

The Influence of Character Education Learning Media Based on Comics and Learning Motivation on Students' Character

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine (1) The effect of comic-based Akidah Akhlak media learning on student character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar, (2) The effect of learning motivation on student character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar, (3) The effect of learning media Comic-based Aqidah Akhlak and learning motivation towards student character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar. The research was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar, Beringin District, Deli Serdang Regency. This research method is quantitative with a descriptive type of ex post-facto research. The research population was conducted in class VIII totaling 87 students and 100% of the population was taken as a research sample. The findings of this study indicate: (1) Comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media influences students' character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar by 26.9% in the low category. (2) Learning motivation influences students' character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar by 39.5% in the low category. (3) Comic-based Aqidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation influence students' character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar by 42.5% in the medium category and other variables influence the remaining 57.5%.

Keywords: Learning Media, Comics, Learning Motivation, Student Character

INTRODUCTION

Character is not something that can be inherited or already embedded in a person's personality. Still, the construction and development of character need to be consciously done over time and obtained through a non-instantaneous process. Parents carry out character planting from the beginning to their children. Besides parents, the environment also plays a role in developing a child's character. So, the character can be built and developed according to self-adaptation to its environment. Character education, according to Kesuma, Triatna, and Permana, is an effort to create good behaviour skills through learning, which is the ability to

behave well with oneself, live in harmony with fellow humans and other creatures, and make the world a place for prosperity and collective well-being (Ramli, 2020). Implementing the learning process to achieve character education does not always run smoothly. Therefore, there will be some problems that will later become obstacles to achieving character education. These problems can include an increase in crimes and violence, abuse of illegal drugs (narcotics), pornography and immoral acts, and free association.

Educational institutions today have become a hope for everyone in fostering students' character. Character development is an effort to reduce factors that trigger a decrease in character. One institution that is hoped to change students' characters is MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar. The educational institution is the only one under the Ministry of Religion in the Karang Anyar village and has been established for 34 years. MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar has gained the perception in society that a madrasah under the Ministry of Religion indeed has students with good character. Therefore, the local community hopes that MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar will be a place to transform students' characters for the better.

The community's perception regarding the educational institution MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar has several strengths and weaknesses. The strengths include the following: First, the subjects taught in the madrasah are not only general subjects but also religious subjects. Second, because this madrasah is the only one under the Ministry of Religion, there is a high desire in the community to enrol their children in the madrasah with the aim that they will have good character. Third, congregational Zuhr prayers were created to guide students in proper prayer readings and procedures. Fourth, guidance on the proper procedure for performing ablution is also provided as a requirement for prayer. Fifth, we perform not only obligatory prayers but also voluntary prayers like funeral prayers. Sixth, every student is required to memorize short verses and prayers. The efforts made at MTs Al-Islamiyah aim to shape students' characters.

The weaknesses include: first, the admission process for transfer students is not selective, resulting in these students becoming sources of problems in MTs Al-Islamiyah. Second, there is still a teacher who is less concerned about students who cause problems. Third, some parents still defend their children even if the madrasah has proved their wrongdoing.

Based on the findings from the counselling teacher's documents in 2022, students' negative behaviours include: first, leaving the madrasah during class hours (truancy). Second, dating in the madrasah environment and third, arriving late to the madrasah. Fourth, do not participate in the regular congregational Zuhr prayers. Fifth, fights in the class; Sixth, theft in the classroom. Seventh, students caught smoking and consuming alcoholic beverages. Eighth, students engage in violent acts against their peers (bullying). Ninth, there is a lack of respect for elders, especially teachers. Tenth is a low sense of mutual assistance towards

classmates and teachers. Eleventh, dishonesty among students leads to misunderstandings between teachers and parents.

The problems at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar indicate the weakness of students' characters. On the other hand, the community's or parents' expectations for a change in students' characters are higher. Based on this condition, the head of MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar issued a policy starting from the basics, directed towards madrasah teachers to use methods and media that captivate students, not solely based on material explanation and rote memorization of theories.

Using learning media can influence students' characters. Gerlach and Ely state that learning media can be human, material, or events that create conditions for students to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Arsyad, 2013). Attitude is part of character that serves as a guide to shaping character.

The objective of the Aqidah Akhlak subjects stated in the Minister of Religious Affairs Decree No. 183 of 2019 concerning the PAI and Arabic Language Curriculum in Madrasahs is to develop students' faith and create individuals with noble character who distance themselves from reprehensible character traits, to be implemented in both individual and social life. Aqidah is the root or core of religion related to the sense of faith. At the same time, akhlak emphasizes how to cleanse oneself from reprehensible characters (*madzmumah*) and fill it with noble behavior (*mahmudah*) (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

Comic-based learning media in the Aqidah Akhlak subjects began in 2021 and has been running for two semesters, focusing on the material of Husnudzon, Tawadhu, Tasamuh, and Taawun. This learning system uses comics by having the teacher explain the material of Husnudzon, Tawadhu, Tasamuh, and Taawun first; then the teacher displays comic strip images using a projector so that students can read the storyline in the comic. After reading the comic, the teacher gives messages in the comic so that students better understand and internalize the messages for application in their lives.

