taught theoretically, but through the practice of values directly in daily life. Early childhood is not yet able to think abstractly in its entirety, so the internalization of values must be concrete and applicative. Islamic education actually emphasizes a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas stated that Islamic education aims to instill manners and spiritual values rooted in monotheism, including ukhuwah Islamiyah as part of socio-religious values. (Al-Attas, S. M. N. 1991).

### **2. The Effectiveness of Group Activities as a Media for Internalizing Values**

Group activities are effective as a medium for learning values because children learn through direct interaction. In a constructivist approach, children build moral understanding through social experiences and reflections from real events. (Piaget, J. 1965)

Mulyasa emphasized that values such as tolerance, empathy, and cooperation can only be formed through habituation in real situations, not just lectures or advice. (Mulyasa, E. 2013). Therefore, group activities implemented in RA Lestari are an effective means to foster the attitude of Islamic ukhuwah.

### **3. The Role of Teachers as Models in Internalizing Values**

The role of teachers in value learning is vital. Early childhood is in a phase of imitation (imitation), where they tend to copy adult behaviors that are considered authoritative. Albert Bandura's theory of social learning explains that children learn through observation of model behavior. (Bandura, A. 1977) A teacher who is patient, compassionate, and fair will be imitated by children in the way they behave towards their friends.

### **4. Challenges and Solutions**

Some of the challenges in the process of internalizing values in RA Lestari include differences in children's characters, time constraints, and inconsistencies in habituation at home. Therefore, synergy between schools and parents is needed. Teachers also need to take an individualized approach to children who have special needs in social-emotional development.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the research and discussions that have been conducted, it can be concluded that the internalization of the value of Islamic ukhuwah in early childhood at RA Lestari Padang Sidempuan takes place effectively through structured and fun group activities. Activities such as playing together, sharing provisions, group work, and small social activities, become concrete media for children to learn and get used to being empathetic, helpful, and respectful of others.

Teachers play a central role in this process, both as facilitators of activities and as models of behavior that reflect the values of ukhuwah Islamiyah. Teacher examples, consistency in habituation, and approaches that are in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood are the main keys to the success of the value internalization process.

Although there are several obstacles, such as differences in children's character and limited learning time, with curriculum support, a positive school environment, and cooperation with parents, the values of ukhuwah Islamiyah can be instilled well and sustainably. Therefore, group activities can be used as the main learning strategy in shaping the Islamic character of early childhood as a whole.

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