

Ants as a Character Learning Media from a Qur'an and Hadith Perspective

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Abstract. A teaching and learning activity not only requires the right method but also requires interesting learning media so that the learning process becomes interesting and the learning objectives can be achieved well. Learning media is every object that can be felt and seen by students. One of the learning media that is very close to human daily life is ants. A small animal whose name has been immortalized by Allah in the Qur'an. In this case, of course, the author wants to reveal that ants can be used as a medium for character learning. This article was written based on research that the author found through a hermeneutical approach to the nature of library research. The analysis that the author uses in this research is an analysis of the text and meaning contained in the reading that the author uses, in which case the author uses texts from the Qur'an and Hadith. Based on research conducted by the author, the author found that ants are animals that have a religious, unselfish, and honest character. This can of course be used to instill character and morals in students.

Keywords: Learning Media; Character; Quran Hadith

Introduction

The goal of education is to mold students into intelligent and good human beings or to make them smart in their actions. Essentially, training students to become intelligent individuals is a simple process. It is, however, extremely different from training kids to become decent and sensible citizens in everyday life. Especially in this day and age,

when technology has extended to every corner of the globe. News in any form is easily accessible. Not to mention the spectacle that serves as a teaching tool for the youngsters who watch it. As a result, it is only reasonable that character education should be undertaken in the field of education, wherever and whenever possible.¹

The mainstream media has recently widely reported on the prevalence of bullying in this country. According to reports, the offenders were students, whereas the victims were educators or instructors themselves. This leads to the conclusion that aspects are lacking or perhaps absent in the realm of education, notably character or moral education. Because today's education places a premium on information above character and moral education.²

Problems with character or morals have actually existed since ancient times, before the prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent to mankind. As he said ﷺ in a hadith:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

Meaning: "Indeed, I was sent to perfect good morals." (HR. Ahmad).³

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the highest form of beauty of character or morals. Therefore, it is appropriate as educators to use the figure of the prophet Muhammad ﷺ as an example of virtuous character. This is as stated in the holy book Al-Qur'an in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 21:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Meaning: "Indeed, there is (in) the Messenger of Allah a good role model for you (namely) for those who hope for (the mercy of) Allah and (the coming of) the Day of Judgment and who remember Allah a lot."

¹ Ajat Sudrajat, "Mengapa Pendidikan Karakter," *Pendidikan Karakter* 1, no. 1 (2011), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v1i1.1316>.

² Umum Budi Karyanto, "Pendidikan Karakter: Sebuah Visi Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin," *Edukasia Islamika* 2, no. 2 (2017): 191, <https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v2i2.1668>.

³ Miftah Mucharomah, "Kisah Sebagai Metode Pendidikan Akhlak Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an," *Edukasia Islamika* 2, no. 1 (2017): 146, <https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v2i1.1666>.

A people's success is mostly determined by the character or morality that its people possess. People will be excellent and successful if it is good. If it is the other way around, then only disaster awaits you.⁴ They are the best generation on Earth, just as the individuals who lived during the prophet's lifetime, or what is often known as the generation of friends because they use the prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a role model and a medium for character learning in their daily lives.

Because students want more experience and real proof in their learning process while studying character or morality. The learning methods, tools, and material utilized in the learning process can aid with this.⁵ If the prophet was a learning medium for the friends, then the Al-Qur'an is a learning medium for them now. Apart from reflecting the principles of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Al-Qur'an is also the source of all knowledge in this world.

Every passage in the Qur'an has a lesson to be taught, and there are scientific sources that may be employed in daily life. According to Allah Ta'ala's word:

فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ

Meaning: "So take (the incident) as a lesson, O people who have insight." (QS: Al-Hasyr:2).

In another verse Allah also says:

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً

Meaning: "And indeed in this livestock, there is a lesson for you." (QS: An-Nahl: 66)

There are several animals mentioned by Allah in the Qur'an, some of which are even employed as letter names. Ants, little animals that are quite near to human life, are one of them. Even if it is minor,

⁴ Mucharomah.

⁵ Erwin Widiasworo, *Strategi Pembelajaran Edutainment Berbasis Karakter* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2018).

Allah never produces something without a purpose and reason for doing so.⁶

Starting with the importance of character education, especially in today's world, one of the most essential components of the learning process is learning media, which acts as an intermediary in delivering information; in this case, the media that serves as the reference source is ants. So, based on the description above, the author is interested in using the library research technique to explore ants as a medium for character learning from the standpoint of the Qur'an and Hadith.

The author then employs a hermeneutical technique to examine the implied meaning of a text to further enhance this investigation.⁷ The author used various scriptures from the Qur'an and Hadith in this study.

