

THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENT IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND ITS ROLE IN CHARACTER FORMATION OF STUDENTS

Winnie Khodijah ^{1*}, Umami Syarifah Auliyah ¹, Muhammad Darwis Dasopang ¹,
Irwandi Sihombing ¹

¹ Postgraduate Program in Islamic Religious Education, Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary
State Islamic University of Padangsidempuan

Article Info

Received March 16 , 2026

Revised March 24 , 2026

Accepted March 27 , 2026

Keywords:

*educational environment,
Islamic education, character,
morality*

ABSTRACT

The environment is a fundamental factor in Islamic education as it directly influences the formation of students' character and personality. Islamic education is not limited to classroom activities but also occurs through social, cultural, and spiritual interactions surrounding learners. This article aims to analyze the concept of environment in Islamic education and its role in shaping students' character. This study employs a qualitative method with a library research approach by examining primary and secondary sources, including the Qur'an, Hadith, and works of Islamic scholars and education experts. The findings indicate that the educational environment in Islam consists of family, school, community, and physical environments, all of which synergistically contribute to the development of Islamic character. The family acts as the first madrasa, the school as a formal institution for value cultivation, and the community as a social space for value actualization. In the digital era, environmental challenges become more complex, requiring the integration of digital literacy and reinforcement of Islamic values. Therefore, optimizing the role of the educational environment is crucial for developing students with noble character.

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.



Corresponding Author:

Winnie Khodijah | Postgraduate Program in Islamic Religious Education, Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary State Islamic University of Padangsidempuan

Email: winnie.lubis05@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative emphasis on the concept of the classical Islamic educational environment with the challenges of the contemporary digital environment. Unlike previous research, which generally separates the study of family, school, and community environments, this article positions the virtual environment as an inherent part of the Islamic educational environment that needs to be managed through an approach based on Islamic sharia values and Islamic digital literacy. (Aisha, 2025)

Islamic education is a comprehensive human development process that includes spiritual, intellectual, moral and social aspects. (Ramayulis., 2020)The success of Islamic education is

determined not only by the material and learning methods, but also by the environment surrounding the students. The environment serves as a medium for education, directly and indirectly influencing the development of students' personalities and character. (Daradjat, 2011) From an Islamic perspective, the environment is seen as part of the signs of the greatness of Allah SWT which can be used as a means of learning. (Al-Abrasyi, 1993) The Quran and Hadith strongly emphasize the importance of choosing a good environment, as humans are greatly influenced by their surroundings. The current educational reality shows that attention is often focused solely on the school environment, while the family and community environments receive less attention, even though both play a strategic role in character formation.

As Allah says in Surah Al-Kahf verse 28: "And be patient with those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, hoping for His pleasure." (Al-Kahf, [18]: 28.) The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasized the importance of the environment in his saying: "A person follows the religion of his close friend, so let one of you pay attention to who he befriends." (Tirmidhi, HR) This hadith shows that the social environment has a significant influence on the development of a person's character.

The current educational reality shows that attention is often only focused on the school environment, while the family and community environment receive less attention, even though both have a strategic role in character formation. (Born, 2021) The phenomenon of moral decadence among students, such as deviant behavior, juvenile delinquency, and identity crisis, is largely caused by minimal attention to optimizing a conducive educational environment. (Tafsir, 2022)

In today's digital age, the challenges facing the educational environment are increasingly complex. Learners interact not only with their physical and social surroundings but also with virtual environments that offer limitless access to information. (Aisha, 2025) This condition requires educators and parents to be more careful in managing the educational environment so that it remains in line with Islamic values.

Based on this background, this article discusses two main problems, namely:

1. What is the concept of the environment from an Islamic educational perspective?
2. What is the role of the environment in forming students' character according to Islam?

This research aims to: (1) analyze the concept of the environment from an Islamic educational perspective based on the Qur'an, hadith, and the thoughts of scholars; (2) identify the strategic role of the family, school, and community environments in shaping students' character; and (3) formulate strategies for optimizing the educational environment in the digital era. (Bowl, 2021). This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach. (Zed, 2014) This approach was chosen because it is relevant to studying the normative and philosophical concepts of Islamic education which are sourced from the Qur'an, hadith, and the thoughts of Muslim scholars and intellectuals.

