



Integrating Ki Hadjar Dewantara's Tricenter and Islamic Uswah: A Conceptual Framework for Family-Level Character Education in the Digital Era

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Abstract

The decline in moral integrity and the degradation of the strategic role of the family are crucial challenges in the development of the nation's character today. This research aims to formulate a conceptual framework for educational design at the family level through the synthesis of various pedagogical, philosophical, and spiritual perspectives. The method used is qualitative research with the type of library research, which critically analyzes the literature on the concept of the Tricenter of Education, family education from an Islamic perspective, and the synergy of the educational environment. The results of the study succeeded in constructing three main pillars in the design of family education: 1) Redefinition of the role of parents as guides (pamong), basic teachers, and main role models (uswah); 2) Integration of value dimensions that include spiritual (aqidah), moral (moral), and socio-emotional aspects holistically; and 3) Authoritative parenting methodologies that prioritize open dialogue, emotional warmth, and creative stimulation without the use of physical punishment. The conclusion of the study emphasizes that the effectiveness of character education at the family level is highly dependent on the consistency of moral messages and strong synergy between families, schools, and society to mitigate the risk of confusion of values in children. This conceptual framework positions the family as the main axis in creating a generation with integrity and high morals.

Keywords: Family Education, Character Education, Conceptual Framework, Tricenter of Education, Spiritual Ethics.

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INTRODUCTION | مقدمة

Education is a fundamental foundation for human existence that covers all aspects of life, both in individual capacities and as members of society (Stahl, 2020; Scanlon, 2019; Shimpuku, 2019). In today's global dynamics, one of the crucial challenges faced is the degradation of moral values and character, which is manifested in deviant behaviors such as intolerance, violence, and weakening of social responsibility (Han, 2021; Mo, 2021; Al-Alawi, 2021). This phenomenon emphasizes that education should not be understood simply as a process of knowledge transfer, but must be a strategic instrument in instilling noble values such as honesty, discipline, and moral integrity.

Previous research has attempted to map the role of the family from various perspectives. Daniel et al. (2025) emphasize that character education will only be effective if there is consistent synergy between family, school, and society, where the imbalance of values in one environment can trigger internal conflicts in children. On the other hand, the perspective of Islamic education

emphasizes the development of the spiritual and mental dimensions of children which refers to the prophetic behavior model, which positions the family as the main fortress in maintaining the purity of nature and building an orientation of devotion to God (Abubakar, 2023).

In the pedagogical structure, the family occupies a position as the smallest social unit as well as the first and main educational environment for children (Hidayati, 2016). Ki Hadjar Dewantara, through the conception of the Tricenter of Education, emphasized that the family realm is the most perfect place to carry out moral intelligence education and the formation of individual character (Febrianti & Ismail, 2025). This is in line with the spiritual perspective that views the family as a vital institution (*manzilatul ula*) to build the foundation of faith, worship, and noble morals from an early age. The first experiences that children have in the family environment will be determinants of their future mental, spiritual, and socio-emotional development.

However, contemporary reality shows a paradigm shift in which the essence of family education tends to decline. The family is often considered a purely supportive aspect, while the responsibility of character education is entirely placed on formal institutions or schools (Bhowmik, 2019; Leung, 2022). This imbalance is exacerbated by a lack of consistency and communication between families, schools, and society, resulting in children receiving contradictory moral messages. Without the alignment of vision between these three pillars, children will experience confusion of values and internal conflicts that hinder the internalization of character as a whole.

Therefore, it is necessary to design a Conceptual Framework for Family Level Education Design that is able to integrate the role of parents as the main educator with spiritual values and exemplary principles. This design should include parental responsibilities that are not only limited to meeting physical needs, but also include democratic parenting, creativity stimulation, and the development of independence. Through a solid synergy between the function of the family as a moral basis and the social environment as a supporting ecosystem, it is hoped that a generation will be born that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has spiritual integrity that is ready to face the challenges of the times.