Discussion of the Findings

Character and Morals are Important

Islam is a religion that takes into account all elements of daily life. This comprises components of character or morality that shape a person's character. If it is good, the people will be prosperous for a long period. If not, it is simply a matter of time before it collapses and is destroyed. This was expressed by Arab poet Syauqy Beik in a poem, which means: "Indeed, the success of a people is based on its character and morals." People will be ruined if their character and values are destroyed.⁸

⁶ Nashir bin Sulaiman Al-Umar, *Beguru Kepada Semut* (Solo: At-Tibyan, n.d.).

⁷ Elok Noor Farida Kusrini, "Studi Islam Pendekatan Hermeneutik," *Jurnal Penelitian*, Vol. 7, No. 2, no. 2 (2013): 381–404, <https://journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/jurnalPenelitian/article/download/820/787>.

⁸ Mucharomah, "Kisah Sebagai Metode Pendidikan Akhlak Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an."

Good character may be perceived via three lenses: knowledge of good things, love of good things, and executing good acts. These three lenses cannot be separated.⁹

The foundation of Muslim education is good character and values. As the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ remarked in a hadith, "The best people among you are those who have good morals." Bukhari, HR. The Prophet then added in another hadith that every human being with excellent morals and character will be given a noble place and rank in the hereafter, as reported by Thabrani.¹⁰

To attain the desired character, there must be both information transfer and value transfer activities, both of which must be present in the learning process. With the expectation that students would be able to apply what educators have taught them during their learning process.¹¹

The learning process is a collaborative educational interaction between instructors and students to attain a learning goal. At least two critical components of learning cannot be separated: instructors and students.¹²

The learning objectives are then separated into three categories, according to Bloom's opinion: cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor.¹³ In other words, learning objectives are an educator's attempt to provide

⁹ Fihris, "Model Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Homestay Di SDIT Cahaya Bangsa Semarang," *Edukasia Islamika* 3, no. 2 (2018): 131, <https://doi.org/10.28918/jei.v3i2.1684>.

¹⁰ Mucharomah, "Kisah Sebagai Metode Pendidikan Akhlak Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an."

¹¹ Uninsu Admin, "Pendidik Tak Cukup Sekedar Transfer of Knowledge, Apa Lainnya?," 15 Agustus, 2016, <https://ftk.unisnu.ac.id/pendidik-tak-cukup-sekedar-transfer-of-knowledge-apa-lainnya>.

¹² Muldiyana Nugraha, "Manajemen Kelas Dalam Meningkatkan Proses Pembelajaran," *Tarbawi* 4, no. 1 (2018): 27–44, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32678/tarbawi.v4i01.1769>.

¹³ S Nasution, *Berbagai Pendekatan Dalam Proses Belajar Mengajar* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1998).

students with intellectual ability, moral knowledge, and skills that will lead them to beneficial outcomes.¹⁴

There is a Need for Learning Media

There are usually several supporting aspects and components in carrying out any process or attempt. Similarly, various components work together to fulfill the learning objectives, such as instructors, students, resources, techniques, media, and assessment.

Aside from the correct approach, the right media is also required in presenting learning information so that it does not look uninteresting. Because learning media serves as a bridge between the message that instructors seek to impart to students and the learning process that occurs inside the students themselves.¹⁵

Another point of view holds that learning media is an object that can be sensed by students' five senses, particularly sound and sight, and can be found inside or outdoors.¹⁶

Then there is a passage in the Qur'an itself that explains the usage of learning media in the teaching and learning process, namely:

بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ ۗ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Meaning: "Remarks (miracles) and books. And we have sent down to you the Qur'an, so that you may explain to mankind what has been revealed to them and that they may think about it." (QS. An-Nahl: 44)

According to the passage above, Allah bestowed miracles and revealed books to the prophets as a channel of learning for his people. Miracles allow the prophet's followers to realize what lessons may be

¹⁴ Azwan Zain dan Syaiful Bahari Djamarah, *Strategi Belajar Mengajar* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2013).

¹⁵ Asnawir dan M. Basyiruddin Usman, *Media Pembelajaran*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Ciputat Pers, 2002).

¹⁶ Zakiyah Darajat, *Metode Khusus Pengajaran Agama Islam* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1995).

taught. The books that were revealed allowed the prophet's people to hear the message that the prophet wished to communicate in his preaching while also educating his people.

