

How do Millennial Parents Internalize Islamic Values in Their Early Childhood in the Digital Era?

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ABSTRACT

Technology development is currently very rapid, influencing almost all aspects of life. With these technological developments, millennial parents must be able to adjust how to internalize Islamic values in children in the family environment. This study aims to analyze the role of millennial parents in internalizing Islamic values for early childhood in the digital era as it is today. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive qualitative research. The informants of this study were millennial parents who had ten children aged 4-6 years. Determination of informants is done by purposive random sampling technique. The data of this study were collected employing virtual interviews. The data obtained were then analyzed by data triangulation techniques. The results showed that the role of millennial parents in internalizing children's Islamic values in the digital era was the Maghrib Mengaji program, optimizing the youtube kids application, using Islamic storybooks, singing Islamic songs, and optimizing animation videos for learning to pray. These five roles help internalize the Islamic values of early childhood in the digital era.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a child in the age range of 2-6 years and has various unique and distinctive characteristics. In addition, at this time, there was also very rapid growth and development in various areas of development, namely the development of religion & morals, cognitive, language, physical motor, social-emotional, and art (Susanto, 2020). The nature of children is born with different potentials and developments. They have their talents and strengths, and interests. In contrast to the development in other phases of child age, early childhood has several distinctive characteristics, including 1) Unique; 2) Egocentric; 3) Active and energetic; 4) Strong curiosity and enthusiasm for many things; 5) Explorative and adventurous; 6) Spontaneous; 7) Happy and rich in fantasy; 8) Easily frustrated; 9) Still lack

consideration in doing something; 10) Short attention span; 11) Passionate to learn and learn a lot from experience; and 12) Show more interest in friends (Sit, 2017).

Early childhood development is the foundation for more complex development because early childhood determines children's success in the future (Khaironi, 2018). Success in this period will be the most critical period in a child's life as an individual. Therefore, this period is often called the golden age because developments skyrocketed rapidly and will not be repeated in the following years (Suyanto, 2012). Of course, to optimize overall development, it is necessary to stimulate the environment around the child, be it parents, educators, or caregivers (Trisnawati & Sugito, 2021). Based on this urgency, knowledge about early childhood development is needed to develop its potential. One of the elements that must be considered in the success of the learning process given to children is looking at the child's characteristics.

Children aged 4-6 years are grouped into preschool age where at that age there are the following developmental characteristics: 1) Physical motor development of children at this age is said to be very active in carrying out various activities, this activity is undoubtedly very beneficial for the development of small muscles (fine motor skills) or large (gross motor), such as jumping, climbing, or running (Ramdani & Azizah, 2019); 2) The language development of children aged 4-6 years is also getting better (Isna, 2019); 3) Children can understand other people's speech and can express their thoughts within certain limits, such as imitating and repeating conversations (Aprinawati, 2017); 4) Cognitive development of children aged 4-6 years is in the preoperational stage in the sub-stage of intuitive thinking, namely the development period from the symbolic stage to the operational beginning. (Santrock, 2011). Based on this explanation, every parent should be able to pay attention and adjust the development needs of their children. The most important adjustment for parents to pay attention to is the development of children in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 as is happening today. This is because the rapid development of technology significantly impacts children's behavior (Putra & Patmaningrum, 2018).

Industrial revolution 4.0 brought various technological developments, one of which was the emergence of the digital era. Various positive and negative impacts characterize the digital era. The positive impact caused by the digital era is the more straightforward learning process assisted by the digitization of the learning system (Lubis & Dasopang, 2021). In addition to education, digitalization also has a positive impact on other fields, such as the economy with the ease of digital-based transactions (Primasari & Ghofirin, 2021), the political field that facilitates the general election process with a digital-based data collection system, and analysis process (Wisnaeni, 2020), culture (Setiawan, 2018), and other fields. However, there are not a few negative impacts caused by technological developments in this digital era. Adverse impacts such as addiction to gadgets that damage children's mentality (Wulandari & Hermiati, 2019), game addiction that has an impact on the delay of children's cognitive development (Ariantoro, 2016), declining health (Abdu, Saranga, Sulu, & Wahyuni, 2021), to the breakdown of children's social interactions (Novitasari & Khotimah, 2016). The positive impact will undoubtedly be beneficial in facilitating daily routines, but no one wants the negative impact caused by technological developments in the digital era, especially children. Therefore, parents, as holders of an essential role in terms of children's education in the family environment, must be able to balance and control children's development so that it continues to run as it should in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, which is marked by rapid technological developments today.