Data Source

Primary data sources include the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW as the normative basis for the research. (Sugiyono., 2019) Secondary data sources consist of:

1. Classic books on Islamic education by scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Khaldun, and Al-Abrasyi

2. Contemporary books on Islamic education by Zakiah Daradjat, Ramayulis, Abuddin Nata, and Ahmad Tafsir
3. Reputable scientific journal articles published in the last five years (2020-2025)
4. Previous research results that are relevant to the topic of Islamic educational environment (Moleong, 2017)

Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation and systematic literature searches. (Creswell, 2015) The documentation process includes:

1. Identify literature relevant to the research topic;
2. In-depth collection and reading of literature;
3. Recording important data related to environmental concepts and character formation; and
4. Classify data based on discussion categories.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques, namely identifying, classifying, and interpreting the main concepts related to the educational environment and the formation of student character. (Arikunto, 2019) The analysis steps include:

1. Data reduction: sorting and summarizing data that is relevant to the research focus
2. Data presentation: arranging data systematically and structured
3. Data interpretation: interpreting the conceptual meaning of the data that has been presented
4. Drawing conclusions: formulating research findings in a descriptive-analytical manner (Krippendorff, 2018)

Data validity is maintained through source triangulation and accuracy of academic citations. (Miles, 2014) Source triangulation is performed by comparing various literature covering the same topic to gain a comprehensive and objective understanding. Accuracy of academic citations is maintained by listing references completely and accurately in accordance with scientific writing standards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Environment in Islamic Education

Definition of Educational Environment

The environment in Islamic education includes all external conditions that influence the development of students, both physical and non-physical aspects. (Bowl, 2021) The family, school, and community environments are three main pillars of education that complement each other. The Quran emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the environment as a means of learning and contemplating the greatness of Allah SWT. According to Al-Ghazali, the environment is everything that is around humans that can influence the development of their soul and mind. (Al-Ghazali, 2003) This definition shows that the environment is not only limited to material conditions, but also includes spiritual and psychological aspects.

Hasan Langgulung defines the educational environment as everything outside the individual that influences the educational process, both positive and negative influences. (Langgulung, 2016) In the Islamic context, the environment is seen as a field of education that must be

managed optimally to achieve the goals of Islamic education, namely the formation of perfect human beings who are faithful, knowledgeable, and have noble morals. (Ramayulis., 2020)

Normative Basis for the Environment in the Qur'an and Hadith

The Quran provides a strong foundation for the importance of the environment in education. In Surah Luqman, verses 13-19, it describes how Luqman educated his son through advice within a family environment filled with exemplary behavior. (Luqman, [31]: 13-19.) This verse shows that the family environment is the first and main basis for forming a child's character. Allah SWT also emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the environment as a means of learning and reflecting on His greatness. In Surah Ali Imran, verses 190-191, it is stated: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men of understanding." (Imran, [3]: 190-191.) This verse indicates that the natural environment is a learning laboratory that can increase faith and knowledge.

From the hadith perspective, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The example of a good friend and a bad friend is like a perfume seller and a fire blower. The perfume seller may give you some or you may buy from him, and even if he does not, you will still get a pleasant smell from him. As for the fire blower, if he does not burn your clothes, you will certainly get the smell of his smoke." (Bukhari, Muslim.) This hadith clearly describes the influence of social environment on a person's personality.

