

## CHARACTER EDUCATION BUILDING THROUGH RECITING ṢALAWĀT

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### Abstract

This paper tries to discuss about character education building through reciting *ṣalawāt*. By using literature study, this article found that character education building is an effort in dealing with behavioral and moral degradation problems in the midst of the generation of the nation today. One of the interventions that can be done is through repetition of *ṣalawāt* recitations that are internalized and interpreted as a way to connect to the figure of *uswatun ḥasanah*, perfecting human morals, which has a positive impact on physical and mental, also has the power to change deviant behavior. As a recommendation, this article states that there is no harm if the above findings are applied to Islamic education institutions

**Keywords:** Character Education, reciting *ṣalawāt*, morality

### A. INTRODUCTION

The current condition of the nation's students is not only full of creativity and useful things that they can do, there are also actions or behaviors that sometimes deviate from the values adopted by this Indonesian nation (Indonesia Ministry of National Development Planning and the United Nations, 2017, pp. 51–60). Among these negative behaviors occur from children, adolescents, and even people who are studying in higher education. Student fights, cheating behavior, sexual crimes at school, etc. are cases that show moral education that is not well internalized in each student, even the educator (Wahyuningsih, 2017).

This situation makes sadness and irony (Mappiasse, 2014), between ideal conditions where schools and other educational environments should provide learning and education that is able to deepen the internalization of good values in life (Rianawati, 2014), but in reality, the ideal environment actually provides anxiety and anxiety due to the decline in moral education in the environment and educational institutions (Natalia, Wijaya, Liesera, & Hutapea, 2015).

One of the things that can be pursued in facing the condition of moral degradation is through character education which is assisted by the process of internalization so that it can be applied more in daily life (Agung, 2011). Character education itself is a national movement to create schools that foster young people who are ethical, responsible, and caring through modeling and teaching good character with an emphasis on the universal values that we agree with (Pala, 2011).

## B. METHOD

This article is written using literature (Haryanto, Ruslijanto, & Mulyono, 1999, p. 78). This method was chosen to collect and record all writing materials, and then review these materials. The results are then presented in an explanation or narrative in the form of analysis and ended with the retrieval of findings or conclusions from the sources of the literature (Sarwono, 2010, pp. 24–25).

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Character is defined as a collection of good qualities that become daily behavior, as an awareness of carrying out roles, functions, and duties in carrying out the mandate and responsibility (Sudewo, 2011, p. 14). The term character is connected and exchanged with the terms ethics, *akhlāq* (Chittick, 2001, p. 34), and or value and is related to moral strength (Hartmann, 2017, p. 142), connotes "positive" rather than neutral (Carr, 2004, p. 51). The true character is the result of internalizing religious and moral values in a person characterized by positive attitudes and behavior (Nann, Butt, & Ladrigo-Ignacio, 2013, p. 138). Because of that he is very related to heart. It is possible for someone to have deep knowledge, but it does not have a commendable character. On the contrary, one can also have very limited knowledge, but his character is very commendable. Indeed, science is not able to form morals or faith; he was only able to confirm it. However, science is able to nurture the heart, sharpen reason, and strengthen one's character (Kumari, 2016).

Another meaning of character is good values (knowing good value, wanting to do good, real good life, and having a good impact on the environment) that are embedded in the self and manifested in behavior. The character coherently emanates from the results of thought, heart, sports, and the feeling and intention of a person or group of people (Nzeocha, 2012, p. 49).

Character configurations as a totality of psychological and socio-cultural processes can be grouped in: Spiritual and emotional development, intellectual development, Sports and Kinesthetic (Physical and kinetic development), and Taste and Spirit (Affective and Creativity development). The four psychosocial processes (though heart, though thinking, exercise, and sport and intention) are holistically and coherently having interrelationships and complementarity, which lead to the formation of character which is the embodiment of noble values (Dirjen Pendidikan Tinggi Kemendiknas, 2010, p. 9).