The family is the first educational environment that each individual undergoes before entering a period of formal education at school (Nasution, 2019). Parents are responsible for controlling and carrying out their role as educators for their children to have basic knowledge in living life (Rahmatullah, 2017). Furthermore, Dasopang & Lubis (2021) state that children's good or bad attitude at an early age is determined by how the education provided by their parents in the family environment. Hasnah & Sugito (2020) also stated that parenting styles for children in the family environment also impact the development of children's skills. Based on some of these descriptions, the role of parents in carrying out early childhood education in the family environment is significant so that children acquire basic attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Parents who have early childhood fall into the millennial category if viewed from

age. The millennial category in question is those born in the early 1980s to the mid-1990s, in which new technological developments began to emerge (Ambarwati & Raharjo, 2018). As individuals who have experienced the beginning of technological developments to become a necessity as it is today, of course, millennial parents must understand good digital literacy to maintain and instill good values in their children. (Fatmawati, 2019). One of these good values is Islamic values for those who embrace Islam.

Islamic values are principles or standards considered useful or indispensable in applying Islamic concepts in life (Kholidah, 2015). In general, Islamic values will discuss two categories: normative, which discusses the concept of good or bad, and operative categories, which discuss the implementation of Islamic attitudes in everyday life (Rafsanjani & Razaq, 2019). Furthermore, Ismatullah (2019) states that forming a child's morality is part of applying Islamic values to children. Ikhwan, Biantoro, & Ahmad (2019) also explained that what is included in Islamic values is knowledge about praying and reading the Qur'an. An understanding of Islamic history is also part of the Islamic values that children must possess. This knowledge can be a provision for children in determining attitudes towards negative issues about Islam so that children get positive values from each story studied (Pratiwi, 2019). Based on this description, the Islamic values referred to in this study are the formation of children's morals or attitudes in applying Islamic values such as politeness, the ability to perform prayers, the ability to read the Qur'an, and knowledge of Islamic stories and history.

Various studies on children's Islamic values have been carried out. One of them is research conducted by Nurfalah (2018) which examines the inculcation of Islamic values in elementary school students. Furthermore, Siregar (2013) examines applying Islamic values carried out by parents in the family environment by utilizing communication psychology. Safitri, Haryanto, & Rofiki (2020) also examines the integration of learning with technology in forming Islamic values in Madrasah Tsanawiyah students. Nurhayati (2016) researched the inculcation of Islamic values in early childhood. From several previous studies described, this research aims to raise the topic of the role of millennial parents in internalizing the Islamic values of early childhood in the digital era. The Islamic values of early childhood that will be studied in this study are the formation of children's morals or attitudes in applying Islamic values such as politeness, the ability to pray, the ability to read the Qur'an, and knowledge of Islamic stories and history.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive qualitative research. This research aims to analyze the roles of millennial parents in internalizing the Islamic values of early childhood in the digital era. In the following, the research design used is presented.

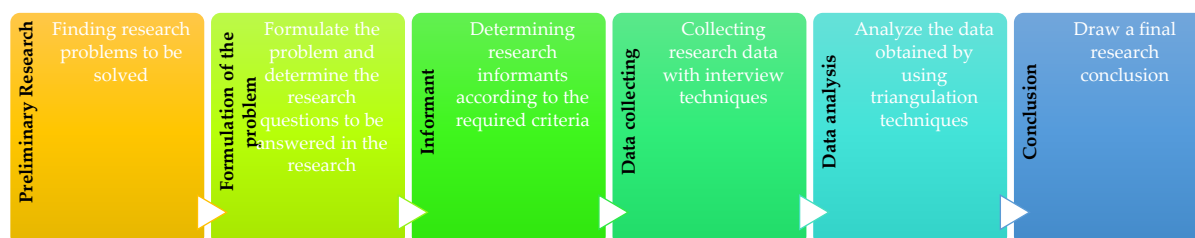


Figure. 1. Research Design

This research was conducted in Padangsidempuan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. The informants involved in this study were millennial parents, totaling ten people. The informants themselves are determined using a purposive random sampling technique with several criteria. The criteria used as the basis for determining research informants are 1) parents who have children aged 4-6 years; 2)

parents born in the 1980s to 1990s to meet the millennial category; 3) understand or have used digital media; 4) are Muslim, and 5) applying Islamic values education to children in the family environment. Determination of research informants with these particular criteria was assisted by information obtained from community leaders in the area so that ten research informants were found that fit the specified criteria. These criteria determine to meet the data needs of this research because this research requires information or data from parents about how they internalize Islamic values in their children in the current digital era. The following table presents the informants of this research.