METHOD

منهج

This study uses a library research method with a qualitative-descriptive approach that is conceptual-reflective. Operationally, this research does not just collect literature, but conducts a critical analysis of various primary and secondary written sources including scientific journals, reference books, and educational policy documents related to the role of the family. The researcher applies meta-synthesis techniques to extract and integrate findings from previous research to identify patterns, theoretical tendencies, and pedagogical principles relevant to the family education level.

The analysis process is carried out through three main stages: identification of fundamental elements of each literature (such as spiritual, philosophical, and ecosystem aspects), comparison between perspectives to find common points and value conflicts, and the preparation of new synthesis in the form of a coherent educational design framework. Using this approach, the research aims to produce a strong and comprehensive theoretical argument to explain how the function of the family as the smallest social unit can be optimized as a center for the development of children's character and moral intelligence in a systematic manner.

RESULT

نتائج

Based on the analysis of the literature reviewed, it was found that three main pillars are substance in family education. The researchers grouped the findings into a comparison of role, material, and methodology dimensions as follows:

Identify the Role of Educators in the Family.

Based on an analysis of the literature reviewed, the family has consistently been identified as the first and foremost educational institution for the individual. As the smallest social unit, the family functions as an educational center that has more perfect nature and form than other institutions in shaping character and moral intelligence. In this environment, the child acquires a first experience that is very vital to his mental and spiritual development, where the loving support of the parents will build confidence and resilient character.

Family education is not only seen as a process of transferring norms traditionally, but is a conscious effort to guide all the natural forces of children to achieve the highest happiness, both as human beings and members of society (Dardouri, 2020). Therefore, failure to lay moral foundations at the family level can result in confusion of values in children, which in turn will hinder the success of education at the later formal and social stages.

Based on Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thought, parents hold three central roles that are united, namely as teachers or guides (pamong), teachers, and leaders who set an example (Daniel et al., 2025). As pedagogical beings, parents naturally have the urge to do their best for the progress of their children, where their position in education is not limited by social status or economic level. In line with this, the Islamic educational perspective details these responsibilities specifically based on managerial functions in the family, the father is responsible for physical well-being and the financing of education, while the mother plays the role of the main caregiver who provides guidance from early to the formal level.

These findings are reinforced by sociological studies that place the family as the first informal environment responsible for laying the foundations of character such as honesty and empathy before being reinforced by formal institutions. Thus, parents do not only act as providers of material needs, but as a model of behavior or central figure whose every action will be observed and imitated directly by the child.

Value and Material Dimension Mapping

The results of the analysis of various literature show that educational materials at the family level cover a wide spectrum of values, ranging from spiritual dimensions to socio-emotional skills. In the spiritual dimension, family education is focused on instilling the foundations of faith (aqidah), introduction to the holy book, and habituating practical worship as signs so that children have a clear life orientation (Borji, 2019). This dimension intersects with the concept of character formation or ethics in national philosophy, which views education as an effort to advance the perfection of children's lives so that they have moral maturity.

In addition to the religiosity aspect, there is a strong emphasis on universal character values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and social care that are integrated through planned learning experiences at home. Another important finding includes the emotional education dimension, where families are obliged to provide assistance when children experience unpleasant events so that they feel valued as individuals. This successful incorporation of

spiritual, moral, and emotional dimensions ensures that the design of family education pursues not only intellectual intelligence, but also psychological stability and solid ethical integrity in the child.

Parenting Methodology and Creativity Stimulation Strategies

The most effective family education design uses authoritative or democratic parenting patterns (Shen, 2023; Levickis, 2023). This pattern is characterized by rational control, emotional warmth, and the provision of an open dialogue space for children to express their opinions. In contrast, rigid authoritarian parenting has been found to turn off self-confidence, while permissive patterns that are too free tend to lower children's self-control. This methodology is reinforced by the principle of active example, in which parents demonstrate good behavior that can be imitated directly rather than simply giving verbal instruction.

