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The Role of Islamic Religious Teachers in Shaping the Character of the Younger Generation in Pasangkayu Subdistrict: The Perspective of Maqasid Al-Syari'ah

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Abstract
This study aims to examine the role of Islamic religious counselors in shaping the character of the Islamic youth generation in Pasangkayu District based on Maqasid al-Syari'ah. This is a descriptive qualitative study with a normative theological approach. Data was obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation from religious counselors, religious leaders, community leaders, and the youth generation. The results of the study indicate that the character of the young generation in Pasangkayu District has experienced moral decline, evident from the increase in promiscuity, low interest in learning, the use of gadgets for unproductive activities, and a shallow understanding of religion. Islamic religious counselors are instilling Islamic values through counseling in schools and detention centers, supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between both parties, and serving as role models (qudwah hasanah) for the younger generation. The Qur'anic approach method, Surah An-Nahl verse 125, namely bil hikmah (wisdom), mau'izhah hasanah (good advice), and mujadalah (dialogue) which is the best. From the perspective of maqasid al-syari'ah, the role of Islamic religious counselors encompasses the protection of five fundamental aspects of life: (1) Religion (hifz al-din), (2) Life (hifz al-nafs), (3) Mind (hifz al-'aql), (4) Wealth (hifz al-mal), (5) Progeny (hifz al-nasl). The implications of the research emphasize the importance of the joint role of parents, religious leaders, youth leaders, community leaders, and the government in providing a positive space for the younger generation, as well as increasing the capacity and number of religious counselors for sustainable religious guidance.

INTRODUCTION

Forming an Islamic character in the younger generation is one of the main foundations of sustainable national development.[1] A character based on Islamic values serves as a moral foundation for individuals and a social bulwark against the challenges of the times.[2]Although formal, non-formal, and informal education are important instruments in character building, the reality is that an educational approach alone is insufficient. A role for intensive spiritual development is needed, in which Islamic religious counselors play a key role in internalizing these values.[3]

From the perspective of *maqasid al-syari'ah*, the objectives of Islamic law are to protect five fundamental aspects of life: religion (*hifz al-din*), life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), property (*hifz al-mal*), and lineage (*hifz al-nasl*).[4] This approach considers not only the textual provisions of Sharia law, but also social and cultural contexts and contemporary challenges. Thus, it serves as a strategic foundation for nurturing a new generation with strong faith, noble character, Islamic life skills, and social responsibility.

The phenomenon of moral degradation among Indonesia's youth has reached alarming levels. Data from the online pornography industry shows that, as of 2014, Indonesia had around 45 million subscribers. A survey of 4,376 junior high and high school students revealed that 93.7% had accessed pornographic content, and 26% of those students were involved in criminal and sexual acts. Additionally, according to 2014 data from the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), approximately 5 million people, or 2.8% of the national population, misused narcotics, psychotropic substances, and addictive substances (NAPZA). This issue is further exacerbated by promiscuity, misuse of technology, inappropriate language use, and weak adherence to religious teachings.

Similar problems were found in Pasangkayu District, West Sulawesi. On May 11, 2023, the researcher observed many cases of early marriage at the local Religious Affairs Office, which were generally caused by pregnancy before marriage. Additionally, the researcher observed deviant behavior among the younger generation, including alcohol consumption, smoking, inappropriate clothing, lack of Quran literacy, and neglect of

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[1] Hidayat. "Pentingnya Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Membentuk Karakter Generasi Muda." Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Indonesia (JUPENDIA), 2025: 15-21. https://el-emir.com/index.php/jupendia

[2] Hasbi, F, I Indiyani, N Juanda, and N Az-Zahra. "Pentingnya Pendidikan Islam dalam Menanggulangi Radikalisme di Kalangan Anak Muda." Journal Scientific of Mandalika (JSM), 2024: 331-341. http://ojs.cahayamandalika.com/index.php/jomla

[3] Asmawati, and H S Sunantri. "Peran Penyuluh Agama Islam Memberikan Edukasi Akhlak terhadap Remaja di Desa Jongkong Kiri Tengah Kecamatan Jongkong." Islamic Learning Journal, 2023: 841-858. https://doi.org/10.54437/iljjislamiclearningjournal.v1i3.1183

[4] Firdaus, M I, and J Sahputra. "Prinsip Maqosid Ash-Shariah Dalam Konsep Kebutuhan Islam." Tafaqquh: Jurnal Hukum Ekonomi Syariah dan Ahwal Syahsiyah, 2022: 65-75. https://doi.org/10.70032/ksdtd048

religious obligations. These issues indicate a moral crisis requiring systematic and targeted intervention.