One way to process the internalization of cultural values and national character is through character education. Broader character education can be interpreted as education that develops the cultural values and national character of students so that they have values and character as their character, apply these values in their lives as members of society, and religious, nationalist, productive, and creative (Ainiyah, 2013).

Another expert states that character education is a deliberate effort to develop ethical core values and values of actions that are widely expressed across all cultures. Effectively, character

education must include all ranks in educational institutions and must absorb the climate and school curriculum (Lickona, 1996).

Character education is not only about skills in ability and knowledge. Character education also includes attitude skills (Jamrah, 2017). Departing from the concern that educated people actually experience moral degradation. The 2013 curriculum includes cognitive and affective aspects in the Graduates Competency Standards to accommodate character-based education. It is also expected that with character-based development, it can be a tiered policy in order to build a generation that has moral skills and is also nationally minded and has capabilities in a wider and more comprehensive field (Sumual & Ali, 2017).

In law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education system, character education actually occupies an important position, we can see this from the national education goals which state that:

"National education functions to develop capabilities and shape dignified national character and civilization in order to educate the nation's life, aiming at the development of potential students so being a human who has faith and is devoted to God Almighty, has a noble character, is healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and becomes a democratic and responsible citizen".

Participants are educated in the classroom to practice thinking skills, while character education exercises good attitudes and abilities which are supported by moral rules. Though both must walk side by side and not into two separate parts. In addition, character education is not a form of material that can only be recorded and memorized and cannot be evaluated in a short period of time, but character education is a learning that is applied in all student activities both at school, community environment and at home through the process of habituation, exemplary, and carried out continuously. Therefore, the success of character education is a shared responsibility between the school, the community and parents (Ainiyah, 2013).

Character education is an education where the process does not only rely on educators in schools, but also the closest people such as family, neighbors and surrounding communities alike provide support for personal development with character. If each individual in an environment has a strong character, the individual can become a role model for those around him (Tatman, Edmonson, & Slate, 2017).

Some principles that must be done by schools or other educational institutions to develop character education include (Lickona, 1996):

1. Promotion of core values
2. Define "character" as an effort to think, feel and do
3. Using a comprehensive approach
4. Creating communities that care about each other
5. Facilitating students with the opportunity to act according to morals

6. Offering a curriculum that is meaningful and challenging
7. Helping the development of student self-motivation
8. Binding staff as a learning community
9. Helps develop leadership
10. Binding the family and relatives of students as partners.
11. Assess culture and climate in schools.

Character education is one of the right accesses in implementing character building for the younger generation; a generation of high knowledge with faith and fear of God Almighty, noble, capable, creative, independent, and a democratic and responsible citizen (Ainiyah, 2013). One alternative that can be done in carrying out character education at school is to optimize the learning of Islamic religious education material (Islamic Education [Pendidikan Agama Islam=PAI]).

The role of religious education, especially Islamic religious education, is very strategic in realizing student character formation. Religious education is a means of transforming knowledge in the religious aspects (cognitive aspects), as a means of transforming norms and moral values to shape attitudes (affective aspects), which play a role in controlling behavior (psychomotor aspects) so as to create a full human personality (Ainiyah, 2013).

Islamic education is expected to be able to produce humans who always strive to perfect faith, piety, and noble character, noble morals include ethics, character, or morals as an embodiment of education. Humans like that are expected to be tough in facing challenges, obstacles, and changes that arise in community relations both locally, nationally, regionally and globally (Taufiq, 2017).

Religious education is one material that aims to improve noble character and spiritual values in children. This shows that religious education has an important role in carrying out character education at school. Therefore, religious education is one of the eyes of the compulsory education from both primary, secondary and tertiary schools. Then the school must be able to organize religious education optimally by applying religious values in the school environment carried out by all teachers and students together and continuously (Ainiyah, 2013).

The concept of character education has actually been around since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. This is evident from the command of Allah that the first and foremost task of the Prophet is as a perfection of morals for his people. The discussion of the substance of the meaning of the character is the same as the concept of morality in Islam, both of which discuss the actions of human behavior. Al-Ghazali explained that morality is an attitude rooted in the soul from which various actions are easily and easily born without the need for thought and consideration (Rusn, 1998, p. 99).