Table 1. Research Informant

Name	Gender	Age	Child Age	Information
HSL	Male	31 years old	5 years old	Informant 1
RA	Female	37 years old	4 years old	Informant 2
NN	Female	29 years old	6 years old	Informant 3
DAP	Male	34 years old	6 years old	Informant 4
EAS	Female	39 years old	6 years old	Informant 5
RPN	Male	32 years old	4 years old	Informant 6
FRY	Female	30 years old	5 years old	Informant 7
ARS	Male	30 years old	5 years old	Informant 8
IFH	Male	31 years old	5 years old	Informant 9
DKY	Female	35 years old	4 years old	Informant 10

The implementation of this research went through several procedures, including 1) conducting preliminary research to determine the problems to be raised in this research; 2) determining research informants, namely millennial parents who have children aged 4-6 years; 3) developing research instruments as a tool to collect research data; 4) conducting interviews about the steps taken by millennial parents in internalizing the values of the past in their children; 5) grouping the data obtained from the research; 6) carry out the analysis process on the collected data; 7) conclude.

Data collection techniques used in this study were interviews. The interview technique was used to obtain information about the steps taken by millennial parents in internalizing the old values of early childhood. The data obtained is qualitative data analyzed by the data triangulation technique. The interview process was carried out in stages for each research informant. Interviews were conducted directly with each informant with the help of a voice recorder. The results of the interview recordings are then recorded in the list of interview results. The results of the interview recaps that have been published in the interview results are then reduced to obtain accurate data needed to answer research questions. Furthermore, the data is analyzed and presented in a report.

The data analysis technique used in this study is a data triangulation technique by comparing the validity of the data obtained. The data analysis in this study itself went through several stages, namely 1) collecting interview data about the steps taken by millennial parents in internalizing the values of the past in their children aged 4-6 years; 2) presenting data obtained from all informants in the form of descriptions; 3) analyze and reduce data by comparing the data obtained to find the roles played by pre-millennial parents in the process of internalizing Islamic values in their children, and 4) draw a research conclusion. The triangulation process in the data analysis process continues until the results can be used as references that consistently answer research questions. If the data is still inconsistent and conclusions cannot be drawn, then the triangulation process will continue to be carried out repeatedly until the data obtained are consistent.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study indicates that millennial parents in the city of Padangsidempuan do various ways to instill Islamic values in their children during the industrial revolution 4.0 as it is today. The ways that millennial parents do this are 1) implementing the maghrib Koran program; 2) youtube kids app optimization; 3) the use of Islamic storybooks; 4) program to sing Islamic songs; and 5) animated video programs for learning to pray. This method can be accepted by their children, who are used to technological developments.

“Maghrib Mengaji” Program

The first role of millennial parents is to implement the "Maghrib Mengaji" program for their early childhood. This program is a routine program carried out intending to bring their children closer to the verses of the Qur'an. This is following the findings of Pratikno (2020), who explained that one way to educate children to be close to and with the Qur'an is to get used to listening to the readings of the Aayat of the Qur'an from an early age. The implementation of this maghrib Koran program for early childhood, which millennial parents apply, is undoubtedly different from the concept of reciting the Koran for adult children who are already able to read the Qur'an. This follows Nirwana's opinion (2021), which states that early the cognitive development of early childhood with children aged above is different. Therefore, the treatment given must also be different so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively.

The implementation of the "Maghrib Mengaji" program is carried out by listening to the verses of the Qur'an, which are read through video. The use of video media is one of the effective ways that parents can do in teaching their children to read the Qur'an (Novelia & Hazizah, 2020). This program is carried out routinely every day for one hour, starting after the Maghrib prayer until the Isha prayer. Furthermore, this "Magrib Mengaji" program is also assessed by millennial parents as an effort that can be made to introduce activities that have positive values to children. Habituation of positive activities in children will positively impact early childhood development (Agustin, Inten, Permatasari, & Mulyani, 2021).

