

Harmony of Positive Character Through Extracurricular Teenage Scientific Groups Based on Al-Ghazali's Perspective

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Abstract

Character education has become crucial in individual development, especially in today's modern era. This article explains an effective approach to character formation through extracurricular, teenage scientific groups, by integrating Al-Ghazali perspectives. The main focus is on Al-Ghazali's views of ethics, morality, and positive moral development. The extracurricular scientific groups of adolescents have the potential to achieve character education goals. By defining the purpose of the group, its relationship with the character, and the methods of development used, this article analyzes the compatibility of Al-Ghazali values with the activity of the teenage scientific group. Case studies highlight the implementation of this concept, evaluate the positive impact on group members, and highlight the role of guidance. Challenges and opportunities in integrating traditional concepts into modern contexts were also discussed. In conclusion, this article provides an in-depth insight into how extracurricular teenage scientific groups can be an effective medium in shaping characters according to Al-Ghazali's views.

Keywords: Al-Ghazali, Character, Teenage Scientific Groups

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INTRODUCTION

Character education is an important process in the formation of an individual underpinned by values of ethics, morality, and noble morality. In this modern era, the demand for strong and positive character is increasingly pressing, making character education an integral part of personal development (Ainiyah, 2013; Kurniawan, 2017). In character education, it is important to understand the social and cultural context that forms the basis of values. This context encompasses social norms, high values, and individual roles in diverse environments. Character education is not only about the cultivation of moral values but also about how individuals can internalize and apply those values in everyday life (Omeri, 2015).

Along with technological progress, social dynamics, technological advances, and solid character become foundations that can guide individuals in facing challenges and making the right decisions. Therefore, character education needs to be aligned with the needs of the times so that it remains relevant and can be implemented effectively (Gustini, 2016; Mainuddin, et al., 2023; Rofi'ie, 2017).

Extracurriculars become a potential means of character formation, given their scope, including activities outside the formal curriculum (Aqodiah, 2023; Khaliq, 2017). Extracurriculars, including teenage scientific groups, provide space for the development of social aspects, leadership skills, and the strengthening of positive values. In this context, extracurriculars become complementary and a laboratory where characters can be tested and reinforced.

Through participation in extracurricular activities, individuals can sharpen interpersonal skills, develop a sense of responsibility, and explore interests and self-potential (Dewi, et al., 2018). Therefore, a deep understanding of the role of extracurricular in character education becomes essential to designing programs that have a positive impact on the formation of individual character.

Among the relevant figures studied in his thinking in the context of the character of the noble son is Al-Ghazali (Kurniawan, 2017; Wibowo, 2020). Al-Ghazali's perspective gives a philosophical and spiritual dimension to character education. As a prominent Islamic scholar, Al-Ghazali introduced deep Islamic values in character development. Understanding of obedience to God, ethics in interacting with one another, and the formation of a noble morality were at the heart of his views.

Al-Ghazali prioritizes that character education is not just theoretical learning, but involves spiritual experience and real practice in everyday life (Chairiyah, 2014; Suhendi, et al., 2020). Children often follow their parents, so as parents, they should set a good example. So is a teacher, not just knowledge passed on. However, the character is also embedded in the student (Mukarromah, et al., 2022).

According to Al-Ghazali, ethics and morality are the main foundations of forming a strong character. Ethics encompasses good behavior, while morality guides the individual to distinguish between right and wrong (Mukarromah, dkk., 2022). This understanding brings the concepts of honesty, integrity, and affection as the core values to be embedded in character education.

Al-Ghazali says that ethics and morality are not just external rules, but also a reflection of sincere heart and spiritual consciousness. Therefore, character education inspired by the Al-Ghazali view needs to strengthen the spiritual dimension in the formation of individual character. Al-Ghazali prioritizes the importance of the development of noble morality as an effort to true good. Noble morals include qualities such as patience, honesty, justice, and humility. In this context, character education focuses not only on the intellectual aspect but also on the formation of a praised personality. Character education that adopts Al-Ghazali's view needs to pay attention to deep training and reflection to internalize these noble qualities. It involves developing sensitivity to moral values in every action and decision taken (Hanani, 2016).

