



# The Effectiveness of Story Method in *Mutalaah* Lessons for Character Education

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**Abstract:** Character education is essential, especially for the younger generation. Successful character education can be seen in students' daily behavior, in how they apply vertical relation to God and horizontal regard to His creatures. To perform an effective character education, various methods and learning media can make students more excited at character values in the learning materials. The story method, *mutalaah* within the *al-Qira'ah al-Rashidah* Book 1 by Abdul Fatah Shabri Bik and Ali Amir Bik, includes some stories that contain noble morality. This study showed that character education through the story method has several stages, (1) the preparation of the syllabus and lesson plan, (2) the learning activity that covers opening, teaching-learning process, and closing. The process of planting moral values is carried out when a teacher explains the content and text of the lesson. Meanwhile, a formal evaluation is done in the semester test, besides daily assessment of student's behavior in pesantren; (3) the story method through the learning *mutalaah* is considered effective in the development of morals because instinctively students like stories and are encouraged and motivated to practice the moral values in the *mutalaah* stories; (4) some factors supporting character education through the story method include the support of pesantren and principal, teacher's linear educational background, and availability of decent infrastructure. On the contrary, the inhibiting factors include students' diverse educational backgrounds, less motivation to study Arabic vocabulary, and lack of learning media that supports the delivery of learning materials.

**Keywords:** instructional education; lesson plan; religious knowledge; human civilization; moral development.

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## 1. Introduction

Character (*akhlak*) constitutes one of the main pillars that are very important for human civilization, so a charity of deeds is not considered perfect if not based on a good character in the Islamic view. According to Ibn Miskawaih (1934: 40), *akhlak* is naturally ingrained in the soul and encourages one to carry out deeds without requiring thought and consideration. Thus, a person with noble character will always be accustomed to behaving commendably in daily life. Ahmad Amin (1967: 50) said that the so-called *akhlak* is the accustomed will. This means that the accustomed wish to do something becomes a habit called *akhlak*.

Moreover, Abudin Nata (2006: 4-6) stated five essential characteristics of deeds that include noble *akhlak*: 1) deeds that are firmly embedded in one's psyche so that they become personalities, 2) deeds that are done efficiently and without thought, 3) deeds arise from within the person who does them,

without any coercion or pressure from outside, 4) deeds that are done in real-time, not playfully nor because of show, 5) deeds that are performed because of sincerity solely for Allah.

Thus, in the social, economic, and political fields, Akhlak covers all aspects of human life for human and Allah relations (*hablun min Allah*) and fellow human relations (*habl min al-nas*). The Prophet Muhammad and his companions taught us many noble characteristics. For this, everyone will be held accountable for all the charities he has done in the worldly life and the afterlife; therefore, God has decided on His apostle to give instructions and guidelines of life to all humankind so that they may be able to distinguish which is good and evil, true and false.

In human life, character education has a significant position. Through moral education, we will understand children's behavior or character changes in each period of their life, considering that babies and children poorly treated will have an ongoing influence on their physical, behavioral, and psychological development in the future.

According to Mahmud (2004: 121), character education in Islam is an education that recognizes how humans face good and bad things, truth and evil, justice and justice, and peace and war. To deal with these negative things, Islam has established the values and principles that enable humans to live in this world. Thus, humans can realize good deeds when interacting with good and evil people.

Islam has laid the foundations concerning the importance of human characters in science and technology. God has created humans with two inseparable elements, namely the physical and *ruhaniyah* dimensions. It is often referred to that humans as beings who have physical and spiritual aspects. In this self-reliance, humans have essential potential (abilities) that can develop through education, teaching, and targeted exercises.

Therefore, we always do our best to achieve good *akhlak*. In providing moral guidance to students, many ways are used, including direct and symbolic methods. One of the methods in character education is the story method which is widely used. Hanafi (1984: 22) stated that the story has a significant portion in the Qur'an. For approximately 1600 verses of the historical tale, there are many verses about the story. This number is greater than the law verses, which amount to around 330 verses.

Concerning the importance of the story method, some opinions express the significance of the story to form and foster *akhlak*, al-Qattan said that advice with a speech delivered without variation could not attract the attention of reason; even all its contents will not be understood. However, advice conveyed in a story that describes events in real life will realize a firm purpose. People will feel happy to listen to it and watch it with longing and curiosity; in turn, they will be affected by the advice and lessons in the story (al-Qattan, 2011: 345).