Types of Islamic Educational Environments

Islamic education scholars classify the educational environment into several main categories: (Daradjat, 2011)

1. Family Environment (Bi'ah Usrah)
The family is the first and primary educational environment for children. In Islamic terminology, the family is referred to as "madrasatul ula" (the first school). (Tafsir, 2022) Within the family environment, children first learn religious values, social norms, and basic behavioral patterns. Parents serve as primary educators, providing role models, training, and guidance for their children. (Al-Abrasyi, 1993)
2. School/Madrasah Environment (Bi'ah Madrasiyyah)
Schools or madrasas are formal educational environments that are systematically designed to provide education to students. (Born, 2021) The school environment encompasses the curriculum, learning methods, school culture, facilities, and most importantly, the teacher's exemplary behavior. In Islam, teachers hold a noble position and are central figures in the educational process. (Zainuddin, 2019)
3. Community Environment (Bi'ah Mujtama'iyyah)
Society is a broader educational environment encompassing social interactions, culture, and prevailing values. From an Islamic perspective, society acts as a social control, strengthening or weakening the values instilled in families and schools. The Islamic concept of "enjoining good and forbidding evil" demonstrates the importance of society's role in education. (Bowl, 2021)
4. Physical/Natural Environment (Bi'ah Thabi'iyyah)
The physical environment encompasses geographic conditions, climate, and natural resources that can be utilized as learning media. The Quran frequently encourages humans to reflect on natural phenomena as signs of God's power. (Ramayulis., 2020)

The Role of the Environment in Forming Student Character

The family environment serves as the primary school, providing role models and fostering Islamic values. The school environment serves as a formal institution that integrates moral values into the curriculum, school culture, and teacher role models. Meanwhile, the community environment plays a role in reinforcing the values instilled through Islamic social and cultural control. In the digital age, virtual environments pose new challenges for Islamic education. Therefore, digital literacy based on Islamic values is necessary to enable students to utilize technology wisely.

The Role of the Family Environment

The family environment plays a role as the first madrasah that provides role models and habituates Islamic values. (Tafsir, 2022) Parents as primary educators have the responsibility to instill correct beliefs, teach worship, and form noble morals in children from an early age. (Ulwan, 2015). The Islamic parenting style applied in the family greatly determines the formation of a child's character. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Every child is born in a state of fitrah, then it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian." (Bukhari, Muslim.) This hadith emphasizes that the family environment, especially parental parenting patterns, has a dominant influence on the development of a child's personality. Some important aspects of the family's role include: (a) parental role models in worship and morals; (b) the habit of reading the Qur'an and praying; (c) dialogic and loving communication; (d) creating a religious atmosphere at home; and (e) monitoring children's social interactions. (Jalaluddin., 2018)

The Role of the School/Madrasah Environment

The school environment functions as a formal institution that integrates moral values into the curriculum, school culture, and teacher role models. (Born, 2021) Schools play a role in continuing and strengthening the education that has been provided in the family through systematic and planned learning. Teachers hold a highly esteemed position in Islam. Al-Ghazali stated that teachers are the heirs of the prophets, tasked with disseminating knowledge and guiding the morals of their students. (Al-Ghazali, 2003) The teacher's exemplary behavior, speech, and worship are crucial factors in the formation of students' character.

An Islamic school culture includes: (a) the habit of praying in congregation; (b) routine religious activities such as religious lectures and tadarus; (c) the implementation of rules based on Islamic values; (d) the creation of a conducive physical environment; and (e) the development of moral development programs. (Muhaimin., 2019)

The Role of the Community Environment

Meanwhile, the community environment plays a role in strengthening the values that have been instilled through Islamic social and cultural control. (Bowl, 2021) A religious society will provide positive reinforcement for students' good behavior and provide reprimands for deviant behavior. The concept of Islamic brotherhood within society creates a strong support system for children's education. Islamic study groups, mosque youth activities, and Islamic youth organizations serve as platforms for actualizing the values learned in the family and school. (Daradjat, 2011). The role of community leaders and religious scholars is also significant as role models for the younger generation. The presence of exemplary figures in society provides

inspiration and motivation for students to practice Islamic values in their daily lives. (Ramayulis., 2020).

