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Introducing Children to Allah: Developing Religious Spirit in Elementary School Through Teaching Tawheed at Home

[1]Noven Kusainun*, [2]Suhairee Berngacha
Corresponding Author: *novenkusainun@gmail.com
[1] STAI Darul Huda, Ogan Komering Ulu Timur, Sumatera Selatan, Indonesia
[2] Yala Rajabhat University, Yala, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses how to introduce children to Allah and how to develop their religious spirit during their childhood, specifically during their time in primary school. The author emphasizes the importance of educating children about Allah and building their faith early on. This research is a literature review study on teaching children about tawheed (oneness of God) within the family setting. The method used in this research is content analysis. The analysis is conducted on several aspects: the command to educate children about tawheed, the primary role of parents in education, and the method of teaching tawheed to children. Parents should explain to their children that everything in the universe exists because Allah created it and provide simple analogies to help children understand the concept. Additionally, parents should strive to develop their children's religious spirit by creating an Islamic atmosphere in the household, teaching them good speech, taking them to the mosque, and using school holidays to participate in religious activities. The author highlights that these efforts should be ongoing and consistent throughout the child's upbringing.

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Introduction

Tawheed is the main foundation of Muslims in carrying out religious life [1], [2]. In terminology, Tawheed is to believe wholeheartedly that Allah is the only God who has the right to be worshiped [3], [4]. Carrying out Tawheed education in the family and community environment is an absolute obligation because it is the main teaching in divinity [5]. Parents should explain to children the existence of Allah and that Allah creates everything in the universe. Parents should try to develop their children's love for Allah and tell them that love for anything else should not exceed their love for Allah. Parents should create an Islamic atmosphere in their home and set a good example to develop a child's religious consciousness. They should teach children good phrases and take them to mosques and religious activities. Finally, parents should use their children's free time to engage them in religious activities.

Parents are role models for their children. Parents have a critical role in educating their children. Islam teaches that parents should inform their families to be people who are righteous to Allah. Education is part of the role or responsibility of parents towards their children. One of the tasks in this education is to provide education on Tawheed. Tawheed, the core of Islamic teachings, is the first and foremost aspect that needs to be taught to children. Laying the foundations of faith in children is essential as a preparation or foundation for their faith. Some parents need to understand that educating their children about Tawheed is not the responsibility of teachers or schools. Schools only serve as institutions to provide cognitive teaching on Tawheed. Tawheed is not a mental matter but a matter of faith that is located in the heart. As Allah commands in the Quran, parents must educate their children on Tawheed.

Tawheed education is the process of growing a strong faith in one's self towards the oneness of Allah from the heart until it can be actualized in real life [6]. Tawheed education can be carried out through formal, informal and non-formal education. Tawheed education in schools can be done in intracurricular and extracurricular learning. Tawheed education in the family is given by parents who are role models for children. Tawheed education in the community can be carried out by having Quran Education (*Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran* or *TPA*), taklim assemblies, routine studies, and so on [4].

Religious education is one of the considerations for parents in choosing a primary school for their children. Entrusting a child's education to a particular primary school is the right thing to do, but more is needed to reduce or eliminate the role of parents as educators. The teaching or material on Tawheed that a child receives in school will only have a good impact if parents educate their child from a young age.

Prophet Muhammad PBUH (peace be upon him) conveyed in a hadith that parents have an essential role in their children's faith. Parents have the right and obligation to shape and

guide their children. Regarding values of trust, parents become the first educators. From Abu Hurairah, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH said: "Every child is born on the fitrah (natural disposition to worship Allah), then his parents make him a Jew, Christian or Magian, just as an animal produces a perfect young animal. Do you see any part of its body amputated?".

This hadith also contains the meaning of the obligation of parents to educate their children about Tawheed. Tawheed means to believe in the oneness of Allah or not associate anything with Him. Tawheed is also understood as humans worshipping Allah alone. Education on Tawheed implies an effort to make various ways so that children can know, understand, and practice the concept of Tawheed in their lives. Childhood is the right time to lay the foundations of religion. The development of the era, accompanied by various advancements, can be a challenge in teaching Tawheed to elementary school children. Children can readily accept multiple contents that could improve their growth and development. The lack of essential faith in children can destroy Tawheed and other religious aspects, such as worship and morals. This research aims to determine the role of parents in educating their children about Tawheed at the elementary school level.