As stipulated in Ministry of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 9 of 2021, Islamic religious counselors play a strategic role that encompasses educational, consultative, advocacy, mediation, and evaluative functions. They guide the faithful in religious matters and promote improvements in society's social and religious life. Their role extends beyond regular lectures and guidance to include character development through da'wah (religious preaching), non-formal education, counseling, setting a good example, and social advocacy. Within the framework of maqasid al-shari'ah (the objectives of Islamic law), religious counselors implement the fundamental values of Islamic law, ensuring that the younger generation grows into well-rounded individuals balanced in their physical and spiritual aspects.[5]

The diverse sociocultural context of the Pasangkayu subdistrict poses additional challenges for Islamic religious counselors. Counselors are expected to promote character development among the younger generation through activities such as training, youth development programs at mosques, family counseling, and religious literacy initiatives. However, despite these efforts, optimal results have not been achieved, as evidenced by the prevalence of deviant behavior among teenagers.

In light of this, the present study addresses two key questions: (1) What is the state of character development among the youth in Pasangkayu District? and (2) What role do Islamic religious counselors play in fostering Islamic character development among the youth from the perspective of *maqasid al-syari'ah*? The study aims to contribute to the development of Islamic character education based on maqasid values and provide practical recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of counseling programs.

Examining the relationship between Islamic religious teachers and character development among the younger generation within the framework of maqasid al-shari'ah is intended to create a relevant, sustainable, and adaptive guidance model that addresses the moral challenges facing today's youth.[6]

[5] Paryadi. "Maqashid Syariah: Definisi dan Pendapat Para Ulama." Cross-border, 2021: 201-216. https://journal.iaisambas.ac.id/index.php/Cross-Border/article/download/742/586

[6] Suhra, S, S Qamariah, and A Saenal. "Peran Penyuluh Agama Dalam Pembinaan Karakter Toleransi pada Masyarakat." Jurnal La Tenriruwa, 2023: 1-17. https://jurnal.iainbone.ac.id/index.php/latenriruwa/article/download/5217/1796

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a normative-theological foundation to deeply describe the role of Islamic religious counselors in shaping the character of young Muslims in Pasangkayu District, from the perspective of maqasid al-shari'ah. The study was conducted in Pasangkayu District, Pasangkayu Regency, West Sulawesi. Primary data were obtained through observations and semi-structured interviews with religious counselors, young people, community leaders, and parents, as well as documentation of activities[7]. Secondary data were collected from books, scientific articles, activity reports, and the archives of relevant agencies. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions[8], and validity was tested using source, technique, and time triangulation[9][10]. Throughout the research process, the researcher upheld research ethics by maintaining objectivity and honesty and protecting participants' rights.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of the Young Generation in the Pasangkayu Subdistrict

The results of the study revealed that the young generation in Pasangkayu Subdistrict exhibits alarming signs of moral decline. This decline is evident in the prevalence of behaviors that exceed religious and social norms, such as physical interaction between opposite sexes and an increase in early marriages, many of which result from out-of-wedlock pregnancies. The main factors triggering this phenomenon are inadequate supervision of gadget use, consumption of uneducational content, weak parental supervision, and minimal social control from the community.

The younger generation tends to be less motivated to learn, displaying indifference toward the learning process in general and religious subjects. This condition is exacerbated by the dominance of gadget use for entertainment, lesson material that is not relevant to real life, and rigid learning methods that do not encourage emotional or cognitive engagement among students. These factors align with the results of research[11].

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[7] Sugiyono. Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D. Bandung: Alfabeta, 2017.
[8] Ahmad, and Muslimah. "Memahami Teknik Pengolahan dan Analisis Data Kualitatif." Proceedings Palangka Raya International and National Conference on Islamic Studies, 2021: 173-186.
[9] Rahmayati, G T, and Y C Prasetiyo. "Strategi Dalam Menjaga Keabsahan Data pada Penelitian Kualitatif." 2022: 54-64.
[10] Dedi, S, and M S Jailani. "Teknik Pemeriksaan Keabsahan Data Dalam Penelitian Ilmiah." Yayasan Pendidikan Dzurriyatul Quran, 2023: 53-61.
[11] Foeh, Y, and M Seafatu. "Pengaruh Pendidikan Karakter terhadap Kecerdasan Emosional (EQ) di Sekolah Menengah Atas." Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, 2024: 1161-1174. https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v6i2.6416

The unguided use of gadgets is a serious problem; the younger generation spends more time browsing social media, playing online games, and watching shallow entertainment content. Exposure to negative content, such as vulgar videos or images of scantily clad individuals, can normalize behavior that contradicts Islamic values. Weak digital literacy makes the younger generation vulnerable to pornography, violence, and foreign cultures that contradict religious teachings. Research findings[12] also support this idea.

