THE URGENCY OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN OVERCOMING THE MORAL CRISIS OF ADOLESCENTS

Syaibatul Aslamiyah [1*]
Marhamah Syarif [2,]
Kunaenih [3]

[1]Faculty of Islamic Studies, Islamic University of Jakarta, Indonesia
(E-mail:syaibahaslamiyah@gmail.com)
[2]Faculty of Islamic Studies, Islamic University of Jakarta, Indonesia
(E-mail:marhamahsyarif2@gmail.com)
[3]Faculty of Islamic Studies, Islamic University of Jakarta, Indonesia
(E-mail:kunaenihuid@gmail.com)

_____

Abstract*: The rapid development of the times and the rapid flow of globalization have had a significant impact on the social behavior of adolescents, marked by an increase in moral crises such as promiscuity, juvenile delinquency, and misuse of technology. This phenomenon indicates a weakening instillation of moral and spiritual values in the lives of the younger generation. In this context, Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role as a solution in shaping the character of adolescents with noble morals. Islamic Religious Education not only teaches the cognitive aspects of Islam, but also touches on the affective and psychomotor domains through spiritual development, ethics, and social responsibility. This article discusses how Islamic Religious Education can function as an educational, preventive, and curative in addressing the moral crisis in adolescents through a contextual and transformative approach. This study highlights the importance of synergy between families, schools, and communities in grounding Islamic values, as well as the need for reform of Islamic Religious Education methods and curricula to meet the challenges of the times. By instilling strong religiosity, it is hoped that adolescents will grow into resilient, responsible individuals who are able to filter out the negative influences of global culture while adhering to Islamic moral and spiritual principles.*

Keywords*: Moral Crisis of Islamic Religious Education for Teenagers*

_____

Introduction

Modern developments marked by technological advancements and globalization have had a significant impact on the social lives of people, especially teenagers. On the one hand, this progress has opened up widespread access to information and knowledge. However, on the other hand, this progress has also brought significant challenges in the form of an increasingly worrying moral crisis.

The moral crisis among Indonesian youth is increasingly evident and concerning. Cases such as promiscuity, juvenile delinquency, student violence, pornography, drug use, and criminal activity are increasingly appearing in the media. The loss of respect for parents and teachers is clear evidence of the moral crisis currently affecting the younger generation. In fact, many of them are displaying apathy, individualism, and a lack of social responsibility. This indicates that something is amiss in the process of character formation and the instilling of moral values in adolescents.

Education, especially Islamic religious education, is crucial in this situation. Islamic religious education involves emotive and practical in addition to normative and cognitive. It seeks to develop a well-rounded Muslim personality—one that is pious, morally upright, and capable of implementing Islamic principles in day-to-day interactions. By instilling moral, ethical, and spiritual qualities in children from a young age, Islamic religious education is anticipated to provide a tangible response to the moral dilemma.

However, the issues of the times are frequently not adequately addressed by the implementation of Islamic Religious Education in schools or madrasas. The effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education in forming teenage character is hampered by curricula that place an excessive amount of emphasis on cognitive factors, repetitive teaching techniques, and a dearth of educational role models. In this context, transforming and revitalizing the approach to Islamic Religious Education is crucial, making it more contextual, participatory, and able to address the spiritual needs of today's youth.

On the other hand, numerous studies have shown that effective religious education can strengthen self-control, increase social empathy, and foster moral responsibility. The values taught in Islam, such as honesty, responsibility, trustworthiness, and compassion, are the main foundations for building a civilized society. Allah's words in Surah An-Nur, verse 19, "Indeed, those who love to have abominable deeds spread among the believers, for them is a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter," acts as a reminder of how crucial it is to uphold morals in social interactions.

Islamic Religious Education is therefore urgently needed as a fundamental basis for building national character, not only as an addition to the national curriculum. With the help of this study, the author hopes to better understand how Islamic Religious Education can help address the moral crisis among teenagers and what tactics can be used to improve the educational, preventive, and curative roles of Islamic Religious Education in addressing the moral problems of the next generation.