“I apply the routine to recite the Koran every maghrib with my child for an hour after the maghrib prayer. The goal is for my child to be closer to the holy verses of the Qur'an. Usually, I play videos reading the Qur'an so that my child can listen to the readings of the Qur'an” (Interview 1. HSL. 14 September 2021)

“...Usually, at the end of every maghrib, I accompany my child to listen to the reading of the Quran. My goal is that when they grow up, it will be easy for them to learn to read the Qur'an because they are used to hearing the verses when they were little.” (Interview 2. RA. 14 September 2021)

The implementation of the maghrib Koran program is not easy to do. Based on the information obtained from the informants, they encountered several obstacles in implementing the maghrib Koran program. Some of the obstacles experienced were at the beginning of habituation; children's attention was often diverted to their toys until children felt bored if they just sat and listened. This follows Ayuni, Marini, Fauziddin, & Pahrul (2020), which state that habituation to activity in early childhood requires patience and consistency because it is not easy to distract them. Furthermore, Wolfolk (2016) states that early childhood is at a time when their curiosity increases rapidly so that physical activity is more intense to explore new knowledge. This is what makes them easily bored with doing the same thing continuously.

“The obstacle I experienced was the difficulty when I started this program. Maybe he is still not comfortable with the new activity he is used to, so he is not happy. The solution I did was to let it continue

to do other activities, but I still tried to divert its attention to the reciting video playing. Alhamdulillah, now my child is used to it and understands this routine schedule” (Interview 1. HSL. 14 September 2021)

Based on the information obtained from the informants, the solution they took to deal with these obstacles was not to force their children and let their children continue to do other activities. However, even if they let their children do other activities, they still play the video while trying to divert their children's attention to the video being played. This is by the findings of Lilianti et al. (2021), which state that the learning process in early childhood should not be forced so as not to damage their mentality in following the learning process.

Youtube Kids

Millennial parents have also been involved in the Youtube kids application to internalize Islamic values in their children. This Youtube kids application is used as a medium to shape children's attitudes, knowledge, and skills. The formation of attitudes, knowledge, and skills in children is done by inviting children to watch positive content on Youtube kids. The content on Youtube kids is content that is presented specifically for children (Hoa, Hien, & Le Kim Anh, 2021). One of the most frequently accessed content is the animated film “Ipin dan Upin” because this content can increase knowledge through the storyline, form attitudes through each character's behavior in the animated film, and train children's speaking skills. Choosing the right content for children to access on social media is essential for helping their development (Khoiriyati & Saripah, 2018).

“I use Youtube kids. I think the application is good because Google selects the content to suit our child's age, so I feel safe when my child accesses the application. But I still accompany my child when he accesses Youtube kids” (Interview 3. NN. 27 September 2021)

“....So, we agreed to look for suitable applications for children so that his insight increases and does not damage his mind when he uses the application. Finally, we found Youtube kids, and we rate the app as suitable for children because the content is filtered and adapted to our child's age. So, we as parents feel more secure and comfortable when our children access the application” (Interview 4. DAP. 28 September 2021)

However, the use of gadgets in children certainly raises concerns for parents. Based on the information obtained, these millennial parents are still worried about the negative impact caused by the use of gadgets on their children. This follows Setianingsih's (2019) opinion, who states that gadget media is like a “double-edged knife” which means it can positively impact if we use it wisely. Still, on the other hand, gadgets can also have a negative impact if we use them wrong. Addiction to gadgets can lead to inhibition of children's cognitive development (Kurniawati, 2020), damage to the child's mind (Fauzan, 2021), damage children's social development (Ariston & Frahasini, 2018), until the child's character is damaged (Chusna, 2017).

“But we are still worried about letting children use gadgets too often because there are so many negative impacts. I am afraid that my child will be addicted to gadgets which will disrupt his brain development. To anticipate this from happening, my husband and I limit the use of the Youtube kids application to a maximum of one hour every day” (Interview 3. NN. 27 September 2021).



Fig. 3. Youtube Kids View

Based on this description, it can be concluded that millennial parents show an active role in internalizing Islamic values in their children. They do this because they realize that gadget media will only be effective when used to a certain level or limit, more than that, it will harm children. This follows Sahriana's (2019) findings, which state that the role of parents in managing and controlling the use of gadgets in children is an aspect that must be fulfilled to obtain a positive impact from the use of gadgets in children. Furthermore, Hidayati (Hidayati 2020) states that parents must be able to communicate well with children about restrictions on the use of gadgets to help overcome gadget addiction in children.

Islamic Storybook

Islamic storybooks are the subsequent role of millennial parents to internalize Islamic values in their children. Using this Islamic storybook varies from teaching children about the value of an excellent attitude to explaining Islamic stories or the history of Islamic civilization. This follows the findings of Lubis & Wangid (2019), which state that the use of storybooks can shape the attitude or character of children through the intrinsic elements contained in the story because each story has an element of the mandate that can shape the attitude or character of children.

