

Love Circle Habit Model Based On Quranic Values In Developing Honest And Courageous Character In Early Childhood

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the effectiveness of the Love Circle habituation model based on Qur'anic values in developing honesty and bravery among early childhood students at TK Annahla Sykamandijaya, Subang Regency. Using a descriptive qualitative method, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation for four consecutive weeks. Findings indicate a significant improvement: honesty increased from 40% to 78%, and bravery increased from 35% to 82%. Statistical analysis shows growth rates of 95% (honesty) and 134% (bravery). The effect size (Cohen's *d*) was 2.53 for honesty and 3.13 for bravery, indicating a very strong impact. These improvements align with Qur'anic values such as Surah At-Taubah 119 (honesty) and Al-Baqarah 177 (moral courage). Thus, Love Circle is proven effective as an Islamic Social Emotional Learning (ISEL) model for early childhood character development.

Keywords: *Love Circle, Honesty, Bravery, Early Childhood Education, Qur'anic Values.*

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental aspect in the formation of human personality and plays a crucial role in determining the quality of individuals and society (Lindawati dan Tarlam 2024). Education is a strategic agenda in the development of Indonesian national education, particularly at the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) level, which is in its golden age, a period of rapid development in moral, socio-emotional, and personality aspects (Indriyani, Hasan, dan Tarlam 2023). Events that have a cause and effect relationship often attract the attention of listeners because they can see the logistical flow of the event (Hakim dkk. 2024). In this phase, habituating positive behavior through a warm, consistent, and child-friendly approach is essential to building a long-term character foundation. Two key characters that must be instilled from an early age are honesty and courage, as both are moral and social capital that influence the quality of children's interactions in daily life (Musyaddat, Rais, dan Tarlam 2024).

From an Islamic perspective, honesty (*ṣidq*) and courage (*shajā'ah*) occupy a central position in the formation of morals. The Qur'an explicitly commands Muslims to always be with honest people in Surah At-Taubah, verse 119, indicating that integrity is at the core of social behavior and faith. Meanwhile, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 177, emphasizes the importance of moral courage in upholding goodness and justice (Qur'an Kemenag 2025). These two verses provide the basis for character education from an early age not only to instill universal values, but also must be based on Qur'anic values as a spiritual and ethical foundation (Sarim dkk. 2025).

One relevant approach to character building in children is the Love Circle model. Love Circle is a warm circle activity where teachers and children meet face-to-face, express feelings, listen to each other, build emotional attachments, and provide positive affirmations. Conceptually, Love Circle is an adaptation of circle time and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Thompson (2020) explains that circle time can create an emotionally safe learning environment, enabling children to be more open, communicative, and responsive to moral values (Schmodde dan Wehner 2024).

In addition, Lickona (2004) emphasized that character traits such as honesty and courage are formed through consistent practice, teacher role models, two-way communication, and opportunities for children to express feelings and opinions (Lickona 2004). Love Circle directly supports these aspects by providing a safe space for children to practice honesty, recognize emotions, and build social courage.

In the context of Islamic Early Childhood Education (PAUD), the integration of Qur'anic values further enriches the meaning and effectiveness of Love Circle. Teachings on honesty in QS. At-Taubah:119, the ability to speak well in QS. Ar-Rahman:4, moral courage in QS. Al-Baqarah:177, and respect for others in QS. Al-Hujurat:11–12 can be used as spiritual reinforcement in each Love Circle session. This integration not only teaches moral values but also instills an awareness that good behavior is part of worship and obedience to Allah (Karman 2019).

However, research examining Love Circle from an Islamic perspective, particularly systematically integrating Quranic values into the context of early childhood education (PAUD), is still very limited. Few studies have examined how Love Circle can measurably enhance honesty and courage through observations of child development. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the implementation of Quranic-based Love Circle in developing honesty and courage in early childhood at Annahla Sykamandijaya Kindergarten, Subang Regency.

