

## **PURPOSE AND CONCEPT OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IMAM ZARKASYI AND AHMAD DAHLAN THOUGHTS**

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this article is to describe the purpose and concept of character education in Islamic perspective according to Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan's thought and to found the similarities between their views about character education. The research that authors conducted in this paper is qualitative approach which included of library research. Authors used content analysis and comparative study as analysis data, which is an analysis of content that focuses on the interpretation of a work that tries to offer epistemological assumptions. The research findings showed that (1) Imam Zarkasyi's concept on character education was explained in Five Principles of Modern Boarding School (Panca Jiwa Pondok Modern) as follows: sincerity; simplicity; independent; Islamic Brotherhood (ukhuwah islamiyah); and free spirit (2) And the basic concept of character education according to Ahmad Dahlan is based on Islamic perspective has consists of three things, faith, knowledge and charity (3) Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan had some similarities in character education as follows: prioritize personality and character education, emphasized the need for moral development that can be maximized in the education system in boarding school and schools, aspired to develop children physically and spiritually based on Islamic guidance (Qur'an and Sunnah), used exemplary / modeling method in character education implementation.*

**Keywords:** *Character Education, Islamic Perspective, Imam Zarkasyi, Ahmad Dahlan*

### **A. Introduction**

The young generation is a nations' hope, the role of the youth is very influential in the future life of a nation. If a nation has a bad youth character so that nation will also be destroyed and vice versa, if the nation has a youth good character, that nation will continue to be victorious. To be known in Indonesia founded that young people are involved in the abuse of illegal drugs and the stigma of students is currently exacerbated by the social deviant behavior they do in the form of promiscuity. We have also witnessed the changes in behavior of the millennial era that have led to symptoms of reduced socialization and direct interaction between individuals, as well as a tendency to want things instantly, even though everything can be achieved only through a process, by doing hard work, discipline, focus, and patience and not giving up easily. This is what the community's complaints are all about these days. The

younger generation of the nation that was supposed to be the figure behind the nation's progress instead came up with his daily behavior that put ethics and morals aside. Time after time passes, but the impact of the flow of globalization is growing in today's youth culture. These events create a bad stigma of society towards the world of education. Education is considered a failure to educate and print its students into noble people. In fact, educators have made the most of it. But the moral woes of students have indeed been snared and indoctrinated by various bad influences from outside of home and school.

The emergence of character education is still believed to be a very powerful medium in building intelligence as well as a better personality for students. Therefore, education is continuously built and developed so that from the process of implementation produces the expected generation.<sup>1</sup> In the Indonesia National Education System is also stated that national education has the function of developing capabilities and forming a dignified national character and civilization in order to educate the nation's life, aiming at developing the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear of God, has noble character and becomes a democratic and responsible citizen. Based on the quote can be concluded that between education in general and national education has the same function and purpose in shaping good character / personality towards students. This shows how much seriousness the Indonesia government is in trying to realize character education in this beloved country.

To build a human being who has great character values as formulated in the purpose of national education, it takes an education system that has comprehensive materials (*kaffah*), and supported by the correct management and implementation. Related to this Islamic education has a goal that is in line with the purpose of national education. In general, Islamic education carries out the main mission of humanizing a human. Islam cannot be separated from the religious leaders who spread or develop Islamic education in this world, and in our own Country there are some Islamic educational figures which have huge services in the development of Islamic education.<sup>2</sup> There are many existing Islamic education figures, both those who are known and those who unknown, of course, there are many lessons and lessons that we can take. Over time, many of the figures who have contributed is forgotten, even their teachings and participation have been neglected. Therefore, we as agents of change should not forget their services. In fact, we need to be more active in carrying out their vision and mission. They are heroes who can help us get the ness of God, and among the thinkers and the founder of Islamic Education are Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan.

Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan are two educational figures who have owned by Indonesia since the Dutch colonial period. Both of them have long developed an educational concept adapted to the social, cultural and religious conditions of the

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<sup>1</sup> Mohammad Chowdhury, "Emphasizing Morals, Values, Ethics, and Character Education in Science Education and Science Teaching," *MOJES: Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences* 4, no. 2 (2018): 1–16.

<sup>2</sup> Yunita Noor Azizah, "Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Budaya Religius: Studi Multi Kasus Di SMP Negeri 10 Samarinda Dan SMP IT Cordova Samarinda" (Thesis, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2014).

Indonesian society. Not only exploring the concept of education for people who were still colonized at that time, but they also played an active role in implementing and directing in the world of education and struggled through building education for the indigenous people by establishing Darussalam Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School and Muhammadiyah educational organization. Two organizations that build independent souls for indigenous peoples using the basis of socio-cultural power on the one hand, and religion on the other, were founded by these two figures. Therefore, author is very interested with Islamic education figures thought in Indonesia. So that we can know more about the struggles of these figures in advancing education in Indonesia especially their main thoughts about character education in Islamic perspective.

The author's interest is not in the question of whether or not a theory is famous. But here the author is trying to do research in exploring related thoughts. The purpose of this article is to describe the purpose and concept of character education in Islamic perspective according to Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan's thought and to found the similarities between their views about character education. Based on the description of the background of the study mentioned above, the authors are interested in conducting further research by raising the title: **Purpose Concept of Character Education In Islamic Perspective: a Comparative Study of Imam Zarkasyi And Ahmad Dahlan Thoughts.**

## **B. Research Methods**

The research the authors conducted for this paper is qualitative approach. Qualitative approach is research that emphasizes qualitative data collection (not numbers) and uses qualitative analysis in data exposure, data analysis, and conclusion retrieval. The types of research included in the study with a literary approach include case studies, biographies, phenomenology, ethnography, and library research. And this research included of library research. Library research is the type of research done by collecting data sourced from books, journals, books, articles, and scientific papers. Library studies are also a series of activities related to the method of collecting data, reading, taking notes and processing research materials.<sup>3</sup>

Data collection is carried out through the stages of the retrieval process of primary data, to improve understanding of the findings obtained from the literature related to this study. The data collection method that authors use is the documentation method. The documentation method is to find data about things or variables in the form of journals, books, dissertations, newspapers, magazines, which are relevant to the topic.

In analyzing the data, the authors used content analysis and comparative study, which is an analysis of content that focuses on the interpretation of a work, that tries to offer epistemological assumptions to understanding that not only revolves around the analysis of the text but also emphasize context so that we find similarities and differences between two perception. This method is collecting and analyzing the content of a text. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within some given qualitative data. This research

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<sup>3</sup> Albi Anggito and Johan Setiawan, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher), 2018).

was conducted to compare the similarities between Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan thoughts on purpose and concept of character education in Islamic perspective.

### C. Imam Zarkasyi as Islamic Education Figure

Imam Zarkasyi was born in Gontor Ponorogo Village on March 21, 1910. He studied at the Jamsaren Solo Islamic Boarding School and at Mamba'ul 'Ulum Solo School. Then, continued to the Adabiyah Arabiyah School until 1930. Especially at the Adabiyah Arabiyah School, he studied Arabic Language. So he went to West Sumatra, studying from Darul Ulum Egypt graduates at Normal Islam and Sumatra Thawalib in Padang. Dr. Mahmud Yunus is one of his teachers.<sup>4</sup>

In 1936 he returned to Gontor, he then introduced a new educational program known as *Kulliyatul Mu'allimin Al-Islamiyah* (KMI), this KMI-style education system is different from the Dutch colonial education system at the time. However, this system is not necessarily the same as other Islamic education concepts even though the institution is in the form of Islamic boarding schools. KMI is an education level equivalent to a secondary school. Junior and high school levels are combined within 6 years, grades 1-3 are likened to junior high school level, while grades 4-6 are likened to high school level. This concept is a self-contained concept of Modern Islamic Boarding School without any outside intervention.

