

# Islamic Family Education in the Contemporary Era: Integrating *Tarbiyah*, *Ta'lim*, and *Ta'dib* in the Formation of Muslim Children's Character

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines Islamic family education as a foundational and holistic framework for shaping the character and identity of Muslim children in the contemporary era. Drawing on the core Islamic educational concepts of *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib*, the research highlights how these three paradigms operate synergistically to nurture children's physical, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and moral development. The family is positioned as the primary and most influential educational institution responsible for value transmission, character formation, and religious cultivation, as emphasized in Qur'anic injunctions and Prophetic traditions. Through an integrative analysis, this study demonstrates that effective Islamic family education requires the application of exemplary conduct, habituation, educational guidance, supervision, and dialogical interaction as key methods for internalizing Islamic values. Furthermore, the research identifies contemporary challenges arising from globalization, digital culture, and modern family dynamics, which significantly influence children's behaviors, cognitive patterns, and moral orientation. While these developments present risks such as moral disruption, informational overload, and diminished interpersonal interaction they also offer substantial opportunities for enhancing religious learning through digital Islamic resources and technology-based pedagogical tools. The study argues that the relevance of Islamic family education today lies in the ability of parents to harmonize permanent Islamic values (*tsawabit*) with dynamic modern realities

(*mutaghayyirat*) through adaptive, contextual, and technology-aware strategies. Ultimately, this study underscores the urgency of strengthening Islamic family education as a means to develop future generations who are spiritually grounded, morally upright, digitally literate, and resilient in navigating global cultural challenges.

## INTRODUCTION

The family is the most fundamental institution in social life, playing a crucial role in shaping an individual's personality and character. As the smallest unit in society, the family functions as the first school for children before they enter formal educational settings (Santika et al., 2019). In the Islamic perspective, family education is not merely a social obligation but also a religious mandate that determines the spiritual well-being of family members, both in this world and in the hereafter.

The Qur'an and the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) provide clear normative foundations regarding the urgency of education within the family. One of the most explicit references is Surah At-Tahrim verse 6, which commands believers to protect themselves and their families from the torment of Hellfire. This command conveys the message that parents bear a moral and spiritual responsibility to nurture their families through comprehensive religious education, encompassing aspects of creed (*'aqidah*), worship (*'ibadah*), and ethics (*akhlak*).

Studies on Islamic family education have become increasingly important in the modern era (Parhan et al., 2022). Changes in lifestyle, advancements in digital technology, and the forces of globalization create new challenges for parental guidance and parent-child interaction. Research conducted by Mujib and Mudzakkir shows that the weakening of religious education within the family is one of the contributing factors to the moral crisis among the younger generation.

A variety of previous studies have discussed family education in Islam. Ramayulis emphasizes that the family serves as the primary foundation of education before formal institutions assume their role. Meanwhile, Langgung explains the importance of integrating the values of tawhid into every process of family education. However, studies that specifically connect the analysis of Surah At-Tahrim verse 6 with relevant hadiths and contextualize them within the challenges of modern education remain scarce. Based on this gap, the present study aims to: (1) analyze the concept of family education based on Surah At-Tahrim verse 6 and the Prophet's hadiths; (2) identify the principles and methods of Islamic family education; (3) explore their relevance to contemporary Islamic educational challenges; and (4) formulate implementable strategies for developing Islamic family education in the modern era.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using the library research method, as the analysis relies entirely on an in-depth examination of relevant textual and scholarly sources. The primary data are derived from the Qur'an, specifically Surah At-Tahrim verse 6 and authentic hadiths related to family education found in Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawud, and Sunan al-Tirmidhi. Secondary data consist of academic works such as books, journal articles, theses, and dissertations that discuss the concepts of *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, *ta'dib*, Islamic family education, and contemporary educational challenges. Data collection was conducted systematically through the identification, selection, and classification of literature according to the research theme. All data were analyzed using content analysis techniques, which included data reduction, interpretation of scriptural texts and scholarly opinions, synthesis of conceptual frameworks, and contextualization of findings to understand the relevance of Islamic family education in confronting modern-era dynamics. This methodological approach enables the study to produce a comprehensive, integrative, and academically relevant understanding of the subject matter.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Concept of Family Education in Islam: A Terminological Analysis

From the perspective of Islamic scholarship, the concept of education possesses a rich and multidimensional conceptual foundation. The term "education" is not interpreted in a singular sense; rather, it is understood through three principal concepts: *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib*. These three terms do not stand independently but complement one another to form an integral Islamic pedagogical framework. *Tarbiyah*, etymologically derived from the root words *rabba*–*yurabbi*–*tarbiyatan*, refers to nurturing, guiding, maintaining, and developing the potential of learners toward the perfection of their innate human nature. According to Al-Abrasyi, *tarbiyah* encompasses the development of physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects as a unified process of harmonious human growth (Mariani, 2022).