The lesson with interesting stories and noble moral values is *mutalaah* subject, which is intended to develop the ability of students in Arabic language. Thus, *mutalaah* lessons contain noble moral values, in addition to improving the skills of students mastering Arabic skills, such as reading skills, the mastering skill of Arabic grammatical, and understanding skill for the content of the Arabic text. The script can be a medium for character development through moral values attached to these stories.

In other words, *the mutala'ah lesson, besides practicing Arabic skills*, contains wisdom, honesty, courage, truthfulness, and many other noble character. For example, the story of a child and an elephant is mentioned in the book *al-Qirā'ah al-Rāshidah* volume I by Abdul Fatah Shabri Bik and Ali Amir Bik. The story contains moral values, including the necessity not to harm God's creatures and not to play with them even if they are animals.

The *mutala'ah* lesson is taught in many pesantren nationwide, including the modern pesantren of Assuruur Pameungpeuk Bandung Regency and the modern pesantren of Darussalam Narunggul Tasikmalaya Regency. The two Pesantren are known as the branches of modern pesantren Gontor, which teaches *mutalaah* subjects to its students. For example, the subject matter *mutala'ah 2* is referred to the book *al-Qirā'ah al-Rasyidah* Volume 1 by Abdul Fatah Shabri Bik and Ali Amir Bik as the primary material or reading resource.

Based on the above background, it is interesting to analyze the effectiveness of the story method in *mutala'ah* lessons for character education. This research was conducted at the modern pesantren of Assuruur Pameungpeuk Bandung Regency and modern pesantren Darussalam Narunggul Tasikmalaya Regency.

This research is aimed at analyzing the character materials used to apply the story method in character education through *mutalaah* subject; the application of the story method in character education through *mutalaah* subject and its evaluation; the effectiveness of the story method for character education through *mutalaah* subject; and supporting and inhibiting factors of *mutala'ah* issue for character education.

Some previous studies related to this issue are as follow: First, Subur's research entitled "Development of Story-Based Moral Value Learning Model in Madrasah Aliyah Students in Banyumas Regency". Dissertation of postgraduate program of Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, 2013. Second, Sholehuddin's study on "Formation of Noble Akhlak Through Affective Education (Case Study on Elementary Education in Lampung)." Dissertation of the postgraduate program of State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2016.; Third, Doddy's study in 2016 on "Moral Education Model through School and Home Partnership: Development Studies to Improve the Noble Akhlak of Students in Al-Azhar Integrated Islamic Junior High School in Jambi city. General Education Study Program". Dissertation of postgraduate school, University of Education Indonesia. Fifth, Dalimunthe's research in 2016 on "Method of Story in the Perspective of the Qur'an," *Tarbiyah Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 2, July-December.

Some above studies have different focuses from this research regarding problem, methodology, themes, and research objects.

## 2. Result and Discussion

This study was applied at the second grade of MTs Assuruur of modern Pesantren Assuruur Pemeungpeuk Bandung Regency and the second grade of SMP of the integrated pesantren Darussalam Narunggul Tasikmalaya Regency. Both pesantrens are the branches of modern pesantren Gontor, so they officially integrated the national curriculum and the pesantren curriculum. And they apply Islamic Boarding School system that requires students to stay all the times inside the pesantren. The schools of MTs Assuruur and SMP Darussalam also help students develop scientific innovations to present a work for academic achievement.

To realize this goal, pesantren requires students to formally participate in teaching-learning activities (KBM) from 07.30 AM to 3.00 PM and pesantren activities from 3.00 PM to 9.30 PM. Students do all activities routinely supported by the provided facilities and infrastructure in pesantren.

For a more detailed explanation, the effectiveness of the story method in the *mutalaah* lesson for character education includes the points:

### 1. Teaching Materials of *Mutalaah* Story Method in Character Education

The main material of *mutalaah* learning in character education is the book *Qiraah Rashidah*, by Abdul Fatah Shabri and Ali Umar. After analyzing the contents of the book, the researcher found that this book deserves to be used as teaching material in *mutalaah* learning, that is, because the book has innovations for teaching writing (*kitâbah*) or teaching creative writing (*insyâ' ibdâ'î*). Its manuscript has an aspect of moral value that is very useful for character building. In other words, innovation is possible because the book's themes are still limited to Islamic culture so the teachers can add different themes. Moreover, the book has a variety of Arabic text genres which can be used as a model for writing a simple Arabic text. And the moral values in its texts are easy to understand and can be applied in everyday life.