In Al-Ghazali's perspective, education plays a crucial role in instilling positive values. The educational process is not just about transferring knowledge, but also about forming character through the process of cultivation, uniformity, and reflection (Khaliq, 2017). Al-Ghazali-inspired character education needs to create an environment that supports the exploration of values, supports solid character formation, and provides concrete examples of the practice of such values in everyday life.

RESEARCH METHOD

The methods and approaches used are:

1. Literary analysis: This method is used to understand the theoretical foundations of character development through teenage scientific groups. Literary studies of character education approaches, developmental psychology theory, and Al-Ghazali concepts can help design solid approaches.

2. Participatory interviews and observations: In-depth interviews with group leaders and members can provide a deep understanding of how teenage scientific group activities are carried out and how they affect character development. Participatory observations can include direct observations of group dynamics and interactions among members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of interviews and observations on the Teenage Scientific Group are as follows:

1. Interview with Group Chairman (Ahmad), gold medal winner of International Competition in Malaysia:

Ahmad said that the selection of themes and research projects began with an open discussion among the members of the group. "We believe that choosing themes that reflect positive values can have a greater impact on character development. That's why we involve all members in this process," he said.

According to Ahmad, members' participation was highly appreciated in the theme selection. "We saw that involving members in the selection of themes makes them more engaged and have a sense of responsibility for the research project," he added.

Observations showed that the theme selection session looked very dynamic, with group members actively engaged in discussion. They listen to each other, ask questions, and convey their creative ideas. Looks like an inclusive and collaborative atmosphere.

Interview with a member of the group (Ina):

"Now I feel more confident and able to convey my ideas clearly in front of the crowd," she said. "This project taught us to work hard and be responsible. It's not just about science, it's also about how we manage ourselves," she said.

Observations show that Ina and other group members are actively involved in every phase of the research project. They work hard, apply dedication, and show responsibility in carrying out project tasks.

2. Interview with the Group Chairman (Ari): silver medal winner of the International Competition in Bali:

"We feel responsible for being a moral example to our friends at school," Ari said. In an interview, Ari emphasized the close relationship between group members and mentors as a key factor. This relationship creates an

environment that supports character growth and allows members to feel comfortable talking about their challenges.

Interview with a group member (Afi):

"We are always taught to ask, 'How can our research bring positive benefits to society?' It helps us understand moral values in a practical context," said Afi. Observations show that Afi and other members of the group have experienced improvements in their ability to collaborate and work in a team. They learn to appreciate each member's contribution and constructively resolve conflicts.

DISCUSSION

There are three problems Indonesia faces in the millennial era. First, the ongoing digital revolution, whose influence is increasingly changing the joints of life, culture, civilization, and society including education. Second, the growing phenomenon of the creative century places information, knowledge, creativity, innovation, and networking as strategic resources for the nation and the nation. Thirdly, there is an increasingly intense integration of parts of the world as a result of globalization. Those three things create a new order and need different from before, which must be responded to and fulfilled by the national education world as best as possible (Hendarman, 2019).

Examples of the decline in student character can be seen in some situations in the educational environment. One example is the rise in cases of harassment and intimidation in schools. Students who are supposed to go through the learning process safely and comfortably often face pressure from peers. Threatening behavior such as bullying and harassment can harm not only victims but also reflect a lack of appreciation for positive values such as empathy and cooperation.

Besides, academic fraud is also an example of the phenomenon of student character decrease. The pressure to high academic achievement sometimes encourages students to commit fraud, such as embezzling or copying a friend's work. This behavior reflects a lack of integrity and honesty, which should be an essential part of the student's character formed through education.

Increased use of technology can also be an example of events that affect the character of students. For example, the spread of negative and incorrect information through social media can trigger conflict among students. Lack of communication skills and inability to understand other people's perspectives can be the result of uncontrolled exposure to negative content in the virtual world.