Meanwhile, *ta'lim* refers to the process of transmitting knowledge through teaching, training, and learning activities. This concept emphasizes the intellectual dimension through the delivery of information, comprehension, cognitive formation, and the internalization of sound knowledge. On the other hand, *ta'dib* carries a broader scope as it focuses on shaping noble character and moral conduct. Al-Attas asserts that *ta'dib* is the process of recognizing and placing something in its proper position within the order of God's creation, resulting in discipline, moral awareness, and ethical stability within an individual (Parhan et al., 2022). Thus, *ta'dib* becomes the core of Islamic education as it aims to cultivate a civilized human being.

Within the context of family education, these three concepts are integrated to form a holistic approach. Family education does not merely concentrate on cognitive dimensions, but also encompasses physical, emotional, spiritual, and character development (Tri Fitrianto, 2023). *Tarbiyah jasmaniyah* emphasizes physical health, endurance, and fulfilling the child's biological needs in an Islamic manner. *Ta'lim* plays a role in instilling intellectual insight, critical thinking skills, and enhancing both religious and general literacy. Meanwhile, *ta'dib* and *tarbiyah ruhiyah* serve as the foundation for cultivating moral character, discipline, faith, and spiritual harmony, which constitute the ultimate goals of Islamic education.

The concept of family in Islam carries broad and substantive meanings. Linguistically, the Arabic terms *ahl*, *āl*, and *asy'rah* refer to kinship units based on blood relations, marriage, and collective

responsibility. In the Qur'an, these terms appear in various verses and contexts, illustrating the importance of the family as a social unit with sacred and functional value. From a modern regulatory perspective, Law Number 52 of 2009 defines the family as the smallest unit of society formed through marital relations or parent-child relationships.

In Islam, the family is not only viewed as a basic social institution but also as the primary educational environment that holds several functions—biological, educational, religious, economic, protective, affective, and recreational. Among these functions, the educational role—particularly religious and moral education—stands as the top priority, as the success of family upbringing determines the quality of faith, morality, and civilization of the next generation (Rahmadania et al., 2021). Therefore, the family is positioned as the primary sphere for personality formation, a role that cannot be fully replaced by formal educational institutions.

Based on the integration of Islamic educational concepts and the conceptual framework of the family, this study defines Islamic family education as a deliberate, planned, and responsible process carried out by parents or guardians to develop the full potential of a child (Hardini, 2024). This process includes strengthening faith, practicing worship, cultivating moral character, enhancing intellectual abilities, managing emotions, developing social competencies, and maintaining physical health. All of these processes are grounded in the values of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, with the ultimate aim of forming a Muslim individual who is faithful, pious, morally upright, and capable of fulfilling their role as God's vicegerent on earth responsibly.

### **Family Education and the Character Formation of Muslim Children**

Family education serves as the fundamental basis for shaping the character and personality of Muslim children. In the Islamic perspective, the family functions as the first and foremost *madrasah* that molds a child's mindset, moral orientation, and religious identity (pengelola et al., 2024). The role of parents extends beyond fulfilling physical needs; it also involves providing integrated guidance for the child's spiritual, emotional, moral, and social development. Both the Qur'an and Hadith affirm the parents' responsibility to educate and direct their children toward the path of righteousness, as reflected in the command to safeguard oneself and one's family from the Fire (At-Tahrim: 6). This indicates that family education is a moral and theological obligation with implications for both worldly life and the hereafter.

In the context of character formation, family education for Muslim children must integrate several key elements: exemplary conduct (*uswah*), guidance (*taujih*), habituation (*ta'wid*), supervision (*muraqabah*), and educational discipline (*ta'dib*). Exemplary conduct becomes the primary method because children learn largely through imitation. Parents who demonstrate honesty, discipline, patience, and compassion encourage the child to internalize these virtues. Additionally, habituating children to religiously meaningful activities such as performing prayer, reciting the Qur'an, making supplications, giving charity, and practicing courteous behavior serves as a strategic measure to strengthen their spiritual and moral character. Parenting patterns that emphasize dialogue, empathy, and appreciation of the child's potential are also considered more effective than authoritarian approaches that prioritize obedience without instilling value-based understanding (Dessy Wahyuni & Suparto, 2025).