Conversely, empirical observations indicate that the level of religious literacy and moral internalization among segments of the younger generation remains critically low. This condition is reflected not only in the declining ability to read and understand the Qur'an, but also in diminished adherence to daily prayers and the erosion of ethical comportment in social interactions. Such tendencies are further aggravated by the proliferation of deviant behaviors, including bullying, early-age smoking, and the abuse of addictive substances such as inhalants (e.g., glue) and narcotics. Statistical records from the Pasangkayu District Prison in 2023 reveal a marked increase in drug-related offenses, with the majority of inmates belonging to the youth demographic. These findings suggest that moral vulnerability among young people is no longer sporadic, but rather indicative of a broader structural and cultural crisis.

From a socio-religious perspective, this phenomenon may be interpreted as a manifestation of identity fragmentation in the context of rapid modernization, digital exposure, and weakened familial and communal supervision. The absence of integrative religious guidance—capable of harmonizing normative teachings with contemporary realities—has contributed to a gap between doctrinal knowledge and lived practice. In this regard, the framework of *Maqasid al-Shariah* offers a normative-analytical lens to evaluate the crisis. The observable decline in religious observance reflects a weakening of *hifz al-din* (protection of religion), while substance abuse and cognitive disorientation undermine *hifz al-'aql* (protection of intellect). Moreover, early exposure to destructive lifestyles threatens *hifz al-nasl* (protection of lineage), as it jeopardizes the moral continuity and social stability of future generations.[13]

Accordingly, this condition necessitates a systematic and multi-layered intervention strategy. First, religious education must move beyond ritual formalism toward

[12] Andini, A T, and Yahfizham. "Analisis Algoritma Pemrograman Dalam Media Sosial terhadap Pola Konsumsi Konten." Jurnal Arjuna: Publikasi Ilmu Pendidikan, Bahasa, dan Matematika, 2023: 286-296. https://doi.org/10.61132/arjuna.v2i1.526

[13] Rahmawati, Fiki, I U Nuha, and N Hassan. "Maqashid Syariah sebagai Fondasi Moral Ukhuwah Basyariah." Indonesia Proceedings and Annual Conference of Islamic Law and Sharia Economic (IPACILSE), 2023: 267-274

transformative moral pedagogy that integrates ethical reasoning, spiritual awareness, and contextual relevance. Second, strengthening digital literacy is imperative to equip youth with critical skills to navigate online influences, misinformation, and harmful subcultures. Third, active parental engagement and community-based mentoring structures should be reinforced to restore the ecosystem of moral supervision. In the long term, these measures represent not merely preventive responses, but strategic investments in safeguarding the essential objectives of Islamic law and ensuring the sustainable moral development of society.

2. The Role of Islamic Religious Counselors in Cultivating an Islamic Generation from the Perspective of Maqasid al-Syari'ah

The role of Islamic religious counselors in Pasangkayu District is highly strategic in shaping a young generation that is Islamic and possesses Islamic character, in line with the primary objectives of Maqasid al-Syari'ah, which include the protection of religion (*hifz al-din*), life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), and wealth (*hifz al-mal*). In the effort to protect religion, religious counselors instill sound beliefs and proper worship practices through regular studies at schools and guidance in detention centers. This aims to prevent young people from deviating from their faith and engaging in behavior that is contrary to Sharia law[14].

Regarding *hifz al-nafs*, counselors educate on the dangers of smoking, alcohol, and drugs and encourage religious practices such as proper ablution and prayer. This approach has led to a decrease in the number of drug users in Pasangkayu District in 2024. For *hifz al-'aql*, counselors encourage critical and healthy thinking through Islamic discussions, Quran and Hadith literacy, and Islamic leadership training based on Quranic values.

The aspect of *hifz al-nasl* is realized through education on ethical social interaction, awareness of self-respect, and counseling on Islamic marriage to prevent moral and hereditary damage[15]. As for *hifz al-mal*, it is implemented by providing Islamic entrepreneurship training, Sharia-based financial management, and halal-haram transaction studies to prevent usury, corruption, and fraud[16].

