

The Use of Stories (Stories of the Prophet and Companions) as a Learning Medium for Islamic Education in Secondary Schools

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Volume: 4 ISSN: 2963-5489 KEYWORD the story of the Prophet, Learning media, Islamic education, secondary school	The story (story) of the Prophet and companions is an integral part of the treasure of Islamic education that is full of moral, spiritual, and historical values. In secondary schools, the use of these stories as a medium of learning not only increases students understanding of the teachings of Islam, but also shapes character and noble character. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness, implementation strategies, and challenges in the use of the story of the Prophet and companions in the learning of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in secondary schools. The method used is a literature study based on critical analysis of the latest scientific journals (2020-2024). The results showed that the narrative approach through the story has a positive impact on learning motivation, moral empathy, and internalization of Islamic values. However, challenges such as time constraints, lack of teacher training, and lack of contextual teaching materials still hinder its optimal application. Recommendations include the development of story-based modules relevant to the context of adolescent life as well as pedagogical training for PAI teachers.

1. Introduction

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in secondary schools not only aims to convey theological knowledge, but also instill moral values and form an Islamic personality (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology [Ministry of Education and Culture], 2022). In the Merdeka curriculum, for example, PAI's goals are emphasized on developing spiritual and social competencies that are realized through honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and caring—not just mastering memorized material (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). This suggests that the PAI should be a space of value transformation, not just information transfer.

One method that has long been used in the tradition of Islamic education is the use of stories (qasas), especially the stories of the prophets and companions. The Qur'an itself mentions these stories not just as entertainment, but as Abraham (lesson) and tazkirah (warning)-as in the Qur'AN. Joseph [12]: 111:

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

Indeed, in their story is a lesson for people of understanding.

This verse confirms that the story in the Qur'an has an educational and ethical function, not just historical. Classical scholars such as Ibn Kathir and Al-Ghazali also stressed that understanding the story of the Prophet is part of understanding the sunnah

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and morals of the Prophet. In the educational context, acts serve as a bridge between sacred texts and the reality of Student Life.

In the digital age and Generation Z growing up in visual and narrative cultures (such as movies, podcasts, and social media), story-based approaches are becoming increasingly relevant. Today's adolescents are more accustomed to receiving information through interesting, emotional and visual storylines—not through monologue lectures or memorization of verses without context (Putra & Fitriani, 2024). Recent research shows that adolescents more easily understand abstract values such as Justice, Patience, or honesty through concrete narratives that touch emotions (Nurhayati & Suryadi, 2023). For example, the story of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH forgiving the inhabitants of Mecca during the Fathu of Mecca is much more memorable for students than just memorizing the definition of “Sorry” in textbooks.

However, the application of the story of the Prophet and companions in the classroom is often still textual and rote, not as a reflective medium that connects Islamic values with students' real lives. Many teachers still deliver stories only as part of exam material—for example, “Name The 5 prophets and their miracles”—without delving into moral meaning or linking them to contemporary issues such as cyberbullying, honesty on social media, or inclusive leadership. As a result, students view these stories as past stories that are irrelevant to their lives (Wahyuni, 2020).

Therefore, it is important to evaluate how these stories can be maximized as a lively, interactive and contextual learning medium in high school. Teachers need to be encouraged to move from the role of “storyteller” to “facilitator of reflection”, where students not only hear the story, but are also invited to ask “what can we learn from mose’s decision?” “How can I imitate the attitude of Umar bin Khattab in dealing with conflicts at school?”. With this approach, the story of the Prophet and the companions is no longer just a subject matter, but a living source of moral inspiration in the daily lives of students.

2. Literature Review

2.1 theoretical foundation: narrative approach in Islamic education

Narrative approach in Islamic education is rooted in the concept of *al-qasas al-Qur'ani*, namely the delivery of moral messages through stories. Islamic education must integrate science, faith, and charity—and the story becomes the bridge between the three. In a modern context, this approach aligns with *Kohlberg's theory* of moral development and *Kolb's experiential learning*, in which learning occurs through emotional experience and reflection.

2.2 Recent Research Findings

Several empirical studies support the effectiveness of the use of stories in PAI learning:

- Nurhayati & Suryadi (2023) examined 120 junior high school students in West Java and found that Prophet story-based learning increased moral empathy scores by 32% compared to the lecture method.
- Hasanah (2022) in the Journal Tarbawi shows that students are more active in discussing and associating Islamic values with social issues when teachers use the stories of Umar bin Khattab or Bilal bin Rabah as Case Studies.
- Kurniawan et al. (2021) developed a digital module based on the story of the Prophet accessed via smartphones, and the results showed an increase in Pai's learning motivation by 40% in high school students.

