

# Strengthening of Students' Solidarity Character Education in the Digital Era Through Islamic Individual Building for Junior Students

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**Abstract:** Education has an important role in building students' solidarity character in faced technology and information development. This research attempted to analyze the solidarity characteristic strengthening concept as an effort to overcome the negative impact of information and technology development in the digital era toward junior high school students through Islamic Individual Building in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta. This research applied a qualitative research design namely case study for grades seven and eight. Based on the analysis result of the interview, observation, and documentation study, it was found that the activity of Islamic Individual Building as an effort to strengthen the students' solidarity character done by SMPIT Nur Hidayah applied peer approach under teacher's guidance. The method used was mentoring group discussion which emphasized the forming of social caring behavior, respecting others and good teamwork. The students' mentoring group was created at each grade guided by the teacher. The students' mentoring grouping was done randomly based on the test result, spoken or written.

**Keywords:** *character education, solidarity, students, digital era, Islamic individual building*

## INTRODUCTION

Recent research shows that the usage of digital media in teenagers adding problem faced by them, strengthening the problem, and giving new chances in creating a new problem for them (Roehl, Amy; Stewart, Alyssa Humphries, 2018). In the view of psychological growth, according to Calvary.R.Diggs and Patrick Akos (2016:1), the growing phase of 11 up to 14-year-old teenagers are the changing phase of reasoning, social cognition, and in-dependency behavior. It is signed by the emotionally psychological condition, which means they are eager to take high-risk choices without thinking about the impact. It becomes the challenge for Indonesia as the fourth biggest nation in the world by having 237.647.326 as its population (Statistic Center Bureau 2010), in which 32.28 % of them are teenagers (Statistic Center Bureau 2011).

One of the reasons causing the teens using social media and other features is the options' features provided by smart-phone. The main function of a smart-phone, which is a communication tool, is shaped into an inseparable tool of human daily activity; since looking for friends, shopping, enjoying leisure time, or using the gadget for finance. (Penjira Kanthawongs and friends; 2016: 339). According to Yulianti (2018), besides offering easiness on various human's daily activity, the development of technology risks the children to separate from good values which live in society.

The use of the gadget, in the form of a smart-phone, by teenagers must be taught with character education and guided by parents and teachers. One important guidance that should be taught to them is the students' solidarity character building. As solidarity character is one of the solutions to face the development of science and technology, they need to have the right understanding of solidarity. The character building of solidarity is important and needed to be

taught to the students as early as possible to avoid them from the negative impact of the use of smart-phone or another gadget, so that they can use it wisely (Bill Joy, 2000).

According to Suyatno (2014: 3 - 4) Islamic educational institution in Indonesia is a modern educational institution which based on religion as students' morale building to counter the negative impact of the technology development; such as: teenage delinquency, drugs, and brawling. One of the educational ways in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta to build characteristic and moral awareness is the Islamic Individual Building in the form of Islamic mentoring. According to Rusmiyati, and friends (2003: 14), Islamic mentoring is the activity to guide the students which are done periodically by using the friend-of-the-same-age approach, so that in the implementation of this activity becoming more interesting and effective, toward creating students' Islamic personality and character. Based on those statements, the writer was eager to research the concept of character education in SMP Islam Terpadu Nur Hidayah Surakarta in their way to strengthen character education toward their students in the digital era.

## METHOD

This research was qualitative research by the case study. According to Myers (2001) study case research is research by observing the real fact and events, and the researcher attempts to learn the problems related to its context. In this research, the data were collected by interviewing methods to look for the data connected to the implementation of Islamic Individual Building from class teachers, counseling guidance teachers, and students. The observation method was conducted to observe and learn directly students' activity of Islamic Individual Building which is related to solidarity characteristic strengthening in the digital era in SMPIT Nur Hidayah. The documentation method was conducted to gain the data about the general description of the implementation of Islamic Individual Building in strengthening students' character building in the digital era through school's vision, mission, and quality standard '*standar mutu*' of Islamic Individual Building SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta. The sources of the data were teachers and the students of the seventh and eighth grade of SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta.