Learning media play a vital role in the teaching and learning process by (1) offering more experience, (2) being more cost-effective, (3) enhancing student concentration, (4) incorporating the five senses in the learning process, and (5) decreasing disparities in perception across participants.¹⁷

The Characteristics of Ant

Ants are tiny creatures whose existence is sometimes overlooked in ordinary life. In reality, Allah has taught a lesson by making little ants, since Allah does not create something unless there is a reason for it. According to Allah Ta'ala in the Al-Qur'an:

أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ، ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ

Meaning: "(Rabb) who has given each thing a form of occurrence, then gives it guidance." (QS. Thahaa: 50)¹⁸

1. Among the lessons that may be drawn from ant life is their character. If people are prepared to study and copy the characteristics of ants, excellent character and morality will undoubtedly be developed in every human being.
2. Some ant characters that can be emulated and used as lessons in character learning are:
 1. Ants are animals that always praise Allah. This is as the prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "An ant once bit one of the prophets, and he immediately ordered (his subordinates) to go to the village (inhabited by) the ants, then burn the village. Then Allah revealed a revelation to the prophet, "Is it because an ant bit you

¹⁷ Usman, *Media Pembelajaran*.

¹⁸ Al-Umar, *Beguru Kepada Semut*.

that you destroyed one of the people who always praised (Me)? Why don't you just kill one ant?"¹⁹

According to the hadith above, ants are extremely pious creatures of Allah. Isn't this a great persona to look up to and emulate in real life? The purpose of character education is to develop religious students into characters.

Then in the Qur'an Allah says:

وَأَنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ ۗ وَلَكِنَّ لَّا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ

Meaning: "And there is nothing but glorification by praising Him, but you do not understand their tasbih." (QS. Al-Isra: 44)²⁰

3. Ants are trustworthy and selfless creatures. Ibn Al-Qayyim related this anecdote in his work, Miftaahu Daari As-Sa'adah. According to the story, there was a guy carrying sweets, and after a time, an ant appeared, but an ant is not a selfish animal that wants to enjoy what it obtains for itself. Then he approached another ant and informed him that there were sweets nearby.

The ants who had heard the news went to the sweets shop that the ants had informed them about. However, when additional ants arrived, the guy lifted the sweets from their original location, ensuring that the ants who arrived did not find what they were seeking.

And the ant that broke the news was pensive and silent in that spot for a long time. It gives him the impression that he has lied to his other pals and that he has been called a liar.

The man then replaced the goodies. That is exactly what occurred three times. And when this ant delivered false news three times in a row, all the ants around him encircled him and tore his body to shreds because if you do the same thing three times, you might be accused of lying. Maybe he's incorrect the first time, maybe he's wrong the second

¹⁹ Al-Umar.

²⁰ Al-Umar.

time, but the third time, he's a liar, and ant society does not forgive this crime.

The character lessons that can be taken from the story above are not being selfish and honest are the two characters that educators must instill in their students. In fact, Islam itself has taught us not to be selfish and honest in our behavior. As Allah Ta'ala says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

Meaning: "O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak the right words." (QS. Al-Ahzab:70)

Honest words can be used to infer true words. Under no circumstances should you lie. Because the verse above is a commandment to always tell the truth. The prophet then stated in a hadith:

عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ ، فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ ، وَمَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَصْدُقُ وَيَتَحَرَّى الصِّدْقَ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ صِدْقًا

Meaning: You should always behave honestly because honesty will lead you to the path of goodness, and goodness will lead you to heaven (HR. Bukhari)²¹

Then in another verse Allah says:

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ

Meaning: "And do not turn your face away from people (out of pride) and do not walk on the earth arrogantly. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are arrogant and boast." (QS. Luqman: 18)²²

²¹ Yazid bin Abdul Qadir Jawas, "Berkata Benar (Jujur) Dan Jangan Dusta (Bohong)," almanhaj, accessed June 21, 2023, <https://almanhaj.or.id/12601-berkata-benar-jujur-dan-jangan-dusta-bohong-2.html>.

²² TafsirWeb, "Tafsir Surah Al-Luqman," accessed June 21, 2023, <https://tafsirweb.com/7502-surat-luqman-ayat-18.html>.

According to the passages above, there is a ban against being selfish and haughty toward other human beings because humans are social animals that require friends to grow and become decent people.

Conclusion

A people's growth is measured by its ability to educate character and morality. transmission of information and transmission of values are required in the action of instilling character. Of course, this action necessitates a procedure known as the learning process.

Learning media, which allows instructors to communicate with students, is one of the most significant aspects of learning. In this study, the author looks at a little animal, an ant, to see whether it may be used as a learning tool. According to the findings of this study, ants are a viable medium for character development. Several passages of the Koran and hadiths of the Prophet demonstrate that ants are devout, selfless, and kind animals with honest character.

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