The use of comic-based learning media contains strong visual and storytelling elements. The visualized expressions engage the reader emotionally, making them continue reading until the end. Thus, besides being an attractive medium, comics are also very effective in transferring character values through characterizations in the comic story.

In reality, comics are one of the most favored readings not only by child readers but also by some adults. Based on research conducted on September 19, 2022, by one international company from Japan called Shueisha Manga Plus, which provides an official comic reading site. The research results reveal that Indonesia is the third-ranked country with the highest number of comic readers after the United States and Thailand. From this research, it can be concluded that learning media using comics has the potential to attract readers (Manga Plus 2022). This is

in line with the opinion expressed by Sudjana & Rivai (Alfiansyah and Silviani 2017:5) that the main role of comic media is its ability to create interest among students to produce effective learning processes.

The Aqidah Akhlak learning system used at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar does not motivate students to learn. This is because the material presentation is solely based on explanations and rote memorization of theories. Throughout the learning process, some students do not pay attention to the teacher explaining the material, and there is no communication process between the teacher and students, such as asking questions or discussing between the teacher and students. The low learning motivation in the Aqidah Akhlak subjects will not achieve the learning goals set by the government, namely that students have a strong faith and can implement it through noble behavior in both individual and social life.

The success of education by implementing educational elements, one of which is through the media used and the emergence of motivation in students to learn, is expected to influence students' characters by government regulations based on the objectives of the Aqidah Akhlak subjects. Based on the use of comic-based learning media and motivation measured and adjusted to students' characteristics and the problems that occur at MTs Al-Islamiyah, as well as the objectives of the Aqidah Akhlak subjects, the researcher is interested in researching the extent of the influence of comic-based Aqidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation on students' characters in MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar.

METHOD

This research was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar, Beringin District, Deli Serdang Regency. It is a quantitative study with an ex-post facto research design using a descriptive approach. Ex post facto research is conducted after the fact, meaning it is carried out after an event. Ex post facto research aims to find causes that may lead to changes in behavior, symptoms, or phenomena caused by an event, behavior, or factors that lead to changes in the independent variable that have already occurred (Widarto, 2013). The descriptive approach aims to systematically, factually, and accurately describe the facts and the relationships between the investigated phenomena (Nazir, 2014).

The data collection technique used is the non-test technique, specifically the questionnaire or survey. This model is the most suitable for expressing someone's opinion about a particular object. The questionnaire is a data collection method by distributing a list of questions to respondents to obtain answers that correspond to the actual events (Abdullah, 2015). The second data collection technique involves observation. Observation is a data collection technique where the researcher goes directly to the field, observes the phenomena under investigation, describes the

occurring issues, and connects them with the questionnaire data collection technique. The results will be linked to existing theories and previous research (Sahir, 2022). Observations in this study were conducted at MTs Al-Islamiyah, specifically in Grade VIII.

The data analysis technique includes tests for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, heteroskedasticity, and multiple regression using the following equation:

$$\hat{y} = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2$$

In this equation, the values for the independent variable a, b₁, dan b₂ re determined using the following formulas:

$$a = \hat{y} - b_1 \bar{x}_1 + b_2 \bar{x}_2$$

$$b_1 = \frac{(\sum X_2^2)(\sum X_1 Y) - (\sum X_1 X_2)(\sum X_2 Y)}{((\sum X_1^2) (\sum X_2^2) - (\sum X_1 X_2)^2)}$$

$$b_2 = \frac{(\sum X_1^2)(\sum X_2 Y) - (\sum X_1 X_2)(\sum X_1 Y)}{((\sum X_1^2) (\sum X_2^2) - (\sum X_1 X_2)^2)}$$

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Table 1.

Analysis of the Influence of Comic-Based Akidah Akhlak Learning Media (X1) on Student Character (Y)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.519 ^a	.269	.261	8.005

a. Predictors: (Constant), TOTAL_X1

The table above indicates that the correlation coefficient (R) for the comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media variable on student character is positive, with R_{xy1} at 0,519. The strength of the influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media on student character is shown by the coefficient of determination (R²) at 0,269. This suggests that the influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media on student characters in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar is significant, with an impact of 26.9%.

Based on the regression equation using simple regression analysis, the direction coefficient (B) is 0,646 with a constant of 52.290. Thus, the regression

line equation is $\hat{y} = 52.290 + 0,646X_1$. his equation indicates that a 1% increase in comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media results in a 0.646 increase in student character. The positive value of the regression coefficient implies that the direction of the influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media on student character is positive.