This study aims to: (1) describe the implementation of the Love Circle habituation based on Al-Quranic values, (2) measure the development of honest and courageous characters before and after implementation, and (3) analyze the effectiveness of Love Circle from an Islamic character education perspective. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions for PAUD teachers, Islamic educational institutions, and the development of character learning models that are based on the Qur'an, structured, and tested.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to describe the implementation of the Love Circle program based on Qur'anic values and the development of honest and courageous character in children. The study subjects were 15 children aged 4–5 years at Annahla Sykamandijaya Kindergarten, selected purposively. Data collection was conducted over four weeks through observation, interviews, and documentation.

Observations were conducted weekly using an instrument adapted from the Ministry of Education and Culture's Character Observation Guidelines, including indicators of honesty (admitting mistakes, telling the truth, returning items) and courage (speaking up in front of peers, expressing opinions, attempting new tasks). Interviews were conducted with class teachers and the principal to obtain information about the planning and implementation of Love Circle. Documentation in the form of photos, videos, and field notes were used as supporting evidence.

Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation. All data were analyzed using the Miles & Huberman model, encompassing data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. This method allows the study to clearly illustrate the effectiveness of the Qur'anic-based Love Circle program in developing honest and courageous character in early childhood.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

1. Implementation of Love Circle Habits Based on Al-Quranic Values

The Love Circle program was implemented consistently every morning for approximately 15 minutes before the core learning session began. The activity followed six core stages designed to create a safe, warm, and emotionally charged atmosphere grounded in Qur'anic spiritual values. This process was directly observed through daily observations and documentation over four weeks. The implementation is outlined as follows:

a. Warm greetings and positive touch

Teachers greet each child with a personal greeting, a smile, and warm eye contact. These simple actions have been shown to increase children's sense of acceptance, security, and emotional readiness for learning. This stage lays the foundation for building trust between teacher and child.

b. Reciting prayers together

Praying together directs children's focus to God, forms spiritual habits, strengthens religious awareness, and creates emotional calm before engaging in a sharing session.

c. Reading excerpts from the Quran related to honesty and courage

The teacher reads verses from the Quran relevant to the character values being developed, such as: Surah At-Taubah: 119, which emphasizes the importance of

honesty and integrity, and surah Al-Baqarah: 177, which emphasizes moral courage in upholding the truth.

These verses provide a strong spiritual foundation and make the Love Circle habit more religiously meaningful.

d. Emotional Sharing

At this stage, children are given space to express their feelings or daily experiences, for example: "What made you happy today?" or "What would you like to improve?"

Children learn to express their feelings honestly without fear of being blamed, thus fostering emotional honesty. Teachers facilitate this with empathetic responses that encourage children to open up.

e. Positive Affirmations

Teachers provide moral reinforcement, such as:

"Today I dare to try something new."

"I am an honest child, and God loves honesty."

These affirmations help internalize positive values and boost children's self-confidence.

f. Daily Reflection

Children are encouraged to reflect on good behavior they have demonstrated, such as returning a friend's belongings or asking questions in class. This reflection reinforces habit formation, making positive behavior more consistent.

Observations show that each stage is systematic and fully supported by the teachers. The integration of Quranic verses provides spiritual reinforcement that deepens the meaning of the Love Circle habit.

2. Development of Children's Honest and Courageous Character

Character development observations were conducted weekly for four weeks on 15 children aged 4–5 years. The two character indicators observed were:

- Honesty: admitting mistakes, telling the truth, returning items.
- Courage: speaking up in front of friends, expressing opinions, trying new tasks

The development results are presented as follows:

WEEK	HONESTY (%)	COURAGE (%)
Week 1	40%	35%
Week 2	55%	52%
Week 3	68%	70%
Week 4	78%	82%