In addition to parenting styles, creative stimulation techniques were found through the learning by playing method and early literacy, such as the ritual of reading stories regularly from infancy and even from the womb (Wu, 2022; Friedman, 2023). The use of positive suggestions and the avoidance of physical punishment are also crucial methodological points, as physical punishment has more negative psychological effects and is often just an outpouring of uncontrollable parental emotions. Overall, this strategy places the family as a fun and caring environment, which naturally encourages the child to dare to explore his or her potential without fear.

Philosophical Reconstruction: Integration of the Concepts of "Pamong" and "Uswah" in Family Education Architecture

The revival of the essence of family education within this conceptual framework requires a profound philosophical reorientation regarding the position of parents. Based on the synthesis of findings, the design of family education should not be trapped in the dichotomy between meeting material needs and formal education alone, but should focus on the role of parents as "Pamong" or guides who maintain the purity of children's nature. In this architecture, parents are positioned as the center of moral gravity that performs the function of Ing Ngarsa Sung Tuladha, where every daily behavior becomes a much more effective teaching instrument than verbal instruction. This is in line with the concept of Uswah Hasanah in a spiritual perspective, which emphasizes that parents are a model of life that manifests noble values in everyday reality. Thus, the success of educational design at this level is highly dependent on the extent to which parents are able to integrate the role of intellectual teachers as well as spiritual guides (aqidah) consistently.

The operational element in the design of a resilient family education lies in the quality of emotional interaction and parenting applied (Wang, 2020; Erduran, 2019). This conceptual framework emphatically favors an authoritative parenting pattern based on partnership between parent and child, characterized by an open space for dialogue, emotional warmth, and rational control. In contrast to authoritarian patterns that tend to be repressive or permissive patterns that ignore boundaries, authoritative patterns have been shown to be able to produce individuals who are independent, have strong self-control, and are socially responsible. However, the biggest challenge in this design is the risk of "value confusion" in the event of behavioral inconsistencies in the household. When children see the difference between what is taught and what is practiced by their parents, the process of internalizing character will be hampered by internal conflicts. Therefore, strengthening socio-emotional aspects through empathy, positive

suggestions, and avoidance of physical punishment is a crucial strategy to build children's mental stability from an early age.

In the final stage, the sustainability of the family educational design should be reviewed through its interaction with the outside environment within the framework of the Education Tricentre. Family education will not achieve optimal effectiveness if it runs in isolation without synergy with schools and communities. This conceptual framework emphasizes the need for intensive and structured communication between the three pillars of education to ensure that the moral messages received by children are coherent and sustainable. Society as a broader social environment has a collective responsibility to provide a context that supports the practice of positive values, such as the culture of mutual cooperation and tolerance that has been instilled in the home. When all parties from families, teachers, to community leaders are able to collaborate harmoniously, then positive characters will be naturally and deeply embedded in students. This synergy will not only produce individuals with noble character, but also be the main key in building a civilization of a nation with high morals and integrity in the future.

DISCUSSION | مناقشة

The findings of this study indicate that the family has an important role as the main foundation in the development of children's character education. The literature research shows that the core objective of this study, which is to formulate an educational framework at the family level, has been achieved through the determination of three key elements: the function of parents as educators, aspects of the values taught, and the parenting methods applied. This shows that education in the context of the family should be understood not only as a domestic area, but as an initial pedagogical system that greatly influences the formation of children's character, spirituality, and social intelligence.

Scientifically, the great influence of the family in education can be understood because children go through the first stage of socialization at home, so the values received early in life tend to form the basis of personality. In this case, parents not only act as teachers, but also as real role models for children. The concept of "pamong" from Ki Hadjar Dewantara and "uswah" in Islamic education reinforces the view that exemplary is the most efficient mechanism in instilling value. Therefore, the success of character education at the next level is highly dependent on the quality of basic education provided in the family.