Based on the explanation above, this research was aimed to construct data based on character building's problem which is students' solidarity character through Islamic Individual Building to face the digital era conducted in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta. Later on, the obtained data were analyzed and interpreted until the theories about character education model in Islamic school in increasing students' solidarity behavior in facing digital era were found.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The planting of solidarity characteristic value in SMP IT Nur Hidayah is done through strengthening Islamic values taught in Islamic Individual Building activity. The activity of the Islamic Individual Building (IIB) in SMP IT Nur Hidayah is a mandatory activity that must be participated by all students.

"... by creating the mentoring group, so they have their own more intense groups. Through the Islamic Individual Building activity (it is hoped) strengthening the solidarity value..." (Counseling Teacher; 4th May 2019).

This activity is constructed formally in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta's curriculum. The IIB activity is designed to be several groups. The group deciding was based on the school entering the test. The test covers the result of the written test (national exam score), Islamic knowledge, oral test (psychological test), memorizing the Qur'an and interview test.

Based on the test, students are divided into several groups. The groups consist of various classes, chosen randomly, without considering their classes. The main aim of this random grouping and based on their test score is to the students having better social ability and not depending on their classmates. The activity of the Islamic Individual Building is done once a week.

"....the activity of Islamic Individual Building or mentoring was done every Friday for the seventh graders and Monday for the eighth graders..." (Guru BPI; 13 Oktober 2018).

To plant the solidarity values, school and teachers try to create various activities which strengthen solidarity values and obtain the standard of graduation achievement. The implementation of the Islamic Individual Building was done by dividing the graduation standard level. Each group level has similar graduation standard, but it has different competencies achievements (JSIT, 2010). The deciding of each group level was based on written and oral tests. The graduation standards are :

**Table 1.** Graduation Standard of Islamic Individual Building.

Graduation Standard	Competency
Having a mature personality, noble character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having spirit toward the family</li> <li>- Having spirit toward the religion</li> <li>- Not cutting others' saying</li> <li>- Not mocking by any sign</li> <li>- Not teasing and mocking others</li> <li>- Loving the younger</li> <li>- Respecting the older</li> <li>- Keeping the sight</li> <li>- Keeping secret</li> <li>- Loving to be generous</li> <li>- Not prohibiting others' right</li> <li>- Improving outfit</li> </ul>

Integrated Islamic Junior High School Nur Hidayah Surakarta in its way to attempt the obtaining of graduation standard of Islamic Individual Building as the strengthening solidarity character values design various activities that must be joined by all students. The activity was done by using various activities; such as games, hiking, discussion, and tutorial. The aim of Islamic Individual Building which is related to the improvement of solidarity value awareness in Islamic mentoring in SMP IT Nur Hidayah is *nafi'un lighoirihi* or giving benefits to others. It is as stated by Hasan Alwi (2005:1082) that solidarity is the feeling of having the same solidarity, having one destiny, the solidarity among the members' are needed.

Solidarity character values are important to be planted as early as possible because it can bet the counter of the negative impact of the development of technology; such as egoist, individualist, and caring-less to others. It is as stated by the students who feel the positive impact of the Islamic Individual Building in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta.

"... the activity of Islamic Individual Building trains us to be a better person. For example, in every meeting our activities are checked; such as shalat, study, reciting Al-Qur'an. We can learn more from our mentor" (Student, Ferel; 1 August 2018).

"It is good to shape and build students' character and personality. It also tightens the relationship between the students and mentor " (Student, Risal; 1 August 2018).