Methods

This research is a literature review study on teaching children about tawheed (oneness of God) within the family setting. The method used in this research is content analysis. The analysis is conducted on several aspects: the command to educate children about tawheed, the primary role of parents in education, and the method of teaching tawheed to children. In this study, a qualitative narrative technique is used to discuss three aspects related to the education of children in the family about tawheed: the command to educate children about tawheed, the primary role of parents in education, and the methods of teaching tawheed to children. The qualitative narrative technique is used to refer to relevant literature containing information about educating children about tawheed in the family. The researcher analyzes data from various literature and presents findings obtained from the analysis. Using the qualitative narrative technique, the researcher can provide detailed and comprehensive explanations of each aspect discussed. Therefore, this study provides a deep understanding of educating children about tawheed in the family, thus contributing to the development of religious education in the family environment.

Result and Discussion

A. Behaviour and Habituation

A study in the Lamongan area explained that Tawheed education in Islamic boarding schools is carried out through methods of indoctrination, understanding, and experience. Doctrine is carried out through memorizing the teachings of Tawheed. Understanding is given

through explanations and studies of books that are relevant to Tawheed education material. Experience in Tawheed education is related to the practices of worship in everyday life [7][3]. There are several methods used in Tawheed education, namely inquiry, giving advice, question and answer, and debate. There are several methods of Tawheed education that refer to the method of the Prophet Ibrahim in finding Allah. These methods are intuitive, rational, targib wa tarhib, ibrah mauizah, scientific, mujadalah, experimentation, and exemplary [3].

Practising exemplary behaviour and habituation is an appropriate method for educating children. Parents display good behaviour and habits and create a warm and religious atmosphere in the family. Examples of habituation that can be done include reading the Quran, praying together, and so on. The method of exemplary behaviour can be divided into deliberate and unintentional examples. Intentional moral behaviour involves providing explanations or instructions for emulating a particular attitude or behaviour. Involuntary good behaviour occurs informally in scholarship, leadership, and sincerity. Habituation or the development of habits can be formed by repeatedly engaging in something intentionally. The habituation method can effectively build a child's character and personality. The inculcation of Islamic values can also be applied through habituation methods. In addition to exemplary behaviour and habituation, several other methods can be used in teaching the concept of tawheed to elementary school children. These include teaching methods, conversations, stories, analogies, advice, warnings, and practical activities. Teaching methods may consist of lectures, discussions, assignments, and other techniques that are adjusted to the child's activities and environment within the family. Conversations or dialogues can be used to impart the values of tawheed, such as discussing the meanings of Allah's names (asmaul husna) and their applications in daily life.

The use of stories can also be a means of imparting knowledge and lessons in tawheed. For instance, the story of Pharaoh, who associated others with Allah, teaches the message that only Allah is the true God who deserves to be worshipped. Analogies can also help children understand complex concepts by comparing them to more specific and easily understood things. Advice and warnings can also be used to educate children in tawheed. For example, they remind children about the importance of gratitude during daily prayers (salah), a form of worship and devotion to Allah. Finally, practical activities or practices can also be used to teach children about tawheed, such as performing daily prayers and other activities that reflect the values and principles of tawheed.

Educators (parents and teachers) can apply many methods in Tawheed education. The choice of methods is narrative, question and answer, problem solving, giving assignments, and reading. If we focus on psychomotor aspects in Tawheed education, the methods that can be

applied are practice, example, and habituation [8]. The psychomotor aspect is an important part because the benchmark for the success of Islamic education is seen from changes in behavior that are bad for good, those who do not understand become understood, and other changes that lead to good [5]. The development of psychomotor aspects is very important because the success of religious education (especially Tawheed) includes changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior [2].

B. Tawheed is the Fundamental Education

Islamic education aims to achieve sincerity in worshipping Allah and pure faith. When teaching Tawheed (the Oneness of Allah) to elementary school children, the most important thing is to convey the fundamental beliefs of faith in a way that the children can understand. Then, the education should focus on guiding the children to manifest their religion in their behaviour as individuals who believe in the Oneness of Allah.