Suwito mentions that morals are often referred to as behavioral science or temperament, because with this knowledge will be obtained about the virtues of the soul; how to get it and how to clean a dirty soul (Suwito, 2004, p. 31). Islamic teachings themselves teach that the wrong form of worship is *dhikr*, remembering Allah. *Dhikr* is the process of deepening. He descends

from the tongue to the heart, from the heart to the soul. In Arabic, *dhikr* means "repetition" and "memory". Oral remembrance is sometimes only a mechanical reinforcement. When the meaning and power of the words begin to absorb, our hearts are filled with pleasure, longing for God, and other spiritual feelings (Frager, 2004, p. 256).

*Dhikr* is repeatedly regarded as a way to cleanse the soul and heal the diseases in it. *Dhikr* can change the tendency of the soul from orientation to the outside world (birth) towards the inner world, changing what is still chaotic in the arena of thinking about a variety of world problems, leading to the unification of the soul and finally being able to change religious life from being self-oriented (self-centered) towards God-centered religious life (Subandi, 2009, pp. 57–58).

*Ṣalawāt* is a form of *dhikr* or remembrance of Allah through the intermediary of the last Apostle, Prophet Muhammad, who has its own virtues, both virtues that have an impact on religiosity, spirituality, education, health, social, and have change power.

In QS. Al-Ahzab: 56 mentioned the order to pray as follows.

"Verily Allah and His Angels pray for the Prophet. O you who believe, pray for the Prophet and say hello to him." (Al-Ahzaab: 56)

A saying of the Prophet Muhammad also mentioned the suggestion to pray to Him, as follows.

"From Abu Hurairah ra said, said the Prophet pbuh: "Do not you make the grave as (place) feast day and do not you make your house as a tomb. And pray to me wherever you are because actually your *ṣalawāt* (that) reaches me." (Narrated by Abu Dawud no. 2042 and validated by Ash-Syaikh al-Albani)

Types of *ṣalawāt* vary. The shortest *ṣalawāt* reads "Allahumma shalli' ala Muhammad." Other *ṣalawāts* such as shalawat nariyah, *ṣalawāt* we are, *ṣalawāt* munjiyat, *ṣalawāt* ibrahimiyyah, *ṣalawāt dhiba*, and other forms such as *ṣalawāt* are developed into a song, which is usually accompanied by musical instruments such as *hadrah* and *terbangan*.

*Ṣalawāt* is one of the strengths that has a tremendous change of power in a person. Nurse changes the point of view, the mindset, behavior, and feelings of a person (Olivia, 2016, p. 8). In addition, *ṣalawāt* is one form of *dhikr* which has the power as a Religious Transformation which includes increasing commitment to adopted religion, transforming consciousness and self-transformation. Further explained that these experiences are often found in people who practice meditation (Subandi, 2009, pp. 49).

Shalawat is one way for a Muslim to connect with the Prophet Muhammad, with the aim of getting his intercession, making it a role model in our daily lives by following all his habits, or his morals. Because he was created to perfect morality, as in the following verse. "Surely there is in (the) Messenger of Allah *uswatun hasanah* (a good example) for you (that is) for those who wish (mercy) Allah and (coming) the Day of Judgment and he mentions Allah a lot." (Sūrah al-Aḥaāb: 21)

Not a few people do the habit of praying *ṣalawāt*. There are millions and maybe billions of people on earth also praying. The collective memory of the people about the Prophet Muhammad is also the same memory, collected in a "collective unconsciousness" (collective unconsciousness). The collective unconscious makes us in the same "frequency wave". For example, like accidentally some close friends wear clothes of the same color, without a pact though. The Prophet pbuh has a collective unconsciousness. When we are praying, we are connected with the unconscious collectiveness of thought of the Messenger of Allāh and the billions of other people who are taking care, which gives rise to a connection which is able to make a very strong personal experience. As Jung explained, this nonvisual reality is often regarded as something mystical, but it really isn't. He only describes the strong personal experience of those who are in the collective unconscious. The Messenger of Allah, with the best quality of mankind, has become a collection of collective awareness that is connected between those who care, which is able to make a person experience a change in perspective, called Jung, a strong personal experience - the most powerful personal experience (Olivia, 2016, pp. 72-74).