In this era of globalization, education is demanded not only to develop students' academic abilities but also positive character that will help them become integrated individuals and contribute positively to society. Unfortunately, the phenomenon of decreasing positive character in students has become a serious concern in the world of education. Several factors can be identified as the cause.

First, rapid cultural change and social values have had a significant impact on student character development. Technology and social media, for example, provide wide access to a wide range of information, but can also affect student mentality and moral values. Peer influence is also an important factor in

character formation, and often students are more exposed to negative stress than positive influence.

Second, high academic pressure often makes students focus more on academic achievement alone, ignoring aspects of character development. Strong competition in the world of education often puts students under pressure to certain standards, so that values such as collaboration, empathy, and honesty can be marginalized.

Besides, the lack of attention to character education in the formal curriculum is also an important factor. An educational system that is too focused on academic achievement can overlook the importance of teaching students moral values and social skills. The role of teachers in guiding students not only in terms of knowledge but also character, is crucial.

To address this phenomenon, a change in the approach to education is needed. Character education should be an integral part of the school curriculum, involving all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the community. Support from all sides is needed to create an educational environment that encourages the development of positive character of students. Thus, education can be a positive force that forms individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also have a strong character.

Observing the dynamics of life that exists then character becomes a determining factor and a must in the existence of every human being. It's said as a must because the absence of character will create a variety of chaos and riots in the patterns of the thinker and the pattern of society. When this is allowed, it will lead to freedom that deprives each other of respect and courtesy by the values that exist in society (Hendarman, 2020).

Character is often equated with morality. Al-Ghazali believes that character is closer to morality, that is, the spontaneity of human behavior, or doing acts that have already existed in human beings (Setiawan, 2014). Character is related to the values of goodness, so character education is always associated with value education. Schools need to optimize the actual learning system, not only focusing on the substance of the teaching material but more endeavoring to internalize the values of its teaching materials in day-to-day activities.

Rapid changes in modern technology and lifestyles can make it difficult for individuals, especially the younger generation, to adapt to existing values. This challenge requires an innovative strategy to link the Al-Ghazali concept to the fast-moving reality of everyday life.

Despite the challenges faced, Al-Ghazali's concept remains relevant in shaping a superior character. Honesty, justice, and compassion which are at the heart of Al-Ghazali's teachings have a strong applicability in the face of the moral dilemmas of the modern era.

Al-Ghazali's concept of character education has proved to be very significant in the world of education. (Mukarromah, et al., 2022). The educational curriculum in Indonesia has contained the concept of al-Ghazali character education, such as how positive character is in everyday life.

The development of technology can serve as an opportunity to support character education. Online platforms, applications, and digital resources can be used to convey Al-Ghazali values in an attractive way and line with the

trends of the younger generation. Opportunities also support character education. Interreligious collaboration in identifying common moral values can create a solid foundation for the development of an inclusive character.

Educating teachers and tutors about the Al-Ghazali concept is the key to overcoming the challenge. The opportunity for further development lies in the provision of in-depth training on the philosophy and teachings of Al-Ghazali so that they can be properly implemented in the context of modern education. This kind of program can cover the scientific, moral, and spiritual aspects, creating a balance between the concept of Al-Ghazali and modern character education.

Three educational environments can contribute to the development of children. First, the family environment is the primary responsibility for preserving the children's welfare. Second, the school environment is to develop all human talents and potential according to its needs so that humans are avoided from deviations. Thirdly, the social environment is an intercessorial vehicle for the formation of religious and social values (Arifin, 2017). The involvement of parents and society in character education becomes a significant opportunity. Building awareness and their involvement in supporting Al-Ghazali values can strengthen character development outside the school environment.

Al-Ghazali taught spiritual values such as honesty, justice, and compassion as the foundation of a solid character. For character education in schools to succeed optimally, its implementation must be integrated through school rules and regulations, the learning process of teaching in the classroom, and extracurricular activities. One of the extracurriculars at the school is a youth scientific group. The compatibility of spiritual values with the activities of youth scientific groups can be explained through a deep understanding of the linkages between spiritual ethics and scientific exploration.

