



Integrating Islamic YouTube Media in Character Education: A Case Study at MI Ihyaussunnah

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Abstract:

This study is motivated by the importance of character education for elementary school students in the digital era, where social media and digital platforms such as YouTube are not only used for entertainment but can also serve as a medium for character education. The study aims to describe the use of Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education at MI Ihyaussunnah and to analyze its role in supporting the development of students' character. A qualitative approach with a descriptive method was employed. The research subjects consisted of one classroom teacher and five students as supporting informants. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive qualitative analysis based on Miles and Huberman's model (1994, 2nd edition), including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings indicate that the use of Islamic YouTube helps teachers instill character values in students through content that conveys moral messages and Islamic behaviors. Activities such as watching videos, retelling the video content, and reinforcement and advice from teachers help students understand good behaviors, such as honesty, respecting teachers and parents, helping others, and performing religious practices more diligently. These findings suggest that Islamic YouTube serves as an effective medium for character education, supporting students' understanding of moral values and positive behavior within the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah environment.

Keywords: Islamic YouTube, character education, student character development, digital learning media

Article info: Submitted : 2026-05-10 | Accepted : 2026-06-06 | Published : 2026-06-11

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How to Cite :

Introduction

The development of digital technology in the modern era has brought significant changes to the field of education, particularly in the learning process at elementary schools (Ariza & Afifah, 2024). The presence of digital media such as YouTube is no longer used solely for entertainment but has begun to be utilized as a learning medium capable of enhancing students' attention and learning interest (Arham, 2020). Elementary school children tend to be more interested in audiovisual-based learning because the material is presented in a more interactive, engaging, and easily understandable manner. This situation encourages teachers to

utilize digital media as a more innovative learning tool, including for character education and religious values (Mihrajuddin & Muqowwim, n.d.).

Character education has become one of the key focuses in elementary education because character serves as the main foundation for the development of children's behavior and morality (Rahayu, 2019). Schools are not only responsible for providing academic knowledge but also have the duty to instill religious values, discipline, honesty, politeness, and social responsibility in students. (Eryandi, 2023). However, the current development of digital technology also presents new challenges, as children increasingly access social media and digital platforms without adequate supervision. (Fitriani, 2025). If not properly guided, the use of digital media can have a negative impact on children's behavior. (Yulistian et al., 2023). Therefore, the utilization of digital media that is educational and carries positive values is necessary as an alternative for character education in elementary schools. (Gunawan, 2024).

Several previous studies have shown that audiovisual media have a positive contribution to the learning process (Hudri & Umam, 2022). Rahmawati's study explains that the use of YouTube-based learning videos can increase elementary school students' learning interest because the material is presented in an engaging and easily understandable manner. (Oktavia & Rahmawati, 2021). Rahman and Nugroho's study shows that Islamic animation videos are effective in teaching children moral and character education because students can more easily understand the messages through visual stories and animated characters. (Rahman et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Arham's study can assist teachers in instilling religious values and positive behaviors in elementary school students. (Arham, 2020).

Although previous studies have discussed the use of YouTube and audiovisual media in learning, most of the research still focuses on improving learning outcomes, learning motivation, and learning media in general. Research on the use of Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education, involving activities such as retelling video content and moral value reinforcement by teachers, is still relatively limited, particularly at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level (Ihsan et al., 2019). This situation indicates a gap between previous studies and the current conditions observed in the field. In earlier research, YouTube was primarily used as a tool for delivering learning material, whereas at MI Ihyaussunnah, Islamic YouTube is routinely utilized as a medium for character development through stages such as watching videos, retelling video content, and receiving guidance and character reinforcement from teachers.

Based on observations conducted at MI Ihyaussunnah, there is a routine activity every Thursday involving the screening of Islamic YouTube videos for students in the classroom. The videos shown include Islamic animations, stories of the prophets, and videos about good behavior in daily life. After watching the videos, students are asked to retell the content they have understood. The teacher then provides explanations and reinforces the character values presented in the videos. According to interviews with

the teacher, the use of Islamic YouTube videos is implemented to help students understand religious values and character education in a more engaging and easily comprehensible manner. The teacher also reported that students appear more active, enthusiastic, and better able to grasp moral messages when learning with video media compared to traditional lecture methods.