The discussion about collective unconsciousness is carried out by Carl Gustav Jung, which means that our experience as a species is a pile of shared knowledge that we have from birth. However, we cannot realize this experience directly. It influences all our experiences and behaviors, especially those in the form of feelings, but can only be known indirectly through the influences that they cause. The most obvious example of this is the creative experience shared by artists and musicians throughout the world and in all times, or mystic experiences in any religion, or similarities found in dreams, fantasies, mythology, fairy tales and literature (Boeree, 2008, pp. 104–105).

Jung further explained that indications of how we connect with others and with nature in general can be found in the collective subconscious (Boeree, 2008, p. 118). Collective unconsciousness is a universal storehouse of evolutionary experiences, which is the deepest level of personality and cannot be achieved at all and is the basis of individual personality. The collective unconscious governs all behavior now and thus is the most influential force in personality (Schultz, 1991, p. 126). When continuing to pray, it means transferring the energy of tension and anxiety to *ṣalawāt*. So that it is connected with the subconscious that is resourceful and abundant. When believing that he was connected with the Prophet Muhammad pbuh who was loving and generous, the abundance mentality also colored someone. So as to bring brothers in need in the intention of sharing in abundance. *Ṣalawāt* made him so sure he would get a way out of any direction (Olivia, 2016, p. 98).

Traits can be our example in behaving and behaving. In the science of self-development, model of excellence or role models, character development is an important factor. It guides behavior, directs decisions and priorities, also maintains values or values of life. Through *ṣalawāt* someone can follow the behavior (sunnah) of the Prophet Muhammad, without coercion. There is gentleness, which leads to joy, arouses love for joyfully following in his footsteps (Olivia, 2016, p. 98).

The Prophet Muhammad pbuh had a deep spirituality, which could make him free from prison himself. Then, other exemplary traits develop, such as spreading love and affection for the surroundings, forgiving the mistakes of others, being responsible, closing the shame of others, teaching loyalty as a condition of achieving freedom, being fair, peaceful, non-discriminatory, a good listener, loving children also respects differences, freedoms and human rights (Ramadan, 2015, pp. 358–363).

*Ṣalawāt* also has other healthful effects, both physically and mentally. Among them is *ṣalawāt* has the same strength as that obtained through meditation. One of the most popular forms of recent meditation is mindfulness, which is an awareness of current experience with acceptance (Olivia, 2016, p. 20).

Mindfulness presents a positive and physical impact on intelligence, some of which are helping oxygen to be used more efficiently, reducing perceptions of pain, reusing blood pressure, supporting emotional stability and resilience, relieving symptoms of depression and anxiety, relieving headaches and pain, increasing feelings of happiness, meaningfulness, and peace, strengthens the coherence of brain wave patterns that are associated with improved learning and creativity, deepens the conditions of relaxation and decreases muscle tension, and so on. Experience and positive effects physically and psychologically arise also from realizing reading *ṣalawāts* (Olivia, 2016, p. 13).

Mindfulness tends to focus on the experience of someone, usually sensations, feelings, or thoughts. Some *ṣalawāt* practitioners can experience the effects of mindfulness, through the practice of practicing *ṣalawāt*. They are more receptive to the events that occur in their lives, are more able to be present in the present conditions. On the other hand, the meaningfulness of life, feels happier and answers to the basic things of his life, such as being answered by themselves. Love for the Prophet Muhammad also increased (Olivia, 2016, pp. 20-22).

*Ṣalawāt* brings the effects of mood changes. Repetition, makes a pause with the pressure of the mind experienced so that someone is not in the mood. In a mood that is more able to be controlled, emotional well-being is more easily achieved. Emotional well-being is the woman to understand the value of her emotions and use them to move to the next stage of life in more positive directions. In addition, he also involves introducing and switching from "fixing the wrong or weaknesses" to focus more on acting on strength. More able to master emotions, have greater capacity to enjoy life and focus on important personal priorities (Olivia, 2016, pp. 24-25).