The application of Al-Ghazali values in the research project of a youth scientific group is a concrete step towards understanding the abstraction of values. This creates room for members of the group to apply Al-Ghazali values in a real context. Scientific discussion activities within the group can be a means of reflecting on the spiritual values of Al Ghazali. Critical thinking and character development through spiritual reflection can occur when group members openly discuss the ethical implications of their research. This kind of discussion creates an environment that supports holistic character growth.

Al-Ghazali argues that the method of forming a child's character is by giving examples, training, and customization as an educational tool to build personality. Choosing a mentor who understands the values of Al-Ghazali and has spiritual integrity can be a key aspect in facilitating character development. Guides that serve as models can guide group members in embracing spiritual values and associating them with scientific activities. The youth scientific group creates opportunities for members to practice empathy and collaboration. Understanding a teammate's point of view, sharing ideas, and supporting each other in achieving a common goal are aspects that can shape the character through this group activity. This is in line with Al-Ghazali's view of individual success supported by the ability to collaborate. Participation in research projects within a youth scientific group can be a personal achievement that builds character. Through this achievement, group members can experience a sense of

responsibility, perseverance, and personal pride, which is in line with the positive values emphasized by Al-Ghazali. Self-reflection activities that are integrated into the youth scientific group activities provide an opportunity for members to better understand themselves. It creates room for character growth through a deeper self-understanding, in line with Al-Ghazali's view of the importance of introspection in self-development.

A range of teenage scientific group activities, ranging from project planning to the presentation of results, can be directed to fostering well-being. Regularity, justice, and honesty in every phase of the project create a strong character foundation. Al-Ghazali will judge success not only from a scientific point of view but also from the moral and ethical aspects reflected in the process.

The importance of the role of parents and mentors in supporting character development through adolescent scientific groups cannot be ignored. Parental involvement can include moral support, providing guidance based on Al-Ghazali values, and creating awareness of the importance of integrating spiritual values into their children's everyday lives. In character valuation, the role of parents and guides is to instill faith in the heart, give guidance on example stories, and self-introspection, be able to distinguish between good and bad, and provide an environment that supports the application of character values. (Ritonga & Hasanah, 2019).

Al-Ghazali's thinking about character education has always shown moral and spiritual aspects. (Dirsa & Kusumawati, 2019). As part of the integration of Al-Ghazali concepts, teenage scientific groups can plan activities or rituals that nurture spiritual traditions. This could include joint prayer, Al Quran reading sessions, or other activities that stimulate spiritual growth and character. In its implementation, before the competition, it is necessary to instruct the children to pray first so that everything goes smoothly. Al-Ghazali believes the purpose of character education is to worship Allah SWT (Fajri, 2020).

The participatory approach applied by Ahmad in the selection of themes and research projects has been closely linked to the development of the character of group members. Involving members in decision-making, in the selection of themes, opens up space for them to express their values, principles, and personal interests. This process not only pursues academic achievement but also gives more value related to character development.

In this context, the freedom to communicate ideas and input creates a sense of ownership and responsibility for research projects. Group members are not only audiences but also active actors who contribute to the design of the direction of the research. It can form characteristics such as leadership, initiative, and responsibility, which are important aspects of character development.

The importance of choosing themes that reflect positive values also has direct implications for the character. When group members engage in discussions to determine themes relevant to character values, they are indirectly involved in the reflection of those values. These processes can build awareness of the importance of integrity, cooperation, and honesty, as well as how these values can be applied in their research context.

Observations of an inclusive and collaborative atmosphere during the theme selection sessions also reflect positive character development. Good

collaboration requires active involvement, listening skills, and appreciation of diverse perspectives. Thus, through this process, group members not only develop academic skills but also social and emotional skills that are essential in forming a solid and adaptive character.

Ina's statement in the interview highlighted the positive impact given by her participation in a teenage scientific group on her character development. Ina's increased confidence, in her ability to speak in public, can be understood as one of the results of her experience of active involvement in the research group. It shows that collaboration in a team can be an effective means of developing social and communication skills, which are important aspects of individual character.