### **The Role of the Family in the Internalization of Islamic Values**

The internalization of Islamic values within the family is an educational process that unfolds gradually, continuously, and through exemplary conduct. Parents hold three essential roles: as educators (*muaddib*), nurturers (*murabbi*), and motivators (*muwajih*). As *muaddib*, parents model proper moral behavior; as *murabbi*, they cultivate and develop the child's faith and religious potential; and as *muwajih*, they guide the child toward a meaningful life purpose that aligns with the pleasure of Allah. This internalization process can be carried out through daily practices such as habitual worship, spiritual dialog, storytelling of Qur'anic and Prophetic narratives, and the establishment of a family culture that is consistent with Islamic principles.

Peran keluarga akan semakin kuat jika dibangun melalui sinergi antara otoritas moral dan komunikasi afektif. Ketegasan tanpa kekerasan, kedisiplinan tanpa tekanan, serta kasih sayang tanpa permisivitas menjadi prinsip dasar internalisasi nilai yang efektif. Dengan demikian, keluarga tidak hanya menghasilkan generasi berpengetahuan agama, tetapi juga berkarakter Islami yang konsisten dalam tindakan. Pada akhirnya, pendidikan keluarga berbasis nilai-nilai Islam akan menjadi benteng

identitas dan etika bagi anak dalam menghadapi tantangan era digital, hedonisme, dan globalisasi budaya.

### **Family Education Methods in Islam Base on Normative Sources**

#### **a. The *Ta'lim* Method**

The *ta'lim* method is an educational approach that focuses on teaching, the transfer of knowledge, and the cultivation of understanding through verbal instruction and direct learning. Within the family context, this method is carried out by parents through the teaching of basic Islamic principles such as the pillars of faith and Islam, daily supplications, proper etiquette, and the understanding of what is lawful and unlawful. The normative foundation of *ta'lim* is reflected in Allah's statement in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:31), which describes how Allah granted knowledge to Prophet Adam AS as a provision for life. The Prophet Muhammad also emphasized the virtue of teaching, stating: "The best among you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it" (Narrated by Bukhari). Thus, *ta'lim* underscores the role of the family as the first institution for developing the child's intellect through structured, repetitive, and age-appropriate instruction.

#### **b. The *Targhib-Tarhib* Method (Motivation dan Warning)**

The *targhib-tarhib* method combines motivational reinforcement (*targhib*)—in the form of promised rewards, encouragement, and glad tidings—with warnings (*tarhib*) that involve admonition, moral consequences, or the threat of punishment when violations occur (Idharudin et al., 2024). This balanced approach develops both the emotional and spiritual dimensions of the child, encouraging obedience to religious teachings not merely out of fear of punishment but also out of hope for divine reward and Allah's pleasure. The normative basis of this method is evident in many Qur'anic verses that mention rewards for righteous deeds and threats for wrongdoing, such as Surah Ali 'Imran (3:133), which encourages believers to seek forgiveness and Paradise, and Surah At-Tahrim (66:6), which warns believers to safeguard themselves and their families from the Fire. In practice, this method can be implemented through moral rewards, praise, inspiring stories, and explanations of the logical and spiritual consequences of actions.

#### **c. The *Qudwah* Method (Role Modelling)**

The *qudwah* or role-modelling method is one of the most effective and fundamental approaches in family education. Children learn primarily through imitation and observing the behavior of their parents; therefore, the moral and spiritual quality of the family significantly shapes the child's character. The normative foundation for *qudwah* appears in the Qur'anic affirmation that Prophet Muhammad SAW is the best example for humankind (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:21). Role modelling extends beyond formal worship to everyday behavior such as honesty, discipline, patience, empathy, generosity, and commitment to truth (Devi et al., 2025). Parents who consistently demonstrate integrity in words and actions will find it far easier to instill Islamic values than those who rely solely on verbal commands without embodying them. Hence, *qudwah* is a method that simultaneously influences the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

#### **d. The *Hiwar* Method (Educational Dialogue)**

The *hiwar* method, or educational dialogue, is an approach conducted through polite, rational, and two-way communication. In Islam, dialogue is an essential aspect of the educational process, as illustrated in the dialogues between Allah and the angels and prophets, including the exchanges between Luqman and his son in Surah Luqman (31:13–19). Through dialogue, parents help children understand religious values rationally, rather than merely accepting instructions without comprehension. This method fosters critical thinking, emotional intelligence, moral awareness, and the ability to make decisions grounded in Islamic principles. Educational dialogue may include reflective questioning, case discussions, problem clarification, and offering alternative solutions, all of which help children feel valued, respected in their views, and guided toward making decisions based on ethical and spiritual considerations.

### **Relevance and Challenges of Family Education in the Modern Era**

The development of globalization, digital culture, and the modernization of family life has produced extensive impacts on children's educational patterns, particularly within Muslim households.

