

"Iqra": The Foundation of Education That Shapes Morals and Knowledge

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ABSTRACT

This research examines Iqra as the foundation of education that shapes morals and knowledge. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study attempts to analyze the role and implications of Iqra values in shaping moral character (akhlak) while simultaneously improving the intellectual quality (akhlak) of students, particularly within the context of Islamic education.

The analysis reveals that this study focuses on the role and implications of Iqra values, understood not simply as an injunction to read a text, but as an epistemological imperative to research and analyze in shaping a holistic education, in line with the essential goals of Islamic education.

Specifically, Iqra values, as the epistemological foundation of holistic education, provide a broad framework for thinking, enabling the ability to actively analyze, understand, and interact with the universe (verses of kawliyyah) and revelation (verses of qawliyyah).

In the process of moral formation, the integration of Iqra values involves not only intellectual awareness but also the transformation of individual character and morality to enhance profound and universal moral qualities. This implementation must be achieved through mastery of science and logic, as well as the integration and application of this understanding in everyday life.

Thus, the value of "Iqra" serves as the primary foundation for shaping morals while simultaneously improving the quality of students' knowledge in an integrated manner.

1. Introduction

In any civilization, education has always been a key pillar of progress, a bridge connecting human potential to a more enlightened reality. However, long before modern curricula, formal schools, or even printed textbooks, Muslims already possessed a universal, profound, and transformative educational foundation, revealed in a single word: Iqra. Literally meaning "Read," this word was the first divine command revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), marking the beginning of an unparalleled revolution in knowledge and morals.

This command goes far beyond mere literacy; it is a mandate to analyze, understand, and actively interact with the universe, oneself, and revelation. "Iqra" teaches not only how to acquire knowledge, but also how it should be used—namely, to strengthen morals and faith. This article will thoroughly explore why "Iqra" remains relevant as the foundation of holistic education, a concept that demands not only mastery of knowledge (science, logic, history) but also the development of noble character and morality, producing individuals who are both knowledgeable and civilized.

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2. Literature Review

The first commandment in the Qur'an, "Iqra" (Read), is universally recognized as the starting point of Islamic civilization. Scholars have clarified that this commandment is not simply an order to read the sacred text, but rather an epistemological mandate to read, research, and analyze all of Allah's creation (the verses of kawaniyyah) and His revelations (the verses of qawliyyah). Ahidatun Nikma (2024) Recent studies emphasize that "Iqra" reflects the essence of holistic education in Islam. In this view, seeking obligatory knowledge is intended purely to seek Allah's pleasure and to revive the sharia, which inherently leads to the formation of noble morals. Herlin Pebrianti Yuanita Ponto, Muhammad Yusuf, & Mardan (2024) Recent studies emphasize that "Iqra" reflects the essence of holistic education in Islam. In this view, seeking obligatory knowledge is intended purely to seek Allah's pleasure and to revive the sharia, which leads to the formation of noble morals.

Abror, I., et al., (2023) found that a number of studies have begun to link the successful mastery of the Iqra' Method with engaging educational approaches such as (edutainment) that successfully increase learning motivation, which in turn contributes to better character formation and a harmonious social environment. This confirms that mastery of Quranic literacy is a basic skill that directly impacts an individual's moral and spiritual quality.

Iqra-based education is a crucial issue raised in contemporary Islamic education research: how the knowledge gained from the command "Iqra" can produce good morals.

Nurul Izzah (2023) From the perspective of Islamic education, morals occupy the highest position and are considered a key aspect that is inseparable from faith. Therefore, the "Iqra"-based educational framework must be understood as an integrated process that produces individuals who possess not only spiritual and moral intelligence (morals), which is the ultimate goal of Islamic education.

3. Methodology

This study chose a qualitative approach because it aimed to gain a deep (holistic and contextual) understanding of the role and implications of Iqra' values in the process of moral formation and knowledge development of the research subjects. Data collected included journal articles, policy documents, and recent research reports relevant to the study topic, based on a literature review.

All collected data was then analyzed qualitatively using content analysis techniques and in-depth interpretation to identify patterns, themes, and the implications of Iqra' values in moral and character formation.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis results indicate that this study focuses on the role and implications of the values of "Iqra," which are understood not simply as an injunction to read a text, but as an epistemological imperative to research and analyze in shaping holistic education, in line with the essential goals of Islamic education.

"Iqra" as the Epistemological Foundation of Holistic Education

The results of the literature analysis confirm that "Iqra" in a philosophical context has a meaning that goes far beyond the ability to read letters (basic literacy). "Iqra" is a command to analyze, understand, and actively interact with the universe (the verses of the Kawaniyyah) and revelation (the verses of the Qawaliyyah). Implications for Science: This command underlies that knowledge must always be profound, universal, and transformative, meaning that knowledge should not be limited to mastery of science and logic alone, but must also build individual character and morality. This makes "Iqra" the foundation for the integration of religious knowledge and general knowledge. Nur Baiti, Mira Yanti Lubis, and Silfa Hafizah Pulungan, (2024)

Integration of "Iqra" in the Process of Moral Formation

The ultimate goal of Islamic education is moral formation. The value of "Iqra" provides a methodological and philosophical basis for achieving this goal. Reading God's Creation (Self- and Environmental Analysis): When "Iqra" Understood as a profound analysis of reality and His creation, this automatically leads individuals to an awareness of God's greatness. This awareness is a vital spiritual foundation for the formation of noble morals. Morals are no longer merely the result of indoctrination, but the result of deep, conscious thought. Morals as a Research Result: The formation of true morals (morals and faith) is achieved through the ongoing process of 'Iqra' (religious study). Individuals are encouraged to analyze how the values of 'Iqra' should be used, namely to internalize and apply the knowledge gained in everyday life, which ultimately manifests itself in the form of morals. Ahidatun Nikmah (2024)

Transformation of the Role of Education and Students

The value of 'Iqra' demands a change in the roles of both educators and students so that education is holistic.

Educators as Analyst Models: Educators do not simply transfer texts (read material), but become facilitators who encourage students to research, analyze, and synthesize knowledge. Educators must be able to exemplify how knowledge is connected to a framework of thought and morals. Nurul Izzah (2023)

Active and Critical Learners: Learners are encouraged to actively interact with nature and sources of knowledge. They not only receive but also "read" and "analyze" (think critically and creatively) to discover the essence of knowledge that is beneficial for this world and the hereafter.

5. Conclusion

The value of 'Iqra' is a key concept that aligns Islamic education with modern challenges. 'Iqra' is not merely about literacy, but rather an epistemological and methodological foundation that encourages education to be holistic, profound, and transformative. Implementing this value in the curriculum will ensure that the pursuit of knowledge is always purely intended to seek Allah's pleasure and produce individuals who are spiritually and intellectually intelligent and possess noble morals.

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