Observations that note the active involvement of Ina and other group members in each phase of the research project indicate the existence of values such as dedication and responsibility. Research projects are not only understood as an opportunity to develop scientific understanding but also as a chance to shape individual character. Responsibility for the tasks of the project indicates the importance of the values of discipline and independence, which are the main components of a mature character.

Ina's statement about a project that teaches them to "work hard" and "be responsible" underlines the importance of self-management in the context of group work. Character development through teamwork is not only about achieving the result of the project, but also involves the process of learning about integrity, collaboration, and responsibility for the individual's contributions.

Overall, interviews with Ina and related observations highlighted that participation in teenage scientific groups can make a positive contribution to character development, including increased self-confidence, active engagement, dedication, and responsibility. It shows that collaborative experiences in a scientific context not only enrich students' knowledge but also form a strong and positive character foundation.

The statement by the Chairman of the Group, Ari, indicates that the research project and the activities of the teenage scientific group are not only an occasion for academic development but also a reservoir for character formation and moral leadership. In this context, group members are not only expected to produce quality research but also to play a role as a moral example in the school environment.

The importance of responsibility as a moral leader reinforces the concept that character development occurs not only through formal learning in the classroom but also through practical experiences in everyday life. In a scientific group situation, members are empowered to be agents of positive change around them, proving that character learning is not limited to the purely academic aspect.

Ari's attention to the close relationship between group members and mentors also demonstrates the importance of social support in character development. A mutually supportive relationship creates an environment in which members feel comfortable talking about their challenges. It reflects the importance of emotional and social aspects in character formation, where self-awareness and openness to peers and mentors can play a crucial role.

Thus, the interview with Ari describes that the teenage scientific group not only serves as a platform for the development of scientific knowledge

but also as a means of character formation and moral leadership. Engaging students in roles that require responsibility and integrity not only helps them grow as young scientists but also as ethical and responsible individuals in society.

The statement by the group member, Afi, provides an important insight into the positive impact on moral values through his participation in youth scientific groups. The focus on the question, "How can our research bring positive benefits to society?" emphasizes that ethical aspects and moral values are actively integrated into every phase of the research project. It demonstrates the awareness of group members of social responsibility and the positive impact that their scientific work can produce.

Observations of the development of collaborative and teamwork capabilities of Afi and other group members suggest that teenage scientific groups can be laboratories for social and interpersonal skills development. The ability to appreciate each member's contribution and resolve conflict constructively is a powerful indicator of character development. In this context, teamwork not only serves to project goals, but also to form empathy skills, effective communication, and collaboration, which are key elements in character development.

The importance of understanding moral values in a practical context, as stated by Afi, suggests that character learning in a youth scientific group is not purely theoretical. By placing moral values in an applied context, members of the group not only understand these values conceptually but can also apply them in everyday life situations. It shows that experience in a young scientific group can create a deeper and more practical understanding of integrity, responsibility, and other ethical values.

Structured evaluation of the impact of teenage scientific group activities on character development is an important step. Interviews and observations can be used to measure changes in attitudes, values, and character skills of group members after engaging in various activities. Through the provision of Al-Ghazali values and scientific skills, group members can have a positive impact on the environment around them, creating an environment that supports character growth.

CONCLUSION

To integrate Al-Ghazali's value-based character education concept into a modern context, involving a youth scientific group into a strategic choice. The Al-Ghazali concept, with its focus on ethics, morality, and moral development, proved to remain relevant in shaping individual character in the modern era. Extracurricular youth scientific groups emerged as effective containers for applying Al-Ghazali values in character education activities, producing a positive impact on the self-confidence, work ethics, collaborative skills, and moral values of group members. The use of technology needs to be enhanced to convey Al-Ghazali values in an attractive and relevant way to the younger generation. Continued monitoring and evaluation are needed to measure the impact of character education programs, and character education materials need to be developed to fit the context of modern life. Al-Ghazali's value-based character education can be a relevant and effective solution in shaping individuals

who are intelligent, moral, and capable of facing the challenges of the modern era. This approach is not only about creating intellectual intelligence but also carving solid and moral characters for a better future.

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