This finding is in accordance with the purpose of the research that aims to make the family the core in the reconstruction of moral education in the midst of various challenges of character degradation in modern society. While formal education focuses more on the cognitive aspect, the family actually offers a more in-depth affective learning environment through daily interactions. This study shows that the cultivation of faith, worship practices, honesty, discipline, and empathy is most successful when done consistently at home, because children gain knowledge through direct experience, not just from theoretical delivery.

The results of this study also explain that authoritative or democratic parenting methods are the most appropriate strategy in designing family education. Theoretically, this approach is effective because it combines rational control, compassion, and two-way communication, so that children can grow up in safe and directed conditions. In contrast to authoritarian approaches that emphasize obedience in the absence of dialogue, or permissive approaches that have low control, authoritative methods encourage the development of independence, a sense of responsibility, and emotional stability. Thus, the ideal family educational design requires a

balance between assertiveness and warmth as an essential condition for forming a positive character.

If we compare it with previous studies, these findings are in line with research conducted by Daniel et al. that highlight the important role of collaboration between families, educational institutions, and society in character building. This equation confirms that the family cannot function in isolation from other social contexts. However, this study makes a deeper conceptual contribution by presenting a philosophical blend between the concept of the Tricenter of Education Ki Hadjar Dewantara and values in Islamic education. This blend is unique because it creates a more comprehensive framework, not only in sociological aspects but also in spiritual aspects.

On the other hand, there are significant implications that suggest that a weak role of the family can lead to value chaos in children. The incompatibility between parental teachings, practices in schools, and social realities makes the process of moral internalization not go well. These findings reinforce the initial assumption that the decline in character among young generations is not only caused by school failure, but also by a reduced educational function in the family. In other words, educational institutions can only strengthen the character that has been instilled, not take over the fundamental role that the family has.

Theoretically, this study emphasizes that the role of the family is the main foundation in forming the perfect individual, both intellectually, morally, and spiritually. These results expand the view of current education that often focuses only on the academic side, by showing that the emotional and spiritual aspects actually have the strongest roots in the home environment. In the context of Islamic education, this reinforces the argument that the family functions as the first madrasah (al-madrasah al-ula) that influences the moral quality of future generations.

Practically, the results of this study have significant implications for policy development in the education sector. Character building programs need to focus not only on school, but must involve families as active collaborators. Parents should gain capacity building through parenting education, spiritual learning, and in-depth interaction with formal educational institutions. Without thorough planning, efforts to build character risk becoming half-hearted and unsustainable.

Overall, the study confirms that the effectiveness of character education depends largely on how strong the foundation of the family itself is. These findings reinforce that the role of parents as educators, role models, and spiritual guides is an irreplaceable factor in the educational process. Thus, the design of education at the family level is not only vital as an initial phase of child development, but also as the main determinant in creating a generation with integrity, morality, and readiness to face social challenges in the future.

CONCLUSSION | خاتمة

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that have been presented, it can be concluded that the conceptual framework of educational design at the family level must be positioned as the main foundation and center of gravity in the formation of students' personalities and morals. The family is the most basic educational environment, where the educational results obtained at this level will determine the success of the child's next educational process, both at school and in the community. Effective family education design integrates three main pillars, namely the role of parents as guides (pamong) and role models

(uswah), materials that cover spiritual, moral, and socio-emotional dimensions in their entirety, and the use of authoritative parenting methodologies based on compassion and open dialogue. Parents hold a collective responsibility to not only meet physical needs, but also maintain the sanctity of their children's nature through habituating noble values such as honesty, discipline, and empathy in consistent daily interactions.

This research also confirms that the success of family education design is highly dependent on the synergy and consistency of moral messages within the Tricenter of Education ecosystem, which includes families, schools, and communities. The lack of communication and coordination between the three environments can trigger confusion of values in children, which ultimately hinders the stability of their character development. Therefore, intensive cooperation and collective awareness are needed so that character education is not only imposed on one party. Overall, a solid family education design is the main key in producing individuals with noble character and building a nation's civilization that is moral, with integrity, and ready to face the challenges of the times with a strong foundation of values.

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