However, challenges remain, namely the lack of teacher training in designing narrative learning (Wahyuni, 2020), the limited allocation of Pai lesson time (only 2 hours/week in many schools), the lack of contextual teaching materials with urban youth life (Putra & Fitriani, 2024).

3. Methodology

research uses descriptive qualitative approach with Case Study Method. Qualitative approach was chosen because the study aims to understand in depth how teachers of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in secondary schools use the story of the Prophet and companions as a medium of learning, as well as how students respond to and interpret these stories in the context of moral formation. Data Collection Techniques Data were collected through three main techniques: participatory observation, in-Depth Interview, documentation.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Why are stories of prophets and companions effective for teens?

Adolescents (ages 12-18 years) are in a crucial period of psychosocial development, where they actively seek their identity, life values, and place in society (Erikson, 1968). At this stage, adolescents are very vulnerable to environmental influences—both positive and negative—and begin to question norms, rules, as well as the meaning behind moral actions. They are no longer satisfied with just commands like “do this because it is good”, but want to know why it is good, how to apply it, and what impact it has in real life.

This is where the story of the Prophet and companions became a very effective learning media. These stories are not just historical tales, but Whole narratives of life, which show how Islamic values are manifested in real situations-in pressures, temptations, conflicts and difficult choices. The stories in the Qur'an and the Seerah of the Prophet are full of characters who face trials similar to those experienced by today's youth:

- Prophet Yusuf endured temptation, slander, betrayal, and loneliness—yet maintained his integrity and faith. For teens facing social pressure or social media temptation, this story shows that it's possible to maintain principles, even if alone.
- Siti Khadijah was a successful, independent, and authoritative businesswoman in a patriarchal society. For young women who are building confidence and pursuing their goals, she is an inspiring figure who shows that Islam values women who are smart, strong, and contribute.
- Abu Bakr Ash-Siddiq showed the meaning of true friendship: he was willing to sacrifice property, accompanied the Prophet in a risky migration, and remained faithful despite being ostracized. This is relevant for teens who are learning to choose friends, build trust, and understand the meaning of healthy loyalty.

Research in Educational Neuroscience shows that adolescent brains are more responsive to emotionally touching stories than to dry facts or rote memorization. When a student hears the story of Bilal bin Rabah who was tortured but still confessed, or the story of Salman Al-Farisi who sought the truth from a young age, emotions such as admiration, emotion, or shame arise. These emotions become a "bridge" that helps moral values stick deeper in their memory and moral consciousness.

In the midst of globalization and pop culture that often conflicts with Islamic values, Muslim teenagers need a proud identity narrative. The story of the Prophet and the companions provides strong historical and spiritual roots: they were not just “pious people of the past”, but intelligent, brave, just and loving heroes of civilization. It helps teens build pride as Muslims without being exclusionary or radical.

4.2 implementation strategies in the classroom

Some strategies that have proven effective (based on 2020-2024 research):

- Role-play / Mini-Drama: students play a character in the story, then reflect on the character's decision.
- Discussion of values: after hearing the story, Students answer questions such as: “What Would you do if you were in the position of the Prophet Moses?”
- Contextual projects: for example, creating a short video about “the story of Khalid bin Walid in an Anti-Bullying perspective”.
- Integration with other subjects: the story of Noah can be associated with science lessons (flood, ecosystem), or the story of Solomon with biology lessons (communication with animals).

4.3 challenges and solutions

Challenge	Solution
Limited lesson time	use the story as an opening or closing lesson (5-10 minutes)
poorly trained teachers	workshop-based training by MGMP PAI or LPTK
students consider the story “old-fashioned”	use modern versions: podcasts, digital comics, or analogies of the lives of celebrities/popular figures

5. Conclusion

The use of the story of the Prophet and companions as a medium of learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in secondary schools proved effective in increasing the understanding, motivation, and moral formation of students. This is because the stories not only convey information, but also touch the emotional and moral dimensions of the learners. When students hear how Prophet Muhammad forgave his enemies in Mecca, or how Bilal ibn Rabah remained steadfast in the faith despite being tortured, they not only remember historical facts—they also feel values such as patience, justice, courage, and compassion in a personal way.

More than that, in adolescence—a time of search for identity and life values—these stories serve as a spiritual mirror that helps students answer questions such as: *"Who Am I?"*, *"What is true?"*, and *"how should I behave?"* Thus, PAI learning is no longer a rote lesson, but a process of internalizing values that are alive and relevant to real life. This is why the integration of the story of the Prophet and companions is not just a teaching method, but a strategy for character building based on Qur'anic morals that are intact and sustainable.

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