"I have been using the story method on Islamic history for my children for a long time. Especially now that there are so many storybooks made especially for early childhood whose content is made funny and interesting, children are happier to see the pictures in the book, and we are also easier to explain the story to them" (Interview 5. EAS. 17 November 2021).

"My children love it when I show them children's storybooks, especially when the animations are cute and the colors are interesting. So, because he was happy, I just took a moment to read or explain the stories in the book. My goal is not only for him to understand what he likes, but I can also explain Islamic stories and Islamic history and the values contained in them, so that he knows a good attitude" (Interview 6. RPN. 19 November 2021).



Figure. 4. Islamic Story Book

Based on the data description, it can be concluded that the use of Islamic storybooks to internalize Islamic values in children is supported by the display of content or animation in storybooks that attract children's attention. This follows Lubis & Dasopang's (2020) opinion, which states that one of the elements that must be considered in developing a picture storybook is exciting content and animation. Furthermore, Afrida & Fitriani (2016) stated that the appearance of attractive animations in picture storybooks could increase children's reading interest.

Islamic Song

Early childhood cannot be separated from singing activities because children begin to practice developing their language and speaking skills at this age. One of the appropriate media for optimizing this development is the singing method (Wati, 2018). Furthermore, Purwanto (2019) explained that character building in early childhood could be done with the help of music media through singing activities. This is one way that millennial parents internalize Islamic values in their children. Based on the information obtained, millennial parents use music media to train their children to speak and internalize Islamic values. The type of music or genre of songs used is Islamic genre songs, so the process of internalizing Islamic values can be transmitted efficiently to children. This is by the findings of Makhmudah (2021), which states that the use of Islamic songs significantly influences the formation of Islamic values in early childhood.

"I often invite my children to listen and sing Islamic songs to train my children to speak the good language and instill Islamic values. I did this based on my discussions with my child's teacher in kindergarten" (Interview 7. FRY. 30 November 2021).

"My son likes to listen to Islamic children's songs, such as Aishwa Nahla's songs. He is delighted to listen to the song. On the other hand, I also see that songs like that are good for them, so I finally made Islamic songs like that a medium to instill Islamic values in my children" (Interview 8. ARS. 30 November 2021).



Fig. 5. Children's Islamic Song

Based on this description, it can be concluded that two supporting reasons make millennial parents choose the program to sing Islamic songs with children as one of the roles they play to internalize Islamic values in children. The first supporting reason is cooperation with kindergarten teachers. This is by the findings of (2019), which state that instilling character values in children requires the role and cooperation between parents and teachers. The second supporting reason is that children enjoy listening to these Islamic songs. Khoiruddin (2016) states that teaching early childhood must begin by making him feel happy and comfortable first so that the child does not feel burdened by the treatment given.

Prayer Animation Videos

Several informants stated that internalizing Islamic values was also carried out using animated prayer videos. This is done to introduce their children to the movement and reading of prayers. This follows Yuliana's (2017) findings, which state that interactive video media can help understand children the guidance of the 5 daily prayers. Furthermore, in their findings, Destiana & Rosid (2015) stated that the use of interactive video media could help children memorize prayer readings.

"I invite my son to watch prayer videos to start following the movements and reading prayers" (Interview 9. IFH. 11 December 2021).

"My child is now starting to be able to follow the prayer movements and readings because I invite him to watch prayer videos at least once a day" (Interview 10. DKY. 11 December 2021).



Figure. 5. Prayer Animation Video

Based on the data description, it can be concluded that the role of millennial parents in internalizing Islamic values in their early childhood using animated prayer videos positively impacts

their children. This is evident from their children, who have started to be able to follow the movements and prayer readings displayed through the video animation because it continues to be shown repeatedly to them. Khairi (2018) explains that early childhood cognitive development is at the stage of imitating things they consider new, so exemplifying good behavior is a wise attitude for their cognitive development. Furthermore, Rozi & Firdausiah (2021) stated that educating early childhood by applying repeated practices will make it easier for children to remember things.

4. CONCLUSION

The results showed that millennial parents played several roles in internalizing the Islamic values of their early childhood in the digital era. The roles carried out are 1) implementing the “Maghrib Mengaji” program to bring children closer to the Qur'an; 2) optimization of the youtube kids application to shape children's attitudes; 3) the use of Islamic storybooks to introduce Islamic stories and the history of the prophets; 4) program to sing Islamic songs to practice language skills; and 5) animated video programs to learn to pray to teach their children to pray. The roles millennial parents play in this effort to internalize Islamic values can instill Islamic values in children.

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