Some observations and studies of the author of *al-Qira'ah Rashidah* book revealed that Abdul Fatah Shabri is an Islamic thinker who has given birth to thought in the field of culture and literature by upholding the noble values of life. He is a polite person who prioritizes progress in the field of study.

In his lifetime, he wrote various works to enrich the inequality of the Arab community and the course of the world community, with concrete evidence of his work as teaching materials in several countries, including Indonesia.

The book has some excellences that benefit the teaching activity of Arabic language. First, as a fable literary work, al-Qira'ah al-Rasyidah book has interesting and inspiring story plots on animals as a symbol of human nature and behavior with the role of monumental characters. The story plots blend the insight of rational thought with practical, emotional effects. Moreover, the book has simple words and sentences which are expressed in an easy understanding way. Some moral lessons covered in its stories are pretty extensive.

Second, although the book of al-Qira'ah al-Rasyidah does not have specific teaching methods and techniques, some teachers feel it convenient to teach it to their students because it has an easy-to-understand arrangement of words and sentences, rich vocabulary, fluent language, and exciting stories.

Third, the book of al-Qira'ah ar-Rasyidah has the appeal to serve as a research study because it covers many signs and symbols of language and exciting messages to express, for example, the chapter *al-aside wa al-fa'ru*. In semiotic theory *al-asadu* (lion) is a sign that can be interpreted as a leader or ruler, while *al-fa'ru* (rat) is a sign facing *al-asadu* (lion). It can be seen as a subordinate. Consequently, the book is open to researchers to interpret the stories in the text using different points of view and theories.

The book of al-Qira'ah al-Rasyidah part 1 has many life values, especially regarding the character education arranged in the fable stories. The values that will be extracted from this study cover religious values, social norms, regulations/laws, academic ethics, and human rights principles, which are classified into five groups, namely; (1) the values of human behavior to God Almighty, (2) the values of human behavior to himself, (3) the values of human behavior to fellow human beings, and (4) the values of human behavior about nationality (Mahmud, 2014: 32).

Fourth, according to the author's observation that the book of al-Qira'ah ar-Rasyidah has long been studied in many Indonesian pesantrens. Here are the *pesantrens* that use the book for an extended period: modern pesantren Darussalam Gontor, and its branches pesantren such as Pesantren Pabelan, Darunnajah, Assalam Solo, al-Islam Solo, Ngruki, Daarurrahman, Assalam Temanggung, Bina Ummat Moyudan, and many other pesantren nationwide throughout Indonesia. His study, however, tries to analyze the textual meaning and the moral lesson behind the story through semiotic analysis.

Thus, the book of al-Qira'ah al-Rasyidah is an innovative work that is quite popularly used as a teaching material of muthalâ'ah (Arabic reading) in many Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. This work is widely used in Arabic language teaching because of its systematic and attractive presentation and contents that reveal Islamic characters and cultural values.

Learning *mutalaah* is part of learning Arabic reading, which can be said as a structured way to facilitate learners and obtain meaning from what is written from reading (Marwati, 2011: 2). So, learning *mutalaah* gives focuses on vocabulary mastery, listening skills, and understanding texts, etc. However, every story in the *mutalaah* material contains noble moral values so that it can be used as a medium for character development.

In other words, learning *mutalaah* materials for character development requires several criteria for the feasibility of teaching books, namely the feasibility of content, presentation, language, and graphics. In each topic, the story contains moral values. In addition, to meet the learning objectives in line with the syllabus and lesson plan, teachers have to initiate learning activities that can simultaneously develop student character.

Meanwhile, when seeing the moral values in the stories of the book of al-Qira'ah al-Rasyidah Volume 1, it generally contains a variety of moral values, such as the *akhlak* towards God, *akhlak* towards the Apostle, *akhlak* towards fellow humans, *akhlak* towards the nation, and *akhlak* towards nature.