Digital Environment Challenges and Solutions

In the digital era, the virtual environment is a new challenge in Islamic education. (Aisha, 2025) Social media, the internet, and digital technology open up unlimited access to information that can have both positive and negative influences on the development of students' character. Therefore, digital literacy based on Islamic values is needed so that students are able to use technology wisely. (Nasrullah, 2020) Islamic digital literacy includes: (a) the ability to select information that is in accordance with Islamic law; (b) ethics in communicating in cyberspace; (c) the use of social media for preaching; (d) awareness of the dangers of negative content; and (e) the ability to use technology for religious learning. Educators and parents need to collaborate in supervising and guiding children in their use of digital technology. Wise supervision, rather than total prohibition, coupled with education about the benefits and dangers of technology will be more effective in shaping Islamic digital character. (Ardiansyah, 2023)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the environment, from an Islamic educational perspective, is a strategic factor encompassing the family, school, community, and physical environment. All of these environments play a significant role in shaping the character of students with noble morals. The family environment serves as a madrasah (school) that instills the foundations of faith, worship, and morals through role models and practices. The school environment plays a role in continuing and strengthening education through systematic learning, an Islamic school culture, and teacher role models. Meanwhile, the community environment serves as a space for the actualization of Islamic values and provides social control that supports character formation. Synergy between the three pillars of education is key to the success of Islamic education, especially in facing the challenges of the digital era. Digital literacy grounded in Islamic values is necessary so that students can utilize technology wisely without losing their Islamic identity and values.

Recommendation

Based on the research findings, several recommendations that can be given are:

1. For Parents: Improve the quality of education at home through role models, instilling habits of worship, dialogic communication, and wise supervision of children's use of digital technology.
2. For Schools/Madrasahs: Develop an Islamic school culture, improve teacher competency in character education, integrate Islamic values into the curriculum, and build strong partnerships with parents and the community.
3. For the Community: Creating a conducive social environment, activating Islamic preaching and education institutions at the community level, and strengthening the role of religious figures as role models for the younger generation.
4. For Further Researchers: Conduct further research on the effectiveness of the three education center synergy program, comparative studies of character education in various Islamic educational institutions, and research on effective Islamic digital literacy strategies in the millennial era.

REFERENCES

- Aisyah, S., et al. (2025). The concept of environment and social media in Islamic education from Hasan Langgulung's perspective. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 5(2), 366–376.
- Al-Abrasyi, MA (1993). *Basic Principles of Islamic Education*. Jakarta: Bulan Bintang.
- Al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid. (2003). *Ihya Ulumuddin*. Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah.
- Ardiansyah, F. (2023). Digital literacy from an Islamic perspective. *Journal of Digital Islamic Education*, 7(1), 45-58.
- Arikunto, S. (2019). *Research Procedures: A Practical Approach*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Creswell, JW (2015). *Qualitative Research & Research Design*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Daradjat, Z. (2011). *Islamic Education*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Jalaluddin. (2018). *Psychology of Religion*. Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. California: Sage Publications.
- Langgulung, H. (2016). *Humans and Education: A Psychological and Educational Analysis*. Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Husna.
- Miles, MB, & Huberman, AM (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Jakarta: UI Press.
- Moleong, LJ (2017). *Qualitative Research Methodology*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Muhaimin. (2019). *Reconstruction of Islamic Education*. Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Nasrullah, R. (2020). *Social Media and Islamic Education*. Bandung: Simbiosis Rekatama Media.
- Nata, A. (2021). Islamic education and the challenges of globalization. *Jurnal Tarbiyah*, 28(1), 1–15.
- Ramayulis. (2020). *Islamic Education*. Jakarta: Kalam Mulia.
- Saeful, A., et al. (2021). Educational environment in Islam. *Journal of Educational Studies*, 4(1), 50–67.
- Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim (Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW).
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Qualitative Research Methods*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Tafsir, A. (2022). Character education from an Islamic perspective. *Journal of Islamic Religious Education*, 19(2), 145–160.
- The Qur'an and its Translation. Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.
- Ulwan, AN (2015). *Children's Education in Islam*. Jakarta: Pustaka Amani.
- Zainuddin, et al. (2019). *The Intricacies of Education from Al-Ghazali*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Zed, M. (2014). *Library Research Methods*. Jakarta: Obor Indonesia Foundation.