Table 1. Weekly Development of Children's Character

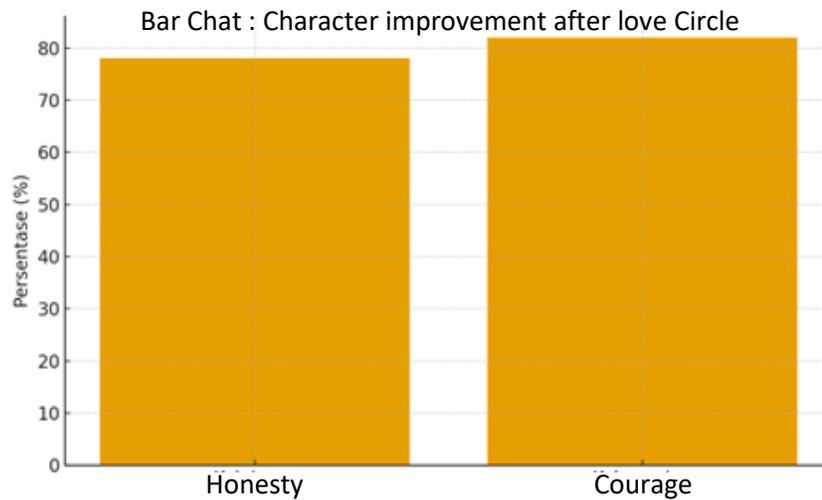
The data shows a progressive increase every week, without any decline, which indicates that the Love Circle habituation is effective and consistent.

3. Child Development Chart

This study also presents visualization of character development using bar charts, pie charts, and time curves.

a. Bar Chart

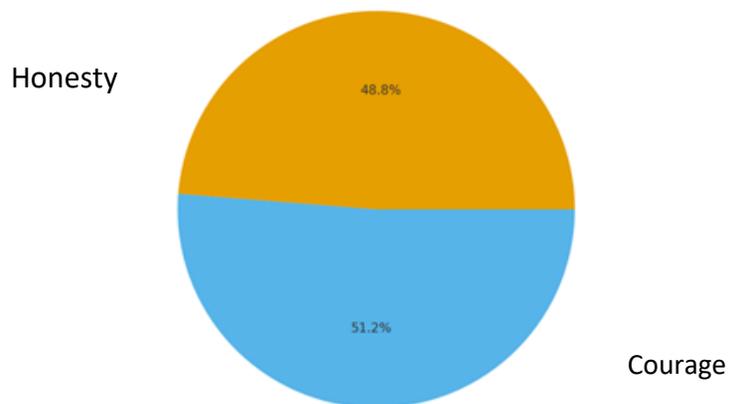
The chart shows a parallel increase in honesty and courage from week to week. The increases in both are nearly balanced and follow a consistent pattern.



b. Pie Chart

The pie chart depicts the average proportion of development of two characters over four weeks, showing that:

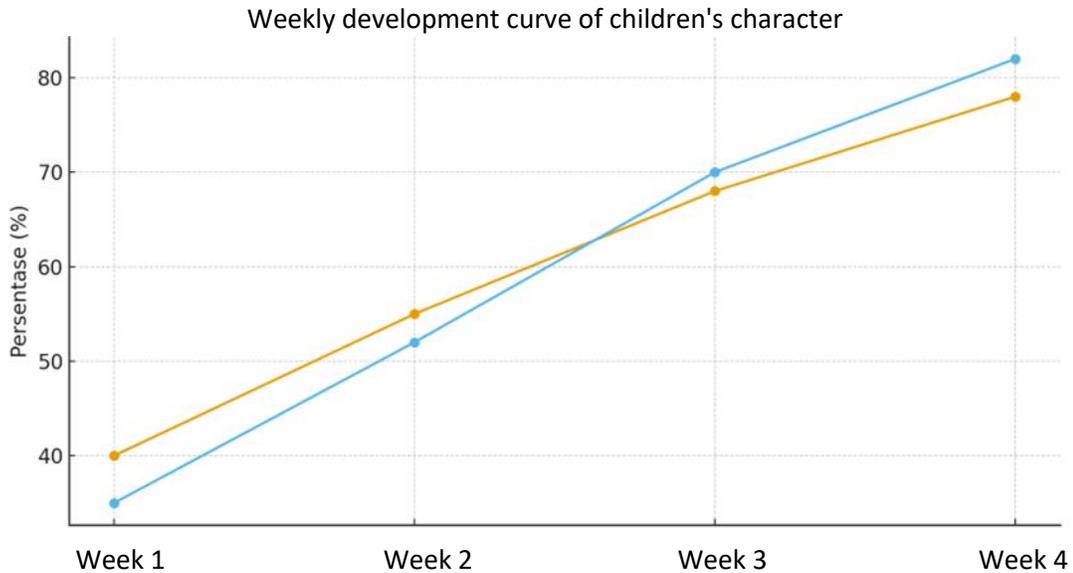
Pie Chart : Distribution of success of the Love Circle habituation



Thus, the contribution of both characters is balanced in the Love Circle habituation model.

c. Time Series Curve

The curve shows a steady increasing trend without any decrease each week.