Hypothesis testing on the comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media variable on student character is supported by a significance test aiming to determine the significance of the variable. The t-test shows that the t-value is 5.595 > the t-table value of 1.988 at a significance level of 5%, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, it can be concluded that the comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media (X1) variable significantly influences student character (Y) in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar.

Table 2. Analysis of the Influence of Learning Motivation (X2) on Student Character (Y)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.629 ^a	.395	.388	7.281

a. Predictors: (Constant), TOTAL_X2

The table above indicates that the correlation coefficient (R) for the variable of learning motivation on student character is positive, with R_{xy2} at 0.629. The strength of the influence of learning motivation on student character is shown by the coefficient of determination (R^2) at 0.395. This suggests that the influence of learning motivation on student character in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar is significant, with an impact of 39.5%.

Based on the regression equation using simple regression analysis, the direction coefficient (B) is 0.800 with a constant of 39.556. Thus, the regression line equation is $y^{\wedge}=39.556+0.800X_2$. This equation indicates that a 1% increase in learning motivation results in a 0.800 increase in student character. The positive value of the regression coefficient implies that the direction of the influence of learning motivation on student character is positive.

Hypothesis testing on the variable of learning motivation on student character is supported by a significance test aiming to determine the significance of the variable. The t-test shows that the t-value is 7.457 > the t-table value of 1.988 at a significance level of 5%, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, it can be concluded that the variable of learning motivation (X2) significantly influences student character (Y) in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar.

Table 3.
Analysis of Multiple Regression of Variables X1, X2 Together on Y

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.652 ^a	.425	.411	7.144

a. Predictors: (Constant), TOTAL_X2, TOTAL_X1

The table above indicates that the correlation coefficient (R) for the variables of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation together on student character is positive, with $R_{xy1.2}$ at 0.652. The strength of the influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation on student character is shown by the coefficient of determination (R^2) at 0.425. This suggests that the combined influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation on student character in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar is significant, with an impact of 42.5%.

The results conclude that comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation influence student character in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar with an impact strength of 0.425 (42.5%). This indicates that the better the comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation, the better the student character.

Based on the regression equation using simple regression analysis, the direction coefficients (B1) and (B2) are 0.269 and 0.633, respectively, with a constant of 31.596. Thus, the regression line equation is $\hat{y} = 31.596 + 0,269X_1 + 0,633X_2$. his equation indicates that the regression coefficient values are positive, implying that the combined influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation on student character in Grade VIII at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar is positive.

Discussion

Gerlach and Ely posit that instructional media can be humans, materials, or events that construct the student's environment, enabling them to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Arsyad, 2013). Attitude is an integral part of character and serves as a guide in character formation. Supported by Angga et al.'s theory, the utilization of comic-based learning media is identified to enhance student interest, motivation, understanding, and character (Angga et al., 2020). Mardiantanto and Arifin describe comics as a sequence of images arranged according to their goals and philosophy, ensuring the story's message is effectively conveyed (Batubara, 2020). This can be considered information acquired by

readers, leading to an understanding of the conceptual messages within the comic. Additionally, comic characters can serve as role models for conveying character values (Saputro and Soeharto, 2015).

In his work, Uno defines motivation as an impetus arising from internal or external stimuli compelling an individual to strive for specific behavioral improvements (Uno, 2016). Purwanto underscores motivation, within the context of learning activities, as a force directing behavior towards a goal. Therefore, motivation is crucial in the learning process to expedite the achievement of educational objectives (Pulukadang et al., 2018). Aunurrahman views motivation in learning activities as a strength that drives students to harness internal and external potentials to realize their goals (Ananda and Hayati, 2020).

Teachers play a vital role in enhancing learning motivation. The Akidah Akhlak class's 8th-grade teacher at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar employs motivational strategies by rewarding students who complete tasks, answer questions, exhibit kindness, and achieve high grades. These rewards take the form of additional points added to the students' grades, which the teacher records. Moreover, the teacher expresses verbal rewards such as "you're smart" and "you're great," not only to academically proficient students but also to those who may be struggling, encouraging them with phrases like "you can do it" and "you've become a courageous child but you must learn and strive again." General motivations for all students include phrases like "pursue education until you complete university and obtain at least a bachelor's degree" and "strive to surpass your parents at home." In addition to verbal affirmations, the teacher provides physical rewards through applause and thumbs-up gestures.

Motivational strategies also include punishments or disciplinary measures. The Akidah Akhlak teacher typically applies physical punishments such as push-ups, Scott jumps, and writing unfinished assignments on the classroom wall for students who fail to complete homework or arrive late to class after the break has concluded.