Research methods

This research uses a library research approach, a research method that relies on data and information collection through in-depth review of various relevant literature sources. Hart (1998) states that library research is a systematic method conducted through reading, reviewing, and critically analyzing literature directly related to the research problem. In this context, the

researcher utilized various scientific references, such as books, journal articles, previous research results, and electronic sources obtained from academic databases such as Google Scholar from 2014–2025.

In order to provide a thorough and pertinent examination of the necessity of Islamic Religious Education in resolving the moral crisis in teenagers, this approach was adopted in order to provide a solid theoretical and empirical foundation. As a consequence, it is anticipated that the findings of this study would significantly advance Islamic-based character education in tackling the ethical issues that the younger generation faces in the modern world.
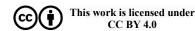
Results and Discussion

The development of technology and science is currently growing very rapidly. This progress has a significant impact on the behavior and actions of the younger generation, especially in the information sector, such as social media. This presents a new problem. Society is not yet ready to face the rapid pace of technological development, especially the younger generation, due to the resulting impacts, including deviant behavior such as bullying, promiscuity, brawls, alcohol consumption, theft, and drugs.(Marhamah et al., 2023 : 517).

Globalization can be a factor influencing moral development. With globalization, moral development can improve because information can be accessed quickly. Religious teachings, motivation, education, and knowledge can be accessed by anyone quickly. However, the impact of globalization can also have a negative impact on Indonesian society in general. Using globalization products for reprehensible behavior can actually cause problems and/or exploit them for activities prohibited by religion and the state. Understanding and practicing religious teachings from an early age is believed to overcome these problems. Religious knowledge will fortify a person from immoral behavior, crime, and negative foreign cultures.(Kurniawan et al., 2023 :24).

Islamic education, which has played a crucial role in shaping the character and morality of the younger generation, faces a number of challenges in adapting to current developments. Therefore, education in Indonesia is required to be sensitive to globalization. Living in the digital era has brought about changes in lifestyle and culture, shifting to a digital world. Islamic education in this era of digital globalization faces significant challenges, including rapid technological change, negative global cultural influences, shifting learning patterns, and a moral crisis among the younger generation. To address these challenges, Islamic education needs to adapt to technology and innovation, while maintaining the fundamental values of Islam, which teach noble morals, honesty, and peace. Thus, Islamic education can become a solid pillar in shaping the character of a younger generation capable of competing in the digital world without losing its identity and morality. Therefore, all parties must recognize the importance of providing moral education or character education to the younger generation.(Maesak et al., 2025 : 6).

The Role of Religious Education in Moral Development

Religious education is a crucial component of education, addressing aspects of attitudes and values, including morals and religious beliefs. Therefore, religious education is also the responsibility of the family, society, and government. The family is the primary educational institution and the place where religious education is instilled from an early age. Likewise, society and the government, through their established institutions, play a crucial role in fostering religious values in children. These three institutions (family, society, and government) must support each other and work together toward the common goal of instilling Islamic values in everyday life.(Iskarim in Khoiriatul'Ulum et al., 2023: 717).

Moral education derived from the Quran and Hadith is an important guideline in guiding adolescent behavior. Teenagers with a strong religious understanding tend to be better able to refrain from deviant behavior such as promiscuity, brawls, and misuse of social media. This demonstrates that Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a strong preventive function in addressing the moral crisis affecting the younger generation. PAI also helps adolescents identify their identity and purpose in life from an Islamic perspective. This process is crucial because many adolescents experience identity confusion and a loss of direction due to a lack of spiritual foundation. Through an approach that touches the heart and mind, PAI encourages the formation of an intrinsic moral awareness that stems from faith, not merely external influences or social rules.(Mailawati, 2025 : 11419).