**Table 2.** The Activity of Students' Islamic Individual Building in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta

No	Activity	Achievement
1	An Overnight Stay for Recharging Faith I	Students become more excited about learning and praying, proven by doing learning and praying independently and orderly.
2	An Overnight Stay for Recharging Faith II	Students can understand <i>iman</i> (faith) and Islam correctly and can apply it in daily life
3	An Overnight Stay for Recharging Faith III	Students can fulfill the criteria of the good teenage of Islam who can give a good example in daily life, preparing themselves to fix the nation and knowing the way to manage the time based on scale-priority.
4	' <i>Daurah</i> ' and ' <i>tasqif</i> '	Students know the Islamic characters well and can imitate them and apply their good deeds in daily life.
5	Weekly group routine activity	The weekly activity aims to deliver the material of Islamic Individual Building and students can understand the material delivered by the teacher.

All mentioned above is corresponding to the book titled "*Al Madkhal li Ma'rifatil Islam*" (The Entrance to Know Islam). It is a book containing a character-building concept written by Yusuf Qardawi. Yusuf Qardawi (2010: 102) stated that "there are seven characteristics of Muslim people inspired character education. Those seven characteristics become the main cause that Islam, as a religion, is adaptable to the development of technology and science. Those seven characteristics are:

#### *Rabbaniyah (true servanthood)*

It means that Islam is a religion revealed by Allah so that a Muslim must declare Allah SWT as Rabb (Lord) with all His commandment and prohibition. So, a Muslim has a *Rabbani* characteristic which is based on values sourced from Allah. As mentioned in Surah Ali Imran (3) verse 79 "It is not for a human [prophet] that Allah should give him the Scripture and authority and prophethood and then he would say to the people, "Be servants to me rather than Allah," but [instead, he would say], "Be *Rabbani* (pious scholars of the Lord) because of what you have taught of the Scripture and because of what you have studied."

#### *'Insaniyah' (humanity)*

Islam is a religion descended for humans so that Islam is not conflicted with *fitrah* (human's basic). Human has interest in wealth, power, women, and all others life-enjoyment. All of those interest is bordered with the rules in Islam. As like, the interest of having fun can be transferred into *rihlah* (traveling) activity which can strengthen the harmonization of his life and his environment.

#### *Syumuliyah (complete)*

Islam is a complete religion. It means that Islam is a religion that gives the rules for its believers about life in this world and hereafter-life. Moreover, Islam gives human guidance for all activities from getting up until going to bed.

### *Al- Waqi'iyah (reality)*

Islam is a wherever-and-whenever applicable religion. It can implement in daily life. It can be applied by all people from different backgrounds. It can be applied in all eras.

### *Wasathiyyah (moderate)*

Islamic concept talks about the love toward Allah and the world at the same time. Islam not only discusses the current life in this world but also the hereafter life. It doesn't omit the rich class, but it doesn't ignore the poor class. It means that as a Muslim it is a must to run the world well and fair, but it is a must also to prepare the hereafter life.

### *Wudhu (obvious)*

The source of Islamic values is obvious. It also has a clear rule in its decision making and authority. The concept of worship, social, marriage, heir, politic, and other human relations things are ruled in Islam. As a Muslim, it is a must to plant and do all Islamic teaching well and constantly.

### *"AlJam'u Biana Ats Tsabat wa Al Muruunah" (the combination between stable and flexible).*

Stable means that there are several unchangeable teachings in Islam, as the five-time daily prayer must be done. But, it is also containing some flexible aspects too. It is like the implementation, when we are sick it is permitted to take prayer by sitting or laying. It means that as Muslim it is a must to do all Allah's commandments and avoid all His prohibitions. Though, there are several dispensations (*ruksah*) in the implementation of Allah's law.

All mentioned above is in line with Thomas Lickona's statement (2012, 11) that the character education has three main elements which are knowing the good, desiring the good and doing the good. A good character covers the knowledge about the good, then from the knowledge, it will create an intention to do the good, and finally doing the goodness which was intended. Thomas Lickona (2012: 51) also stated that character is related to the concepts of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior.

The development of technology occurred in this era brings an aesthetic change (object). In the end, the development cannot be seen as the changing of its function only but also becoming life style (Rulli, 2012: 22). According to Ribble (2008) as the part of network-citizen, we have to have several characteristics: such as caring to others, empathy, and applying good norm and ethics in our society related to technology, responsibility, and showing positive behavior as a good technology used for the learning activities or other useful activities.