## 2. Implementation of *Mutalaah* Story Method in Character Education

Based on the above description, the primary purpose of learning *mutalaah* is to improve proficiency in Arabic. Consequently, all steps implemented in the teaching-learning process are intended to improve Arabic language skills, vocabulary mastery, reading skills, and understanding of Arabic texts.

### a. Learning Preparation

The learning process of learning *mutalaah* starts from the preparation activity and is followed by the learning process itself. In the pre-learning activity, the teacher gets the appointment of teaching *mutalaah* with an arranged syllabus by the academic section of the school/pesantren. Furthermore, teachers are required to create a Lesson Plan (RPP).

The study stated that the RPP compiled by *mutalaah* teachers in MTs as-Surur and SMP Darussalam has been in line with the regulations and procedures of preparing RPP, as stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Permendikbud RI) Number 81A of 2013 concerning general guidelines for learning that include (1) reviewing the syllabus, (2) identifying learning materials, (3) determining the objectives, (4) developing learning activities, (5) elaborating the type of assessment, (6) determining the time allocation, and (7) determining the learning resources.

Furthermore, the prepared RPP by the teachers of MTs Assuruur and SMP Darussalam has fulfilled the minimum steps in preparing the following lesson Plan (RPP): 1). 2). formulating learning goals; 3). determining learning materials; 4). determining learning method; 5). establishing learning activities; 6). selecting learning resources; 7). determining learning media; 8). determining assessment.

Professionalism standards of teacher are very fundamental that is no longer negotiable. A person who chooses to be a professional educator in his lifetime, his ideal concern should develop three main abilities, namely personal ability, professional ability, and social ability. In the learning process, a teacher's success lies in the following aspects: personality, method mastery, frequent and intensive interaction of teachers and students, insights, material mastery, and learning process mastery. Therefore, the requirements to be a professional teacher are an intelligent, skilled, thoughtful, professional, and noble character (Idi, 2014: 240).

A professional teacher must have several characteristics, (1) committing to professionalism, which is attached to positive attitudes; (2) mastering science and having the ability to develop it and explain its function in real life, elaborate its theoretical and practical dimensions, transfer, and internalize science; (3) educating and preparing students to be creative, and able to organize and maintain their creations so as not to cause harm for themselves, the surrounding society; (4) being able to be a model or center of self-identification, or to be a center of role models and consultants for his students; (5) having intellectual and information sensitivity, and sustainable knowledge and expertise, and strenuous effort to educate his students; (6) getting responsible for building a quality nation civilization in the future time (Idi, 2014: 240).

Further, an ideal learning preparation and process depends on how well a teacher knows the elements of good learning planning that, include identifying student needs, goals to be achieved, various relevant strategies and scenarios used to achieve learning objectives, and evaluation criteria (Hunt in Abdul Majid, 2012: 94). Learning planning is synonymous with teaching preparation. For that reason, in the development of teaching practice, the teachers must pay attention to the interests and engagement of students with the learning materials (Djabidi, 2017: 50). In this case, the teacher functions not only to be a transformer but also a motivator that can arouse learning motivation, encourage students to learn by using various media, and appropriate learning resources and support competencies building.

For a teacher, making teaching preparations means that he has compiled a learning program. Teaching preparation can take the form of short-term learning program products that include components of learning activities and the program implementation process. For the teacher, to

make effective and successful teaching preparations requires understanding various aspects related to the development of teaching preparation concerning the nature, function, principles, and procedures of teaching preparation and measuring the effectiveness of teaching.

### b. Learning Process

Regarding the learning process implementation at the second grade of MTs Assuruur and SMP Darussalam, *mutalaah* subject is a part of Qur'an material, namely a loud reading (*qira'ah jahriyah*). *Mutalaah* material includes four essential elements, i.e. correct pronouncing and reading (سلامة النطق والدقة) in clear and precise language style, and intonation of sentences (الطلاقة في القرآن المقذاجراً السرعة), fluent (صحة الإلقاء أو الأداء المعبرة) and understandable (الفهم) (al-Majid,1961:201). The teachers should consider these four elements in teaching *mutalaah*.

The above data revealed at least three types of methods that are often used in learning *mutalaah*, namely; first, the *tahliliyah* method *tarkibiyah* method (الطريقة التركيبية أو الجزئية), second, *tahliliyah* method (الطريقة التحليلية أو الكلية), and third, eclectic method (الطريقة الوليفية أو المزدلفة) (Ahmad,1979: 124).