Interviews with students indicated that they were able to understand the moral messages from the videos they watched and began to demonstrate positive responses to character values, such as helping their parents, being honest, apologizing when making mistakes, showing more respect to teachers, and being more diligent in performing religious practices. These findings suggest that Islamic YouTube is not only a source of entertainment but can also be utilized as a medium for character education for elementary school students.

Based on the above discussion, this study is important to examine how Islamic YouTube is utilized as a medium for character education at MI Ihyaussunnah and its role in supporting the development of students' character. The study aims to describe the process of using Islamic YouTube in character education and to analyze students' responses to this learning. The novelty of this research lies in its focus not only on the use of YouTube as a learning medium but also on examining the process of character development through activities such as retelling video content and reinforcing moral values by teachers after the video screening. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to the development of digital-based character education media in elementary school settings, particularly in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to understand and describe in depth the process of using Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education at MI Ihyaussunnah. Qualitative research allows the researcher to collect data on learning activities, students' responses, and the role of teachers in instilling character values through Islamic video media. According to Creswell (2017), qualitative research is used to understand a social phenomenon based on the experiences and meanings provided by participants in their natural context. (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The descriptive method is used to systematically illustrate the learning process occurring in the classroom, ranging from activities such as screening Islamic YouTube videos, students retelling the video content, to teachers providing advice and character reinforcement. This study also focuses on students' experiences and responses to the use of Islamic video-based learning media in classroom character education activities.

Participants

This study was conducted at MI Ihyaussunnah in early April 2026. The research subjects consisted of one classroom teacher as the primary informant and five students as supporting informants. The researcher also conducted observations of an entire class to examine the character education process through the screening of Islamic YouTube videos.

The selection of five students as supporting informants was conducted using purposive sampling based on the classroom teacher's recommendation. Purposive sampling was employed because the researcher needed informants who were considered capable of providing information relevant to the focus of the study. These five students were selected based on specific criteria, namely students who actively participated in learning activities, responded cheerfully to classroom activities, and were frequently able to understand and retell the video content after the video screening. In addition, the selection of informants also took into account the diversity of student characteristics, such as the level of participation, communication skills, and enthusiasm in engaging in learning activities. This consideration was made to ensure that the data obtained would be richer, more relevant, and better represent the students' experiences in a more diverse manner.

The data used in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through direct observations and interviews with teachers and students regarding the use of Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education. Secondary data were obtained from documentation of learning activities, activity photos, observation notes, and references related to digital learning media and character education.

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

The research data were collected using several techniques, namely observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly examine the character education process through the screening of Islamic YouTube videos in the classroom. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher as the primary informant and five students as supporting informants to obtain information regarding the purpose of using the media, students' responses, and their understanding of the character values conveyed in the videos. Documentation, including photographs, field notes, and other supporting materials, was used to reinforce the observational and interview data.

Data collection was conducted in early April 2026. Observations were carried out three times during the video screening activities. Semi-structured interviews with the classroom teacher and five students were conducted on April 2, 2026. Documentation was carried out throughout the data collection process to ensure that every activity could be thoroughly analyzed. The information obtained from these

three techniques was then used for data triangulation to ensure consistency of findings between observations, interviews, and documentation.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study employed qualitative descriptive analysis. The analysis referred to Miles and Huberman's model (1994, 2nd edition), which includes three stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions or verification (Miles, 1994).

In the data reduction stage, the researcher selected, simplified, and focused on data relevant to the use of Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education. Data that was not directly related to the focus of the study was excluded from the analysis. In the data display stage, the reduced data was organized into descriptive narratives to facilitate understanding and analysis. In the conclusion drawing stage, the researcher interpreted the data from observations, interviews, and documentation to explain the process of using Islamic YouTube and the students' responses to the character education activities.

In the data processing stage, the researcher used Microsoft Word to compile interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation results. Subsequently, the data were interpreted descriptively to address the focus of the study.

Data Validity

The validity of the data in this study was maintained through source triangulation and method triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the classroom teacher and the students. Data from the teacher were used to understand the objectives, processes, and teaching strategies, while data from the students were used to explore their experiences, responses, and understanding of the Islamic YouTube videos used in character education.

Method triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained through observations, interviews, and documentation. Observational data were used to directly examine the learning process, interview data were used to understand the perspectives of teachers and students, while documentation was used to reinforce the research findings. This study did not conduct member checking or verification of interpretations with the informants. Therefore, the data validity in this study was strengthened through the consistency of information obtained from various sources and data collection techniques.