To shape a network-citizen who cares to others and has a good ethic, school as the center of children's education must be able to form students' characters well, especially solidarity character as the solution to face the impact of technology development. Character, terminologically, comes from Greek "karasso" which means basic format (Doni Koesoema, 2012:55). Character in *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Dictionary) means psychological traits, morals, or quality that differs one to others. Abdul Majid (2012: 12) character is temperament, trait or things that having basic traits on everyone.

Solidarity character building in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta focuses on the activity of the Islamic Individual Building which done with the mentoring method. This activity designed to be done in various acts which can stimulate students' caring toward others, respecting others, and

good team-works. The solidarity is the feeling of having the same solidarity, having one destiny, the solidarity among the members are needed. (Hasan Alwi, 2005:1082). It is similar to Nasution (2009:3) that solidarity is the feeling which morally exists to fulfill the hopes, as the basic cause of it includes caring, responsibility, and cooperation.

It is also stated by Mochtar Buchori (2001:108-109), if the students are prepared to be a person who has social-solidarity, there are three things should be taught, namely: 1) the awareness to have to understand the borders of individual freedom toward others, 2) the ability to know and make use of chance by improving social and life skills, and 3) throw all prejudice to others away.

The enforcement of Islamic Individual Building as the activity to plant students' solidarity values of SMP IT Nur Hidayah relates to the elements of character education as delivered by Ali Muhdi Amnr (2007:82) there are four elements character education suggested by UNESCO, namely 1) *learn to know*, 2) *learn to do*, 3) *learn to be*, dan 4) *learn to live together*. The first, second, and third elements are more focused on creating humans resources who have good ability in cognitive, behavior, and skill. While the fourth element is more aimed at the character-building related to the mutual benefit; as honesty, responsibility, solidarity, cooperation, etc.

All mentioned above is line with the seven main and essential elements character that must be planted to the pupils, as stated by Thomas Lickona, (2012: 5), namely: (1) Honesty, (2) compassion, (3) courage, (4) kindness, (5) self-control, (6) cooperation, (7) diligence or hard work. If it is analyzed, ll those seven essential characters delivered by Thomas Lickona are fitted the character developed in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta through Islamic Individual Building.

Solidarity character education as a solution to overcome the negative influence of technology and information becomes urgently applied thing. It is as stated by Gerzon (2010) by the existence of a globalization system affecting in the forming of the egocentric citizen, idiocentric citizen, socio-centric citizen, multicentric citizen, and geocentric citizen. It is caused by the use of the internet in various use which is done constantly can affect students' daily life, as a negative impact on students' socio-academic development in school (Demetrovic and Graffiths, 2012).

The involving of the development of technology in our daily life, like the internet, can give an addictive impact for us, humans. The internet addiction can appear in the form of the addiction in using all digital activities, such as using social network to find friends, sharing information, and playing game (Emre Cam & Onur Isbulan, 2012) Islamic Individual Building as the mentoring activity between teachers and students becomes the media of solidarity character planting in digital era. It is correspondent to the result of the research done by Kiran Esen & Gundogdu (2010) that the internet addiction in teenagers can be decreased if the pressure from same-age friends lowered and the support from teachers and family for them leveled up.

## CONCLUSIONS

The development of technology, in the form of internet and smartphone, creates an addiction for teenagers. Moreover, it may cause behavior, emotional, and anxiety problems for them. The activity of the Islamic Individual Building in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta is the mentoring activity guided by a teacher which is aimed to build students' character, especially students' solidarity character corresponding to Islamic values and teaching. It is in line with the goal of education which is helping pupils become smart and good people. Islamic Individual Building

as a character education method in SMP IT Nur Hidayah is done to plant the students' moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior. This character education plants good habits toward the students. So, they can understand, love the good, and do the goodness. Islamic Individual Building is conducted to improve the social care attitude, good cooperation, and appreciating others as an important character and it is needed to be planted as early as possible on the students to face the negative impact of the development of technology.

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