Student learning motivation is not solely dependent on teachers but also requires support from engaging learning systems and conducive environments. The Akidah Akhlak learning system employs discussion and question-answer methods using block arrangement media in group settings. However, the learning environment is occasionally disrupted by students talking while the teacher explains the material. The overall learning motivation of 8th-grade students at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar is categorized as good. Maintaining extrinsic factors such as rewards from the Akidah Akhlak teacher and interesting learning activities is essential. Areas for improvement include encouraging the future to generate student enthusiasm in achieving aspirations and creating a more comfortable and conducive classroom environment for increased focus on learning.

Fundamentally, motivation is a fundamental drive that propels an

individual's behavior. This drive is intrinsic, compelling individuals to act by their internal motivations. Motivation and learning are two mutually influential factors. Learning involves relatively permanent changes in behavior, potentially resulting from practices founded on goal achievement. Learning motivation arises from internal and external stimuli during the learning process, prompting behavioral changes (Uno, 2016). Uno's theory suggests that motivation emerges due to internal and external stimuli, encouraging students to alter their characters. Consequently, for an Akidah Akhlak teacher aiming to instill religious, collaborative, and integrity-based characters in students, learning motivation is crucial for cultivating positive characters.

Observation of children during religious activities and questionnaire results demonstrate the emergence of religious character in students. During madrasah worship activities, such as congregational Zuhr prayers and other religious events, 8th-grade students at MTs Al-Islamiyah exhibit enthusiasm. After receiving guidance on proper behavior and consequences from the Akidah Akhlak teacher, students are more confident in making the best decisions for themselves. They are unaffected by actions that violate rules. Religious differences do not hinder communication or mutual assistance among 8th-grade students at MTs Al-Islamiyah, where there are non-Muslim communities. Areas for improvement in religious character at MTs Al-Islamiyah include incomplete performance of obligatory prayers and the need for guidance on proper prayer procedures.

The collaborative character emerges during observational activities, such as learning processes where 8th-grade students at MTs Al-Islamiyah willingly accept group assignments facilitated by the Akidah Akhlak teacher. The spirit of mutual assistance is evident among students and teachers, observed during classroom and madrasah environment cleaning activities. Students form friendships and greet teachers positively. However, areas for improvement include some 8th-grade students who show indifference towards group assignments.

In this study, the integrity character comprises discipline, responsibility, and honesty. Observations reveal that 8th-grade students at MTs Al-Islamiyah demonstrate punctuality at the madrasah, with reduced truancy due to collaboration between the Akidah Akhlak teacher, guidance counselling teacher, and parents. However, discipline needs improvement, particularly in completing assignments partially before Akidah Akhlak's class hours and some students refusing to participate in group duty due to social stigma.

Responsibility arises after observations, with MTs Al-Islamiyah students taking responsibility for their mistakes or violations of madrasah rules. Students acknowledge their mistakes and accept punishments from the Akidah Akhlak teacher, such as late submission of assignments or completing tasks based on their reasoning. Areas for improvement in responsibility include raising awareness among 8th-grade students at MTs Al-Islamiyah regarding the importance of

seeking material for teaching and its supporting materials.

Honesty is evident after observations and based on responses in an 8th-grade class survey, where students do not engage in cheating during exams, and no reported cases of false reporting in the counseling guidance section. Students do not leave the class without permission from the teacher or lie about specific matters. Areas for improvement in honesty include reinforcing students' values in returning borrowed items, as instances of missing stationery items were identified in the 8th-grade class.

CONCLUSION

The instructional media variable of Akidah Akhlak based on comics (X1) has a significant influence of 26.9% on the character of students (Y) at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar. Enhancing the quality of comic-based learning media in Akidah Akhlak will positively contribute to the formation of students' character. The learning motivation variable (X2) also significantly influences 39.5% of students' character (Y) in the 8th grade at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar. The higher the students' learning motivation, the better the character will be formed. Both variables, namely Akidah Akhlak comic-based learning media and learning motivation, influence students' character. The multiple regression equation shows that both have their respective coefficient weights (bX1) of 0.269 and (bX2) of 0.633, with a constant value of 31.586. Other variables not included in this study have an influence of 73.1% on students' character, and unidentified factors still influence 57.5% of the variability in students' character.

The use of Akidah Akhlak comic-based learning media and the improvement of students' learning motivation are crucial factors in shaping students' character at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar. Thus, teachers and relevant parties need to continuously improve the quality of learning media and motivate students so that quality characters can be well-formed. The significance test results of the multiple regression equation indicate that the regression equation is significant in explaining the combined influence of comic-based Akidah Akhlak learning media and learning motivation on students' character in the 8th grade at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar.

In conclusion, this article states that both Akidah Akhlak comic-based learning media and learning motivation play a crucial role in shaping students' character in school. Enhancing the quality of both factors can help create more character-rich students at MTs Al-Islamiyah Karang Anyar.

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