Result and Discussion

Result

The findings of the study indicate that the use of Islamic YouTube helps teachers instill character values in students through content that conveys moral messages and Islamic behaviors. Activities such as watching videos, retelling the video content, and receiving reinforcement and guidance from teachers help students understand good behaviors, such as being honest, respecting teachers and parents, helping others, and being more diligent in performing religious practices.

Direct Quote:

“Video Islami membantu siswa memahami perilaku baik karena mereka bisa melihat contoh nyata, bukan hanya mendengar dari saya. Saya menekankan kejujuran, sopan santun, dan sikap peduli melalui cerita dalam video.” (Classroom Teacher, interview on April 2, 2026)

“Saya senang menonton video Islami karena ceritanya mudah dipahami dan mengingatkan kami untuk berkata jujur serta membantu orang tua.” (Student A, interview on April 2, 2026)

“Setelah menonton video, saya jadi tahu kalau salah harus minta maaf dan harus sopan kepada guru serta teman.” (Student B, interview on April 2, 2026)

In addition to verbal responses, the researcher’s observations showed that students were actively engaged in the activities. They paid close attention to the video content, repeated parts they considered important, and displayed enthusiastic expressions, such as smiling, responding to the teacher’s questions, and interacting with peers to recall moral messages. These activities demonstrated students’ cognitive and emotional engagement with the material presented through audiovisual media.

The teacher played an active role in directing the activities, such as posing stimulating questions before the video was played, emphasizing important parts of the story, and providing real-life examples of good behavior. After the video screening, the teacher asked several students to retell the content of the video in their own words, allowing the teacher to assess students’ understanding and reinforce moral messages through discussion (Hoeruman et al., 2025). This strategy helped students not only watch but also comprehend and internalize character values.

The findings also revealed variations in students’ responses. Some students were able to grasp the moral messages more easily and accurately cite examples of positive behavior, while others required additional reinforcement from the teacher.

This underscores that digital media needs to be combined with teacher guidance to achieve the objectives of character education effectively.

Several obstacles also emerged during the learning process. An unstable internet connection caused video playback to stop, and videos that were too long could reduce students' attention. The teacher recommended selecting short videos, using simple language, having a clear storyline, and including moral messages that relate to students' everyday experiences to ensure effective learning.

Although some students have begun to demonstrate positive behaviors, such as helping their parents and being honest, these behavioral changes are still in the early stages. The data were obtained from students' self-reports, the researcher's observations, and teacher statements, and therefore cannot yet be claimed as permanent character changes. Further research with long-term observations is needed to assess the sustainability of students' behaviors both in the classroom and at home. Overall, Islamic YouTube serves as an effective medium for character education when combined with teachers' pedagogical strategies. Activities such as watching, retelling, and discussing the video create a mutually supportive learning sequence. This medium not only provides entertainment but also helps students understand moral messages and relate them to daily behaviors, in line with the objectives of character education in elementary schools.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the use of Islamic YouTube plays a role in supporting students' character education at MI Ihyaussunnah. The Islamic video content used by the teacher functions not only as a source of entertainment but also as a means to convey moral messages and Islamic values more concretely. Through visual presentations, students can observe examples of good behavior in stories that are relatable to everyday life, such as being honest, helping parents, respecting teachers, apologizing when making mistakes, and practicing religious habits. This demonstrates that audiovisual media can assist teachers in explaining character values in a more engaging and easily understandable way for elementary school students.

These findings align with the characteristics of elementary school students, who tend to be more interested in learning based on images, sounds, stories, and easily recognizable characters. In this context, Islamic YouTube can serve as a relevant medium because it conveys moral messages through simple visual stories. Students not only receive verbal guidance from the teacher but also observe examples of behavior through the characters in the videos. This type of presentation helps students understand moral messages more concretely compared to learning that relies solely on lecture-based methods.

Nevertheless, the use of Islamic YouTube cannot stand alone without the teacher's role (Dhomiri & Nursikin, 2023). The findings indicate that teachers play a

crucial role in guiding students before the video is shown, assisting them during the viewing process, asking students to retell the video content, and providing reinforcement of moral values after the video ends. With guidance and reinforcement from the teacher, the moral messages in the videos do not remain merely as entertainment but become material for reflection and character learning for students. This demonstrates that the success of using digital media in character education heavily depends on the teacher's ability to select appropriate content, manage activities, and relate the video content to students' daily lives.