It is important to teach Tawheed from an early age, even when the child is still in the womb. This is because Tawheed is the foundation for humans in all their deeds. Practices based on Tawheed will bear rewards, while practices based on polytheism will result in sin [3]. The next urgency is Tawheed for Muslims not only as a belief in Allah but also as a point of view. Tawheed is part of the unity of the human self which is used as a perspective in carrying out life in the world [9].

The substance of Islamic education is close to the core teachings of Islam, namely Tawheed. The essence of Islamic education is to strengthen human faith and belief in Allah's truth and develop the human potential for knowledge and truth-seeking. Islam teaches that children are blessings and trusts that must be protected. When Allah blesses a family with a child, it increases the parents' responsibility to educate and support the child's growth and development. The presence of children should not distract parents from their obligation to Allah, including their commitment to educating their children. As a trust from Allah, the presence of children should make parents even more obedient to Allah. Educating children according to the teachings of Allah and the Prophet Muhammad PBUH is part of this obedience.

Teaching tawheed to children is one of the most important responsibilities of parents as educators. As children are born with a natural inclination towards Tawheed, parents must nurture and protect their children's innate faith and provide them with the necessary knowledge to avoid shirk (associating partners with Allah). Mothers play a crucial role in family education, especially during the early stages of a child's development.

An article also states that Tawheed cannot be separated from the way humans manage and make decisions in leading themselves and others. The statement emphasized Tawheed is part of a Muslim [10]. By nature, humans has Tawheed. Humans since their creation believe that Allah is the only God who has the right to be worshiped. The role of parents, teachers, and any

educators around them is basically to grow, awaken, or return humans to this nature. It is not humans who make other humans has Tawheed but Allah who has power over all his greatness [11].

Another explanation that also supports the importance of Tawheed education is the development of the times which has a lot of influence on children. There are positive influences and negative influences. It should be that parents must educate and protect children from negative influences. Tawheed as the main foundation in the development of children so that they can distinguish between good things and bad things [8], [10], [12].

C. Children Development Phases

When a child has entered school age it does not mean that the parents' responsibility in Tawheed education is over. The religious learning that children receive at school can be said to be limited. Likewise, the duration of the child at school is not the same as the child's presence at home. Behavior that is in accordance with the values of Tawheed must continue to be grown and not depend on school materials. Therefore Tawheed education becomes part of the ongoing role for parents in educating children [11].

Generally, elementary school children are between 6 and 13. At this stage, according to Jean Piaget's theory of development, children are in the concrete operational stage. In this stage, children are faced with real problems and are capable of logical and systematic thinking. Therefore, parents must understand their child's character when providing religious education. Understanding the child's personality is necessary to determine the appropriate approach to teaching tawheed. For example, teaching tawheed to elementary school children should be adjusted to their developmental stage. The delivery of messages or advice should also use language that is easy to understand so that children can adequately understand tawheed.

Elementary school-age children have developmental tasks as suggested by Havig Hurst and Erikson. These tasks are learning physical skills, getting used to healthy living, getting along with peers, realizing gender roles, developing reading, writing and arithmetic skills, developing concepts related to everyday life, managing the heart and morals, realizing that being part of society, and have the freedom to make decisions [13], [14]. Parents can instill Tawheed values according to the stage of child development. There are eight main values of Tawheed education which are faith, Islam, ihsan, piety, sincerity, trust, repentance, and gratitude [3], [4].

Similarly, parents must understand the developmental stages of early and late elementary school-aged children. It means that the delivery of messages or advice to lower-grade students differs from that of upper-grade students. Lower-grade students usually depend highly on adults, while upper-grade students are starting to develop their sense of independence. Parents must avoid eliminating certain habits or activities that elementary school children

enjoy, such as playing. However, parents can use these activities to educate their children, including in religious education. Interactions between parents and children are essential, even through small things such as playing.

Parents can play in religious education for children, including telling children that Allah is the only true God. They can warn about the dangers of shirk or associating partners with Allah, introduce children to the fact that Allah is the sustainer of all creatures, and teach children about the names and attributes of Allah. Additionally, parents can teach children the meaning of Quranic verses and hadiths. These roles can be broadly divided into two main areas: introducing Allah to the child and developing the child's religious character. Introducing Allah is the beginning of spiritual education while developing the child's holy symbol is done to nurture and guide them to maintain their tawheed.