The *tarkibiyah* method is called the *juz'iyah* method. It is called *tarkibiyah* because learning process starts from a letter by letter to word by word that form a new sentence. In other words, *tarkib* is arranging the letters to be words and putting the words into sentences. On the other hand, the *juz'iyah* method in learning *mutalaah* begins with discussing the minor parts so that they become whole words and the words are arranged into perfect sentences. This means, how words work in sentences is called *tarkibiyah*, and how comments are characterized is called *juz'iyah*. Learning *mutalaah* with this method, starting with letter recognition, *harakat*, and how to read it (letter sounds). Afterward, write the letters and arrange them into words while introducing the letters *mad*, and finally arrange the words into numbers (perfect sentences). The emphasis at this stage is on memorizing letters, *harakats*, and their sounds. This method is suitable for teaching children who know Arabic little and no longer correspond to advanced learners.

The opposite of the *tarkibiyah* method is the *tahliliyah* method. Learning *mutalaah* with the *tahliliyah* method begins with sentences, words, and letters, from *kulliyah* to *juz'iyah* or from complex to simple. This method is called the naturalist method (الطريقة الطبيعية), i.e. the delivery of materials by the natural way the child learns the language with his mother or the surrounding environment. It is also called the global method (الطريقة الإجمالية), namely the delivery of materials by revealing globally and understanding the content of the material broadly as well (Ahmad, 1979: 124). However, in its implementation, this method requires an analysis of the meaning of each expression. The first step is understanding the global significance of expressions, and knowing the word-by-word meaning, even by deciphering the quotation of the letter. This method is suitable for advanced learners and is less compatible with elementary levels.

Moreover, the eclectic method is referred to by various Arabic terms, namely, الطريقة التوفيقية, طريقة and also الطريقة التركيبية التحليلية. The use of some numbers of terms for this method implies this method is a combination of some methods above by taking advantage of each method. Learning *mutalaah* by this method begins with expressing sentences by the level of learners' knowledge, repeating them with strong and fluent reading, in which each letter is read clearly according to the punctuation mark. Furthermore, analyze the word to the letter by the letter, both the name of the letter and the writing, so that all learners can understand their meaning, the levies of each letter, word, and sentence. This method tends to accommodate individual differences in essential ability, modalities, and the development level of reasoning ability.

### c. Character Values Delivery in Story Method

The development of santri's characters through the story method in learning *mutalaah* is closely related to the purpose of learning objectives in improving the Arabic language understanding. And the teacher, when explaining the meaning of *mutalaah* text, will discuss the moral values in the *mutalaah* reading text.

In other words, although the primary purpose of learning *mutalaah* is to improve Arabic language skills, the teacher does not intend to integrate *mutalaah* subject with the santri's character building. Moreover, the students can easily catch the moral values from the *mutalaah* materials.

### 3. The Effectiveness of *Mutalaah* Story Method for Character Education

The research data revealed that using the *mutalaah* story method to instill santri's characters in MTs Assuruur and SMP Darussalam can attract students' attention. They feel happy to get the story. As a result, the moral values in the *mutalaah* reading text can touch students' hearts.

Furthermore, the story method can encourage teachers to share the moral values from *mutalaah* text so that students can follow all characters and behavior they find in the text. In addition, cultivating moral values in the *mutalaah* materials will make it easier for students to understand and apply them in everyday life.

The story as a teaching method is theoretically essential because it has various examples and educational values. This is due to several reasons: the story is always enthralling as it invites the reader/listener to follow the events and reflect on its meaning, the report can touch the human heart as it presents the character in its context as a whole so that the reader/listener can live and feel the content of the story; as the Qur'anic story instill the faith by arousing feelings which is emotionally involved. In addition, it is revealed that the story method has some advantages: it will make it easier for students to apply the knowledge they get in school and encourage teachers to do good things because their students will follow what they do. In other words, the story method in learning activity aims to give moral lessons in real life and touch the heart to understand meaningful things, which is part of human pleasure (Gunawan, 2014: 306).