Family, neighborhood, school, and peer group are other sources that can influence a youth's moral crisis. A moral crisis can also be caused by deviant beliefs, including a lack of faith, religion, and fear of God. All parties must pay attention to the ethical changes and causes of the ethical crisis that have occurred in recent years, especially among the younger generation. The moral decline among adults is increasingly concerning and has a direct impact on children and adolescents who use bad behavior as an example. This poor example leads to juvenile delinquency such as brawls, bullying, and crime. Many adolescents become trapped in violence, theft, drug abuse, or even become involved in criminal gangs. An environment with minimal attention and moral guidance, coupled with negative media influence, exacerbates this situation.(Aisyah & Fitriatin, 2025 : 332).

Actions related to the social moral and ethical crisis have been regulated and provided solutions in Islam. Through education that strengthens religious values, such as Islamic education, this character crisis should be effectively resolved and prevented. Families, especially parents, play a crucial role as primary educators in instilling Islamic values in children from an early age, which are then further refined by schools and the social environment.(Syukri et al., 2024 : 169). By instilling noble moral values, spiritual awareness, social responsibility, and a sound understanding of ethics and morality in technology, Islamic education guides the younger generation to become individuals with strong character, responsibility, and the ability to wisely face the challenges of the times. Therefore, Islamic education focuses not only on intellectual aspects, but also on the formation of balanced character and morals, which will lead adolescents to become individuals who are beneficial to themselves, their families, society, and religion. As the position of religious education in the millennial era, it serves as a bridge in fortifying children from all negative actions.(Maesak et al., 2025 : 5).

Guidance and direction can be in the form of coaching efforts that are not only preventive, but also educational, to strengthen religious and moral values.   (Muchlis et al., 2025 : 73)Dina Mufidah stated that knowledge of moral values alone is not enough to become a person of character. However, moral values must be accompanied by moral character, with the aim of enabling people to understand, feel, and simultaneously cultivate the values of virtue. This moral character includes moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action.(Dina Mufidah in Muchlis et al., 2025: 73).

Instilling moral principles in daily life, whether in schools, communities, the country, or the state, is one way that Islamic education contributes significantly to the development of national character. Following the 1998 reforms, society began to glorify individual freedom in all aspects of life, but at the same time, there is considerable evidence indicating a decline in the nation's moral values.(Rahman, 2015: 55).

Education for adolescents is crucial, especially Islamic education, which prioritizes moral education encompassing all aspects of life, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Ultimately, it is hoped that adolescents will grow and develop into physically, spiritually, and socially complete individuals, ready to live in a complex society. The realities of life faced by young people are extremely complex, requiring individuals with strong personalities and strong characters who will be able to navigate the challenges of life and living.(Badriyah, 2014: 65).

Islamic education is essential for forming a person's character, especially in light of the quick advancements in science and technology. In addition to improving intellectual capacity, this education seeks to cultivate moral character and a disposition consistent with Islamic principles. Students who get religious education are supposed to grow up to be obedient, devout, and morally pure people who are equipped to handle both the difficulties of this life and the next. Additionally, Islamic education emphasizes fundamental religious concepts like monotheism, worship, and values while fortifying Islamic identity. "This process is carried out through various activities, both within the family, educational institutions, and within the community. By involving parents, educational institutions, and social and cultural activities aligned with Islamic values, this education can shape a strong and noble national character".(Amalliya Oktaviani et al., 2025).

Religious education, in this case, provides a universal moral education. Islamic education plays a role in fostering individual religious values. The Quran, as the primary source of Islamic education, explains four developmental functions of human beings that are directly related to the development of human morals and ethics, namely, hablu minallah (human knowledge), hablu minannas (human knowledge), and hablu minal alam (human knowledge).(Rahman, 2015: 55).