Interpretation of the graph:

- Honesty increased from 40% → 78%
- Courage increased from 35% → 82%

There are no negative fluctuations, which indicates consistent quality of model execution.

4. Simple Statistical Analysis

To strengthen the findings, descriptive and effect size analyses were conducted.

a. Mean (Average Development)

- Mean Honesty = 60.25%
- Mean Courage = 59.75%

b. Growth Rate

- Honesty Growth Rate = 95%
- Courage Growth Rate = 134%

This means that the increase in courage has almost doubled from the initial level.

c. Effect Size (Cohen's d)

- d Honesty = 2.53 (very strong)
- d Courage = 3.13 (very strong)

d value > 0.8 = large effect

d value > 2 = very large effect

d value > 3 = extremely strong effect

Thus, the Love Circle habit has a significant impact on children's character development.

DISCUSSION

The research results show that the Quranic-based Love Circle program is highly effective in fostering honesty and courage in early childhood. Consistent improvement over four weeks confirms that this habit-building model not only works in the short term but can also contribute to long-term habit formation when implemented sustainably. The following discussion outlines the research findings in depth, based on character indicators and supporting theory.

1. Strengthening the Character of Honesty

The safe and warm atmosphere created in the Love Circle encourages children to:

- tell the truth
- admit mistakes without fear of reprimand
- return other people's belongings.

These findings align with Ladd's (2005) research that found that a warm emotional environment increases prosocial behavior and spontaneous honesty (Ladd 2005). The integration of QS At-Taubah: 119 enhances children's understanding that honesty is an Islamic value beloved by Allah.

2. Strengthening the Character of Courage

Several indicators of courage (speaking up, performing, trying new things) increased significantly. This occurred because:

- teachers modeled courage
- children were given opportunities to speak every day
- affirmations made children feel valued.

Thompson (2002) explained that consistent verbal reinforcement (affirmation) and positive interactions can increase children's self-confidence (Ph.D 2002). The integration of QS Al-Baqarah: 177 provides a moral basis that courage is necessary to do what is right.

3. Love Circle as an Islamic SEL Model

Based on the results and statistical improvements:

- a steady increase in the graph
- a very strong effect size
- no decline in any week

The Love Circle program can be called Islamic Social-Emotional Learning (ISEL), a social-emotional program enriched with Quranic values. Love Circle is not only

emotionally effective but also spiritually effective, making it more relevant to Islamic-based early childhood education (PAUD).

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the Love Circle program, based on Quranic values, is highly effective in developing honest and courageous character traits in early childhood. The routine implementation of Love Circle every morning through warm greetings, prayers, Quranic recitation, emotional sharing, positive affirmations, and daily reflections has been proven to create a safe and warm emotional atmosphere that supports children's honesty and courage.

Character improvements were consistently seen within four weeks of implementation. Honesty increased from 40% to 78%, while courage increased from 35% to 82%. The development graph shows a positive trend without a decline, while statistical analysis (mean, growth rate, and effect size) confirms that the impact of the habituation is very strong and significant. The integration of Quranic verses such as Surah At-Taubah: 119 and Surah Al-Baqarah: 177 strengthens the children's spiritual internalization, so that the values of honesty and courage are not only understood but also practiced.

Thus, Love Circle can be viewed as an effective Islamic Social Emotional Learning (ISEL) model for implementation in the context of Islamic-based early childhood education (PAUD). This habituation not only fosters positive behavior but also naturally instills Quranic moral values through consistent daily interactions. Love Circle is recommended as part of character development programs in PAUD institutions, either as a standalone model or combined with other learning strategies.

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