Retelling the content of the video has become an essential part of character education through Islamic YouTube. This activity engages students more actively, as they are not only watching but also required to understand, remember, and convey the messages contained in the video. In addition to training students' public speaking skills, the retelling activity helps teachers assess the extent to which students comprehend the moral messages conveyed. Thus, this activity can serve as a simple form of reflection that encourages students to connect the content of the video with behaviors that should be applied in their daily lives.

The findings also revealed positive responses from students after participating in character education activities using Islamic YouTube. Students appeared more enthusiastic, more confident in expressing their opinions, and capable of identifying the moral messages presented in the videos. Some students also reported that they began to understand the importance of being honest, apologizing, helping their parents, and showing respect to teachers and peers. However, these positive responses should be understood as initial indications rather than evidence of permanent changes in students' character. This is because some of the data regarding behavioral changes were derived from students' self-reports and observations conducted over a limited period.

To strengthen these findings, this study employed triangulation among students' interview results, the researcher's observations, and teachers' statements. Students' self-reports regarding the good behaviors they began to understand were reinforced by observations showing their enthusiasm in participating in activities and their ability to retell the video content. Additionally, the teacher confirmed that some students started to show positive responses during the learning activities, such as being more active in answering questions and more easily understanding guidance when linked to the video content. Thus, the findings regarding behavioral changes are not solely based on students' self-reports but are also corroborated by data from multiple techniques and sources.

However, this study still has its limitations. The behavioral changes observed in students are still at an early stage because data collection was conducted over a limited period. In addition, the study did not include long-term observations of students' behavioral consistency both at school and at home. Therefore, the findings

regarding character development through Islamic YouTube should be understood as initial tendencies that require further research. Longer-term studies are needed to determine whether the positive behaviors observed during learning can be sustained and become habitual in students' daily lives.

In addition to providing benefits, the use of Islamic YouTube also faces several challenges. These include an unstable internet connection and the possibility that students may become bored if the videos are too long. Therefore, teachers need to select videos with a short duration, simple language, a clear storyline, and moral messages appropriate for students' age. Videos lasting approximately 5–10 minutes may be more suitable as they align with the attention span of elementary school students. Furthermore, teachers should prepare the videos in advance before the lesson to ensure that activities are not disrupted by technical issues.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that Islamic YouTube can be used as a supportive medium for character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. This medium helps students understand moral values through visual presentations, while the teacher plays a role in guiding, explaining, and reinforcing the character messages contained in the videos. Thus, Islamic YouTube can serve as a relevant alternative medium for character education in the digital era, provided it is used purposefully, accompanied by the teacher, and supplemented with reflective activities such as question-and-answer sessions and retelling the video content.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study conducted at MI Ihyaussunnah, the use of Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education demonstrates that Islamic video content can play a role in supporting the cultivation of character values in elementary school students. Through activities such as watching videos, retelling the content, and receiving reinforcement and guidance from the teacher, students not only understand the moral messages presented in the videos but also demonstrate positive responses to the character values conveyed. Character values such as religiosity, honesty, politeness, discipline, respect for parents and teachers, and the habit of doing good deeds emerged in students' understanding and behavior throughout the learning activities.

This study also shows that the teacher's role is a crucial component in using Islamic YouTube as a medium for character education. The teacher not only uses the videos as a learning tool but also provides guidance, explanations, and reinforcement of moral values so that students can understand the meaning of the messages conveyed in the video content. Additionally, the activity of retelling the video content helps students become more actively engaged in the learning process while also training their confidence in expressing opinions in front of the class.

Based on the research findings, teachers are advised to select Islamic videos of short duration, approximately 5–10 minutes, so that students remain focused and do not become easily bored. The selected videos should feature simple stories, characters relatable to children, and clear moral messages appropriate for elementary school students. Video screenings can also be conducted routinely, for example, once a week, accompanied by reflective activities, question-and-answer sessions, and reinforcement of values by the teacher. In addition, parental involvement should be strengthened so that the character values acquired by students at school can be continued and practiced in the home environment.

This study has limitations due to its short duration and the relatively small number of informants involved. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a longitudinal study or be conducted in a different school context to examine the sustainability of students' behavioral changes over a longer period. Further research can also compare the use of Islamic YouTube with other character education media to gain a broader understanding of the utilization of digital media in character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.

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