The purpose of this education is to mold teenagers into morally upright, virtuous, tolerant, resilient, and well-behaved men and women. Character education serves a number of purposes, including the following: Forming and growing potential is necessary for them to think clearly, have a decent heart, act morally, and adhere to the Pancasila way of life; "The function of improvement and strengthening is intended that character education can improve and strengthen the role of families, educational units, communities and governments in order to achieve a developed, independent, and prosperous nation and; The filtering function, with the existence of character education, it will be easier to sort and filter foreign cultures that are not in accordance with Pancasila and the characteristics of the nation's culture"(Ningsih et al., 2023 : 129).

Moral education in Islam is based on the Quran and Sunnah. In this regard, educators aim to direct education toward growth in accordance with Islamic teachings. Therefore, it must be delivered through various educational institutions and systems that adhere to Islamic law. Furthermore, Islamic family teachings are a key factor in successfully overcoming ethical and moral crises. Islamic religious education can be provided in various forms, ranging from formal education in religious schools, Islamic educational institutions, and as part of the general education curriculum in Muslim-majority countries. Furthermore, Islamic religious education can also be implemented through home study, religious study groups, or through the use of media and information technology.(Hadi et al., 2019: 239).
The educational environment, family circumstances including broken houses and a lack of parental supervision, social connections, and the influence of social media are some of the elements contributing to this moral degradation. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) instructors
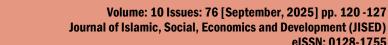
play a critical role in combating this moral deterioration by employing realistic yet successful strategies, such as leading by example and giving students constructive criticism to help them behave well. "Thus, the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in addressing students' moral decline is not only as teachers, but also as guides and role models who play a vital role in shaping students' morality and behavior in a positive manner".(Betha Agustian Daryanto et al., 2024 : 163).

In an effort to overcome moral degradation, various comprehensive and in-depth strategies can be used. One of the steps taken is to provide an understanding of the risks of deviant behavior with the aim of making students aware of the negative impacts of actions that conflict with religious and social norms. In addition, Islamic Religious Education teachers are also active in encouraging students to choose good relationships by guiding them to be in a positive environment that supports character formation. Not only that, Islamic Religious Education teachers also apply sanctions to students who violate the rules, however, these sanctions are not merely punishment but rather educational sanctions. This approach aims to enable students to understand the mistakes they have made, learn from experience, and strive to improve themselves in the future. "Islamic Religious Education teachers also continue to strive to integrate moral values, especially in this digital era, in every subject matter so that students not only gain religious knowledge but are also equipped with education in moral and ethical aspects".(Inayatussadiyah, 2025 : 2538).

Conclusion

The moral crisis among adolescents is an increasingly worrying phenomenon with the rapid flow of globalization and technological advancement. Deviant behavior such as promiscuity, violence, media abuse, and the loss of values of decency are evidence that the development of adolescent character and morals requires serious attention. In this regard, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is essential as the main pillar supporting the development of the younger generation's values and character. Islamic religious education helps students develop strong morality, spirituality, and social values in addition to imparting religious information.

Islam's core principles—honesty, accountability, compassion, and dependability—are crucial for creating people with high moral standards and the capacity to handle today's difficulties. As a result, Islamic religious education has to keep evolving to become more relevant, flexible, and sensitive to the needs of young people today. Islamic religious education's ability to handle teenagers' moral crises rests not only on educational institutions but also on the cooperation of communities, families, and the government. Early and ongoing religious education can strengthen self-control, deepen social empathy, and instill a moral awareness rooted in faith. Thus, Islamic religious education is not merely a complement to the national education system, but a key pillar in shaping a civilized, resilient nation grounded in Islamic values.