Globalization creates unlimited cultural encounters that not only enrich perspectives but also open the door to value penetration that may conflict with Islamic moral and ethical principles (Taufiqurrahman et al., 2025). This phenomenon requires families to be increasingly selective and critical in filtering information, stimuli, and consumption culture to which children are exposed whether through social media, digital entertainment, or global interactions. In this context, the family no longer functions solely as an agent of value socialization but also as a guardian and protector from potentially destructive external influences.

Digital culture intensifies these challenges, as today's children grow within a virtual ecosystem that is highly interactive, constantly evolving, and deeply immersive. Excessive use of gadgets, social media, online games, and digital content can significantly affect children's mindset, character, and emotional habits. Moreover, patterns of family interaction are shifting from warm face-to-face communication to device-based communication that often lacks emotional engagement and direct role modelling. Family modernization characterized by parents' busyness and increased activities outside the home further reduces the intensity of educational interactions, resulting in less optimal transmission of values that should ideally be taught through direct engagement.

Nevertheless, the contemporary era should not be viewed solely as a threat; it also presents strategic opportunities to strengthen the effectiveness of family education by utilizing technology grounded in Islamic literacy. The availability of digital platforms such as Qur'an learning apps, online religious classes, Islamic e-books, dakwah podcasts, and educational videos offers accessible and engaging learning tools. Technology allows families to build a lifelong learning environment using methods that align with the learning styles of the digital generation, making technological tools a support rather than a barrier to Islamic character formation.

To optimize these opportunities, Muslim families must position themselves as navigators and curators of children's digital education. Parents are required not only to supervise but also to actively accompany children in selecting content, setting usage duration, and providing critical understanding of the values embedded in digital media. In this way, technology becomes not merely a source of entertainment or distraction but a medium of epistemological and spiritual learning. Such accompaniment must be framed within Qur'anic and Prophetic values to ensure that the use of technology remains within ethical and moral boundaries.

Ultimately, the relevance of family education in the contemporary era depends on the family's ability to balance the permanent traditional Islamic values (*tsawabit*) with the dynamic realities of modern life (*mutaghayyirat*). Family education cannot be understood solely as a normative inheritance; it must be managed through innovative, dialogical, and contextual strategies. Muslim families are expected to build a generation with strong character, spiritual intelligence, and ethical digital literacy capable of facing global challenges without losing their Islamic identity and orientation.

## CONCLUSION

Berisi kesimpulan dan saran. Kesimpulan mencakup jawaban atas pertanyaan penelitian. Saran mengacu pada hasil penelitian dan berbentuk tindakan praktis, menyebutkan kepada siapa dan untuk apa saran tersebut ditujukan. Ditulis dalam bentuk esai, bukan bentuk numerik. ditulis dengan font Times New Roman ukuran 11.

This study concludes that family education in Islam is a comprehensive, integrative, and continuous process grounded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, particularly Surah At-Tahrim verse 6 and relevant Prophetic traditions. The concepts of *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib* form a unified pedagogical framework that guides parents in developing the physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and moral potential of their children. The findings affirm that the family functions as the first and most essential educational environment, shaping a child's character, religious identity, and worldview long before formal institutions play their role. The integration of exemplary conduct, habituation, guidance, supervision, and educational dialogue is proven to be effective in internalizing Islamic values and cultivating morally sound Muslim personalities.

The study also highlights that contemporary dynamics such as globalization, digital culture, and modern family structures—present both challenges and opportunities for Islamic family education. Global cultural flows, uncontrolled media exposure, and reduced face-to-face interaction threaten the continuity of value transmission within the family. However, technological advancements also offer

strategic tools that can strengthen religious learning when used wisely and accompanied by parental guidance. Therefore, the relevance of Islamic family education in the modern era lies in the family's ability to harmonize permanent Islamic values (*tsawabit*) with changing social realities (*mutaghayyirat*) through adaptive, contextual, and dialogical strategies.

Based on these findings, the study suggests that Muslim parents, educators, and policymakers strengthen the role of the family as the core of religious and moral formation by enhancing literacy on Islamic parenting, optimizing the use of digital resources rooted in Islamic values, and building collaborative support systems between families, educational institutions, and religious communities. Parents are encouraged to actively supervise, accompany, and curate their children's digital environment so that technology becomes a medium of spiritual and intellectual development rather than a source of distraction. Educational stakeholders are advised to design programs, training, and learning materials that support the implementation of *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, and *ta'dib* within the family. Ultimately, strengthening family education is essential for developing future generations who are spiritually grounded, morally upright, intellectually capable, and resilient in facing global challenges while preserving their Islamic identity.

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