As a result, character development through *mutalaah* story method is considered adequate for character building because the story method has the following positive influences:

- a. It describes various facts in the student's thoughts and views that often occur in the community.
- b. It encourages his heart to understand something through the story.
- c. It instills moral education
- d. It elaborates on the value of transparency.
- e. It is a part of the child's pleasure so that it can be more easily understood.
- f. It fosters student's appeal.
- g. It plants good values.
- h. It provides a moral lesson and increases the student spirit.
- i. It accelerates and infuses the child's memory so that it is easily digested from the story, religious studies, etc.

Moreover, the application of the story method serves as: 1) a brainstorming that produces students's thoughts and fantasies about specific values. 2) a subject matter in the topic of discussion. 3) a tool to provoke students' attention to the material conveyed. 4) a tool to raise student's emotions. 5) a tool to generate students' curiosity until there is motivation to know the whole story. 6) a culmination point of the students' passion for specific values such as courage, honesty, sincerity, and patience (Shahidin: 2009), 104)

Consequently, regarding the practicality of the *mutalaah* story method for character development, it is revealed that the story method conveying legend, fairy tale, and myth can insert intellectual and moral messages from which the learning objectives depart.

Fadillah (2012: 172) stated that humans, through a story, can make warm communication and compassion with others. A well-presented report will awaken a sense of calm, warmth, relaxation, and a personal touch. In terms of learning activities, children can enjoy the content of the story told by their parents, teachers, and other people in a loud voice. From the cognitive perspective, the story method is believed to be the right means to improve the child's vocabulary without having to cause him to feel reluctant. Referring to the word of the Prophet Muhammad, the story method effectively instills the

students' values of faith, creed, and good characters. The themes such as patience, sincere giving, helpfulness, courtesy to the younger, respect for the older, and obedience to parents are suitable for the parents' or teachers' instruction topics. Well-delivered story method in thrilling stories on the people's experiences is another exciting side for children (Adhim, 2004: 91).

The book of *mutalaah Qiraah Rashidh* has some words that are easy to hear, pronounce, understand, and use widely. That is, because some words are concise, some letters are easy to pronounce, and some have beautiful sounds. As a result, it is easy for learners to understand and suitable for beginners who learn the Arabic language (Majid, 2008: 25). In this regard, the story method is very influential. It is considered adequate for students because they like to listen to something interesting that does not make them feel bored in learning Arabic. Besides, the story method can quickly instill moral values in the *mutalaah* reading text.

Furthermore, some supporting aspects lead to the teacher's success, one of which is his ability to master and apply learning methods that fit the teaching material, characteristics, and conditions of students.

The application of *mutalaah* story method must be promoted by the teacher's creativity and other supporting elements that include the available school facilities, the used media used, and the strategies the teachers apply so that the method can run well.

The *mutalaah* story method in character education strongly relates to a theory of teaching with advice or a picture of life in the past used as a reference or provision in navigating the future life, so that the quality of human life will get better over time.

The research results showed that the story method applied to foster santri's characters in MTs Assuruur and SMP Darussalam could be considered adequate due to the following indicators:

- a. Students feel enthusiastic about participating in learning *mutalaah*.
- b. Students feel happy to take *mutalaah* lessons because they get new stories that encourage them to focus more on the learning activity and understand the conveyed learning materials.
- c. Students progress better in learning outcomes of writing, speaking, and action.
- d. Students can practice the material they get in everyday life.

The above indicators imply the story method's effectiveness in fostering santri's characters through *mutalaah* learning. An effective learning method can help educators deliver subject matter and help learners achieve the desired goals.

In teaching-learning activities, all methods may be used. And the story method constitutes one of the methods. It is well known that the delivery of character materials through the lecture method is less efficient in attracting the students' attention and enthusiasm, especially for children. And even it makes children feel bored and get less understanding of the delivered material because it focuses more on theoretical knowledge. Whereas in this current time, students can easily understand the lessons when they are entertaining and not saturating

For this reason, it is imperative to use various methods in character education, one of which is the application of story method which is expected to increase the student's learning spirit to create an excellent generation.

The learning activity through the story method can make students interested in the subject materials and make the learning atmosphere fun and encouraging with full excitement and activation so that students catch the material quickly.

The story method attempts to collaborate theory with events or images of real life in the past as a reference or provision in navigating the future so that humans get a better life.