References

Aisyah, NN, & Fitriatin, N. (2025). Moral and Ethical Crisis Among Indonesia's Young Generation from the Perspective of the Teaching Profession. Indonesian Journal of Education and Learning (JPPI), 5(1), 329–337. https://doi.org/10.53299/jppi.v5i1.908

Amalliya Oktaviani, F., Dewi Yukhanid, K., Muntaha Binti Salis, K., Nafiah, Q., & Nurya Mumtaza, S. (2025). The Role of Islamic Education in Facing the Moral and Character Crisis of Students in the Era of Globalization. Mumtaza Journal of Islamic Education, 1(1). https://journal.sgt.ac.id/index.php/AlMadjid

Badriyah. (2014). The Role of Islamic Education in Improving the Nation's Morals. Heritage Journal, 56–63.

Betha Agustian Daryanto, Nurul Mubin, & Ahmad Robihan. (2024). The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Overcoming Moral Decadence of Students at SMK Ngesti Widhi Husada Kendal. Journal of Student Research, 2(4), 156–164. https://doi.org/10.55606/jsr.v2i4.3164

Hadi, I., Purwanto, H., Miftahurrahmi, A., Marsyanda, F., & Rahma, G. (2019). Moral and Ethical Crisis in Indonesia's Young Generation. Angewandte Chemie International Edition, 6(11), 951–952., 2, 233–241. file:///C:/Users/Hype GLK/Downloads/Krisis+Moral+dan+Etika+Pada+Generasi+Muda+Indonesia,+pp+233-241 (1).pdf

Inayatussadiyah, AS (2025). The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Addressing Student Moral Degradation in the Era of Social Media at the Junior High School Level. Didaktika: Journal of Education, 14(2), 2531–2542.

Khoiriatul'Ulum, H., Wanto, D., & Harrmi, H. (2023). The Role of Islamic Religious Education as a Solution to Moral Challenges in Embong Sido Village. Journal of Islamic Education, 1 No.(2), 1–23. https://jurnal.stituwjombang.ac.id/index.php/ilj/article/download/1093/448/3101

Kurniawan, A., Daeli, S.I., Asbari, M., & Santoso, G. (2023). Adolescent Moral Crisis in the Digital Era. Literaksi: Journal of Educational Management, 1(02), 21–25. https://doi.org/10.70508/literaksi.v1i02.9

Maesak, C., Kurahman, OT, Rusmana, D., Islam, U., Sunan, N., & Djati, G. (2025). The Role of Islamic Education in Overcoming the Moral Crisis of Generation Z in the Era of Digital Globalization.

Mailawati. (2025). The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Addressing the Moral Crisis Among Adolescents. Tambusai Journal of Education, 9(2), 11416–11423. https://jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/26507/18197

Marhamah, M., Lutfhi, A., Nahuda, N., & Rasyid, MH (2023). Educational Counseling "Strengthening Character Values for Personality Formation at the Tahfidz Mazro'atul Lughoh Islamic Boarding School, Pare, Kediri, East Java." Journal of Community Service (PkM), 6(5), 516. https://doi.org/10.30998/jurnalpkm.v6i5.19536

Muchlis, MM, Khasanah, SU, & Nahuda, N. (2025). Efforts to Increase Social and Religious Activities of Students to Prevent Bullying from an Islamic Perspective at the Al-Ihsan Islamic Boarding School Efforts. 5(1), 72–84.

Ningsih, R., Hardiyansyah, MR, Nugraha, MA, Nurasiah, N., & Azis, A. (2023). Analysis of the Implementation of Character Education to Overcome the Moral Crisis of Students in the History Education Study Program, Islamic University of North Sumatra. Education & Learning, 3(2), 20–25. https://doi.org/10.57251/el.v3i2.1033

Rahman, A. (2015). The Role of Islamic Education in Forming National Morals. Al-Riwayah: Journal of Education, 7(1), 45–59. http://ejournal.stain.sorong.ac.id/index.php/al-riwayah

Syukri, A., Sihombing, SW, Budiman, B., & Ifnaldi, I. (2024). The Role of Islamic Education in Facing the Moral and Social Ethical Crisis. Journal of Administration and Educational

Management (ALIGNMENT), 7(1), 167–171. https://doi.org/10.31539/alignment.v7i1.10370