D. Parents as the Role Model

The meaning of Tawheed is explained namely a strong belief in the oneness of Allah which is manifested in daily life such as worship, economic, social, political activities, and other aspects of life [3], [5]. If understood as science, Tawheed has the meaning of knowledge that examines ways to strengthen faith or faith in Allah [7], [10]. So parents need to establish good cooperation with schools and teachers in implementing Tawheed education. A study in Malaysia presented a teacher's perspective on the importance of integrating Tawheed values in schools. Teachers agree that integrating Tawheed has a good impact on children. The impact in question is feeling close to Allah, strengthening belief, active thinking skills, increasing enthusiasm for learning, and practicing responsibility [10]. Other studies examine the four main principles of Tawheed based on the book Al-Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life. The four principles are worldview principles, knowledge principles, family principles, and metaphysical principles [6], [15]. Among these four principles, family is one of them. So it is important for parents to make Tawheed a principle that is firmly held in the family, including principles in educating children.

Parents are role models for children. Some parents need to understand that Tawheed education in children is not the task of the teacher or school but the duty of the parents. Tawheed education means an attempt to strive for various ways so that children can recognize, understand, and practice the concept of Tawheed in their lives. The role of parents in Tawheed education in elementary school children is introducing God to children and developing children's religious spirit through good habits. Teaching God to children is the beginning of Tawheed education while creating a child's holy spirit fosters and guides children to maintain their Tawheed.

Parents play a crucial role in providing Tawheed education to their children. Tawheed education refers to helping children understand and practice the concept of Tawheed, which is

the oneness of God in Islam. Some parents may need to realize that tawheed education is not solely the responsibility of the teacher or school, but it is primarily the task of parents. Therefore, parents need to take an active role in providing Tawheed education to their children.

The role of parents in providing Tawheed education to elementary school children involves introducing God to children and fostering their religious spirit through examples and habits. The first step is teaching God to children, which is the beginning of Tawheed education. Parents need to help their children understand who God is and His role in their lives. The second step is to develop a child's religious spirit by guiding and nurturing them to maintain their Tawheed. Parents need to set an example of good habits and behaviour that reflect the teachings of Islam, such as praying, giving charity, and reading the Quran. By doing so, children will learn to emulate these habits and develop their religious spirit. Parents are crucial role models for children, especially in providing Tawheed education. They must take responsibility for introducing God to their children and developing their religious spirit through exemplary behaviour and habits. Some of the duties of parents in child education are as follows:

- Nurture and raise their child: Every parent wants to witness and support their child's growth and development. They must provide the best environment for their child, including food, drink, clothing, shelter, and other facilities that support their growth and development.
- Protect their child's health: Parents should protect their children. Protection includes providing a safe and comfortable environment for their child. The health of the child, both physical and spiritual, is the responsibility of the parents.
- Educate with helpful knowledge and skills: Knowledge is essential for a child's life and future. Parents introduce their children to various knowledge and skills. The scientific knowledge and skills a child acquires in a family environment are the foundation for their education before they learn in school and society.
- Provide education for this world and the hereafter according to Allah's teachings: Allah commands that humans must protect or maintain their families from the fire of hell. In other words, parents must educate their children to become pious individuals. The elementary school years, which are a crucial period for learning, provide parents with the opportunity to be good role models.

Conclusion

In conclusion, parents play a vital role in the religious behaviour of their children. They are responsible for providing a nurturing environment for their children's physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. Parents can help guide their children towards a fulfilling and meaningful life by instilling moral and social values and a strong foundation in religious

teachings. Parents must set a positive example and practice what they preach, as children often model their behaviour after their parents. Parents can help shape their children's spiritual beliefs and practices for years to come by being actively involved in their children's religious education and upbringing.

Conflict of Interest

The authors should declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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Authors



Noven Kusainun is a lecturer at STAI Darul Huda, South Sumatra, Indonesia. Her undergraduate education was obtained from Ahmad Dahlan University. Her master's degree was obtained from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University. She has written several books related to Islamic education in various perspectives. She has research interests in education, family, and technology. (email: novenkusainun@gmail.com).



Dr. Suhairee Berngacha is an lecturer in the Department of Educational Administration. Currently he is working at the Faculty of Education, Yala Rajabhat University, Yala, Thailands. His doctorate degree is from Thaksin University, Thailand. (email: Suhairee.b@yru.ac.th).