The application of the story method for character education, primarily performed through storytelling, can bring children to a happy atmosphere, and fun learning activities can be easily stored in student's cognitive memory. This concept is in line with Nata's (2001: 97) statement: "The storytelling method is a method that has an attraction that touches the feelings of children. Islam is aware of the nature of man to enjoy stories that have a great influence on feelings. Therefore, it is used as one of the educational techniques".



The above opinion implies that the effective way to convey the learning material to students is first making them interested in the course materials. This condition leads students to understand the topic and even saves them in their long-term memory, which can be recalled and applied daily.

Moreover, the story method activates the students' learning spirit because they naturally tend to reflect on the meaning and follow various situations of the story. Consequently, students are affected by the story's character and topic, which direct their emotions to a conclusion of the subject materials. The story method creates a significant effect as it invites students to follow the event and reflect on its meaning; it can affect their emotions, such as fear, feeling watched, willingness, happiness, reluctance, or hate that are narrated in the story.

Here are some ways to apply the story method in fostering the student's characters:

- a. The story method can be used at the beginning of the learning activity to bring students to thought and moral values in the story so that they can apply the values in real life in everyday behavior.
- b. The story method a teacher applies will provide understanding and insight to students related to the material given in the learning process so that they can practice the values and moral values from the story. Besides it can build student's motivation.
- c. The story method creates a fun learning atmosphere so that students easily understand the course materials. At this time, the students will prefer something that fits them, thus triggering their spirit to continue learning and understanding the lesson.
- d. The story method can positively influence children in their daily lives because, in essence, the learning carried out, primarily through the story method, is powerfully saved in the student's memory for a longer time. Students are expected to see and hear and apply its moral lesson in real life.
- e. The story method can provide a clear explanation of good and evil. And with this method, students at least understand the impact of evil deeds and the benefits of doing good. This is why the story method is instilled with noble moral values that train learners to capture power and concentration.

Teachers' ability to use learning methods is a dominant factor affecting learning effectiveness. In contrast, learning methods relate and depend on other elements such as learning goals, students, situations, facilities, and teachers. According to Sadiman in Trianto (2009: 20), the effectiveness of learning results from implementing teaching and learning activities. The teaching effectiveness can be analyzed by providing tests that evaluate various aspects of the teaching process. Soemosasmito in Trianto (2009: 20) states that learning activity can be said to be effective if it meets several main requirements of learning effectiveness, namely:

- a. Students devoted a lot of attention to a learning activity
- b. Students did the class assignment well
- c. Students' ability highly resulted from the learning materials
- d. Students got a positive learning atmosphere

Moreover, effective learning is seen from the learning outcome and the learning process. This corresponds Hamruni's (2012: 23) opinion that effective education must meet its goals orientation, activities, individuality, and integrity.

- a. Goal orientation

Effective learning is a learning activity that is oriented to the subject goals. All activities the teachers and students carry out are aimed at achieving learning goals

- b. Activity

Learning is not merely transferring knowledge from teacher to student or memorizing subject materials. However, it is an activity the students do to get a learning experience. The learning experience will provide meaningful action because students experience the learning process.

- c. Individuality

Effective learning is an in-depth activity that affects the students' behavior. However, the main goal of learning activities is changing student behavior.

d. Integrity

Teaching activity does not merely focus on the cognitive dimension. In other words, effective learning will develop all aspects of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions.

#### 4. Supporting and inhibiting factors of the story method in character education

The research findings stated some factors that support the development of student's character building through the *mutalaah* story method that includes: 1) the support of caregivers and heads of pesantren 2) linear teacher religious education backgrounds, 3) adequate and reasonable educational facilities and infrastructure, 4) student's staying in the pesantren environment that facilitates the character building education.

Teacher's educational background fully contributed to the success of *mutalaah* learning in the development of character education. This is in line with the educator qualification standards in The Republic of Indonesia Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, stating: Teachers must have academic qualifications through undergraduate program education or diploma four program, competencies, educator certificates, physical and spiritual health, and can realize national education goals.

The teacher's educational background that corresponds to his teaching subject can improve his professionalism. He can carry out the learning activity well, responsibly, and authoritatively. This is confirmed by E. Mulyasa's opinion that teachers are educators who become figures and role models who identify students and their environment. Therefore, teachers must have specific standards of personal quality, which include responsibility, authority, independence, and discipline. Regarding his authority, the teacher must have strengths in realizing spiritual, emotional, moral, social, and intellectual values and have a good understanding of the subject he developed (Mulyasa, 2013: 37).