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[14] Ali, M. "Penyuluh Agama Islam sebagai Penggerak Pendidikan Keagamaan dan Penguatan Karakter untuk Meningkatkan Kesadaran Spiritual Masyarakat." Jurnal An-Nasyr: Jurnal Dakwah Dalam Mata Tinta, 2024: 204-217. https://doi.org/10.54621/jn.v11i2.948

[15] Baharuddin, H, and N Sastrawati. "Usia Perkawinan Perspektif Maqashid Syariah; Analisis terhadap Undang-Undang Perkawinan di Indonesia." Shautuna: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Perbandingan Mazhab, 2021: 543-560.

[16] Basri, H. Keluarga Sakinah Tinjauan Psikologi dan Agama Cetakan ke-3. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1997.

All of these activities are carried out using the *qudwah hasanah* method, in which educators serve as role models for behavior, discipline, and simplicity, as exemplified by KH. Ahmad Dahlan in his da'wah movement[17]. This approach is strengthened through collaboration with religious and community leaders, as well as local governments, and the use of digital media for da'wah.

This approach is based on the *qudwah hasanah* method (setting a good example), collaboration with community leaders, and the application of Qur'anic methods, as stated in QS. An-Nahl:125:

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُۗ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ وَهُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ

Translation:

"Invite people to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction. Debate with them in a better way. Indeed, your Lord knows best who has strayed from His path and who has been guided."

This formulation reflects the Qur'anic methodology of *da'wah*, which is fundamentally grounded in wisdom (*ḥikmah*), constructive counsel (*maw'iẓah ḥasanah*), and ethical dialogue (*mujādalah bi al-latī hiya aḥsan*). Rather than relying on coercive or confrontational modes of engagement, the Qur'anic paradigm prioritizes persuasive communication that integrates rational argumentation, moral sensitivity, and contextual awareness. This approach positions *da'wah* not merely as the transmission of doctrinal content, but as a transformative communicative process aimed at shaping ethical consciousness and spiritual maturity.

The Qur'an operationalizes this paradigm through six interrelated ethical principles of speech: *qaulan sadīdan* (truthful and precise speech), *qaulan ma'rūfan* (appropriate and socially recognized good speech), *qaulan layyinan* (gentle and non-confrontational speech), *qaulan balīghan* (effective and impactful speech), *qaulan karīman* (noble and respectful speech), and *qaulan maisūran* (easy and reassuring speech). Collectively, these communicative ethics emphasize integrity, empathy, clarity, and politeness. They construct a normative framework in which truth is conveyed without harshness, correction is offered without humiliation, and disagreement is expressed without hostility. In this sense, Qur'anic rhetoric embodies both moral substance and ethical form.

Within the context of Pasangkayu District, religious counselors operationalize these principles as part of their pedagogical and social engagement strategies. By adopting a dialogical, compassionate, and culturally responsive approach, they facilitate the transfer

[17] Hairona, Adi, and D Nicklany . "Nilai-nilai Perjuangan KH.Ahmad Dahlan yang Ditanamkan kepada Muridnya." Jurnal Budi Pekerti Agama Islam, 2024: 8-14. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61132/jbpai.v2i5.582

of religious knowledge while simultaneously nurturing affective and behavioral dimensions of faith. The emphasis is not limited to cognitive understanding, but extends to the internalization of Islamic values in daily conduct. Through sustained mentoring, persuasive communication, and exemplary behavior, counselors contribute to the gradual formation of moral character among the younger generation, thereby reinforcing the broader objectives of religious guidance and social cohesion.

CONCLUSION

The younger generation in Pasangkayu District is facing a moral and spiritual crisis. This crisis is characterized by rampant promiscuity, low motivation to study, uncontrolled gadget use that triggers exposure to negative content, low digital literacy, and a lack of religious understanding. This situation has implications for early marriages, deviant behavior such as bullying and substance abuse, and the weak implementation of Islamic values. From the perspective of Maqasid al-Syari'ah, this reflects a failure to uphold hifz al-din, hifz al-'aql, and hifz al-nasl. Islamic religious counselors play a strategic role in five areas of protection: hifz al-din (strengthening faith and worship); hifz al-nafs (educating about the dangers of destructive behavior); hifz al-'aql (cultivating sound reasoning based on Qur'anic values); hifz al-nasl (educating about ethical social interaction and harmonious family life); and hifz al-mal (cultivating Islamic transactions). They carry out this role through qudwah hasanah (setting a good example), collaborating with community leaders, and taking a Qur'anic approach based on QS. An-Nahl:125 and the six ethical principles of speech in the Qur'an. This ensures that development is internalized in the behavior of the younger generation in a sustainable manner, not merely remaining theoretical.

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