The challenges of the world of education today come from one of the human resources involved, namely students and teachers. Some cases arising from schools which are formal places to attend education include sexual harassment by teachers against students, negative student behavior such as student brawls, behavior related to drugs, and so on. These cases can be triggered by the inaccuracy of these teachers and students in internalizing the values and rules of their lives, which can be caused by lack of imitation of a Muslim's role model, namely the Prophet Rasulullah pbuh and also the flow of technology where all information flows

profusely without a good filter internal and external sides of individuals, then can enable someone to get an idol who is a role model that is not right for his life .

*Ṣalawāt* as a form of spiritual treatment, according to therapists, spirituality does have a positive impact on the lives of their clients. The study shows that the impact of spirituality is quite real on their clients. Some report their blood pressure decreases and strengthened physical function. Those who perform rituals and worship are also reported to have experienced improvements in their mental and physical condition (Olivia, 2016, p. 53).

Changes that occur to people who do dhikr, during the purification process and the journey of getting closer to Allah SWT, often get mystical experiences or experiences of Altered State of Consciousness or abbreviated as ASC, which is a form of changing consciousness, which is different from the normal consciousness of people generally. In the term hypnotherapy, it is called trance (Olivia, 2016, p. 58).

According to Milton Erickson, a Hypnotherapy figure who is also one of the founders of APA (American Psychology Association), this recurring thing can bring about the effect of trance or displacement of consciousness. Trance is a multilevel condition, starting from light trance, which occurs between awareness of wakefulness and trance medium to deep trance, which is very deep into hypnotic conditions (Olivia, 2016, p. 27).

Application to read *ṣalawāts* that can be applied at school can be done, among others, when opening learning activities in the classroom and when *hadak* ends. Some institutions such as Madrasah Aliyah, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, and Madrasah Takmiliah who are in the neighborhood of Islamic boarding schools have been accustomed to applying this application for a long time. Likewise, in several other religious Madrasah institutions, some have applied it. For educational institutions that have not, including general education institutions, for students who are Muslim, it can be recommended to make this practice, given the various virtues that will be obtained by the principals.

By making the Prophet Muhammad as a role model in the formation and character development of students, can be used as an example of good behavior in everyday life. Students tend to consider all the decisions of their behavior, making his life example in his prophetic stories can be absorbed in the students who are then internalized and interpreted as an inspiration that will bring close feelings to him and a feeling of gratitude for giving light to become survivors. All of these feelings can be applied and expressed through routine reciting *ṣalawāts*.

The impact of routine recitation of one's mental or psychological condition can also have an effect on controlled and happy behavior because healthy psychic is directly proportional to physical health and positive behavior. If the *ṣalawāt* is read routinely by the students and educators in the school, then they are accustomed to reading *ṣalawāts* also outside school hours which means that it has become a daily routine, certainly accompanied by deep meaning both in terms of religion and in terms of social, educational and health, it will form a lifestyle that



is connected with the figure of the Prophet Muhammad, with a belief that will control attitudes and behavior not to get out of the guidance and demands exemplified by him..

#### D. CONCLUSION

*Ṣalawāt* is a way that can be done to maintain harmony with life, maintain positive feelings and thoughts, so that space and opportunities from negative things to develop become smaller. Without realizing it, the subconscious is connected with *ṣalawāt*, which continues to be offered to the most positive creatures in the world. Through *ṣalawāt*, educators and students are able to develop the process of character building by taking the meanings and lessons from the figure of the example, the Prophet Muhammad who has become the best role model for Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad became an exemplary figure as self-control in attitude and behavior. That way, ideally and be our hope, students will not mock or bullying their friends, there is no act of violence through fights or brawls among fellow students, there is no immoral action from an educator on their students, mutual respect between educators and the whole students, and educational institutions can be a home to gain knowledge for all residents who provide peace, kindness and happiness.

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