Consequently, a teacher needs to have a minimum standard of specific competencies in teaching. The required competency standard (at least Bachelor degree as mandated by the Law) is expected to support the existence of teacher performance, as well as an effort to improve the quality of student education outcomes.

Furthermore, adequate and suitable educational facilities and infrastructure significantly support the successful implementation of learning in the educational institution. This is in line with the opinion of Mutohar (2013: 77) that the availability of school facilities and infrastructure is essential because it supports the learning process's success so that it can run effectively and efficiently. Allah in Al-Baqarah (2) verse 31 Allah says:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

"He taught Adam the names of all things, then He presented them to the angels and said, "Tell Me the names of these, if what you say is true".

This verse reveals that God taught the Prophet Adam the names of all objects on earth, and Allah commanded the Angels to mention them, but they did not know all. The things that Adam said certainly have been given a picture of their shape by Allah Swt. So the existence of media in schools is essential to influence the success of the learning process and outcomes.

Meanwhile, there are some efforts that teachers always make to deal with the obstacles during the teaching and learning process. Based on the author's direct observation at the time of learning *mutalaah*, the teacher made several activities to overcome the obstacles:

- a. Making a conducive learning atmosphere to get more attention from students by rebuking and giving sanctions for those who break the school regulations, such as sleeping and getting noisy during learning time. Students are expected to be more concentrated and not fall sleepy during class. For example, the teacher tells students to wash their faces or take ablution and stand in front of their chairs during the teacher's explanation.
- b. Looking for the synonym of Arabic words or translating examples of Arabic sentences directly into Indonesian.

- c. Making more intensive interaction and communication with students to have complete control over the class
- d. Making innovation to the learning methods applied so that students are more interested and enthusiastic about learning.

Getting active during the teaching activity so that the teachers have control over the surroundings of the classroom to make all students focus on the learning activity. When students have less learning participation, the teacher evaluates the classroom and asks directly the student to give their focus and provides additional learning activities outside the fixed lesson hours.

### 3. Conclusion

The teaching materials conveyed through the *mutalaah* story method for student's character building for the second grade of MTs Assuruur Pameungpeuk Bandung Regency and the second grade of SMP Darussalam Narunggul Tasikmalaya Regency are taken from the book *al-Qirā'ah al-Rasyīdah* Volume 1 by Abdul Fatah Shabri Bik And Ali Amir Bik. The book consists of simple themes that tell noble moral values, encouraging students to have commendable behaviors. Implementing the *mutalaah* story method in character-building education has several stages: first, preparing the learning syllabus and the lesson plan (RPP). Second, the learning process consists of three main activities: introduction, core activities, and closing. Each learning material is carried out in three meetings. The character/moral values in the text are explained at the second meeting when the teacher explains the content of the text. Meanwhile, the evaluation is done at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the session; the formative assessment is performed in the middle and final semesters. The other evaluation assesses how students behave in their daily life. The *mutalaah* story method is considered effective in developing student's character education. Students are directed to understand not only the Arabic lessons but also the values of the story in the learning material. Indeed, students instinctively like stories, so they feel happy to learn moral stories. Moreover, students are asked to memorize the story to stay in their memory and heart longer.

In learning *mutalaah*, some factors promoting the success of student's character education through the story method include the support of Pesantren and the principal, linear educational background of teachers, and decent infrastructure. On the contrary, the factors that hinder character education consist of the different educational experiences of students, decreasing learning spirit of students to study Arabic vocabulary, and the lack of instructional media that supports the delivery of learning materials. Supporting factors for applying story methods in *mutalaah* learning for moral education are as follows: First, Some of the supporting factors include The support of Pesantren caregivers and the Principals and, the Linear educational background of teachers: Availability of infrastructure. While inhibiting factors include: The experience of students who are not the same in the mastery of Arabic; Lack of interest and interest of students to understand the meaning of Arabic vocabulary; Difficulty of students in understanding the importance of new Vocabulary of Arabic; It is difficult to get student's attention to be able to listen to the teacher's explanation when the learning process takes place: And the lack of good learning media at the time of delivery of learning materials.

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