The first time KMI was established, Imam Zarkasyi was appointed as director. He really understands the KMI concept that he initiated to apply in the boarding school that has been established with his two brothers. The idea of establishing KMI was born from his journey of studying from Islamic boarding schools. While studying in Solo he invented two concepts of Islamic education, the first is a modern madrasah and the second is a traditional boarding school.<sup>5</sup> So when establishing KMI, Zarkasyi combined two concepts of Islamic education that existed at that time, from which it was asked to come up with the concept of the establishment of KMI Gontor Islamic Boarding School. KMI implements an integrated curriculum system between religious and general sciences. As the director, Zarkasyi always emphasizes that the application of foreign languages (Arabic and English) in the education pattern at KMI Gontor Islamic Boarding School must be continued. This kind of thing became a distinctive feature for boarding schools at the time, the concept of education at KMI with all its methods was a new and advanced concept when compared to traditional boarding schools.

The pattern and rhythm of Gontor Islamic boarding school activities takes place naturally with strict discipline, and without written rules. Regulations processed become part of the quality of consciousness, mind and instinct, made into guidelines for building their social lives in boarding school. The combination of the day school system with boarding system does not eliminate the essential elements in Islamic boarding school tradition, which is the study of classical Islamic books (yellow book).<sup>6</sup> At the final level, the students were given the opportunity to unload and understand a

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<sup>4</sup> Tim Penulis, *KH Imam Zarkasyi: Dari Gontor Merintis Pesantren Modern* (Universitas Darussalam Gontor Press, 2016).

<sup>5</sup> Zuli Dwi Rahmawati, "Education Leadership Perspective KH. Imam Zarkasyi," in *1st International Conference on Islamic Civilization Ans Society (ICICS)*, 2017, 245–261.

<sup>6</sup> Imroatul Fatihah, "Kepemimpinan KH. Imam Zarkasyi Di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor," *JIEM (Journal of Islamic Education Management)* 2, no. 2 (2018): 26–43.

large number of yellow books from various kind religious disciplines. With Arabic language skills since first grade, students can read and understand the yellow thick books without having to be helped by their teacher. Zarkasyi also recommended the students to own, read, and understand books which used in traditional boarding school, such as *Fatbul Qarib*, *Fatbul Mu'in*, *I'anutul Thalibin* and so on.

Imam Zarkasyi is not a figure whose work is only for one region, he is a figure who has great influence and contribution to this country. His name is well known at the national and foreign levels. Apart from being the director of KMI, he has held several strategic positions in government and private institutions. The number of achievements he has achieved is inseparable from the amount of struggle he has done, the number of achievements he has achieved is inseparable from the amount of struggle he has done. Educating for him is a struggle, he often describes the meaning of struggle with Javanese language sentences, "*bondo bahu pikir lek perlu sak nyawane pisan*", the main point of it is that in struggle everyone must be ready to sacrifice his property, power, mind and even if you need to sacrifice your life.

#### **D. Imam Zarkasyi's Character Education Concept**

Imam Zarkasyi defines morals or character as knowledge of how to act and show someone a good way to live in society. For him, character cannot be separated from religion, because in Islamic terminology characters are closely related in one of three main aspects of religion, these are (1) morals, (2) beliefs (*i'tiqad* or *aqidah*) and (3) taste or feeling (*'atifah*). Zarkasyi said Morality is guidelines, which we must follow in our lives. These guidelines for Muslims are taken from Al-Qur'an and the hadiths, the reference character is one based on a religious or religious character, not a particular view, tradition or philosophy. Therefore, character education is very important to be owned by every Muslim.<sup>7</sup>

Character education is a process of instilling important values in children through a series of learning and mentoring activities so that students as individuals are able to understand, experience, and integrate the values that are implanted in the educational process they live into their personality. At first, the character education process takes place in the family. Many families then look forward to the process of educating children's character in educational institutions such as schools / madrasahs.

The view that Islamic boarding school education is a religious education institution that has long practiced character education in its education system can be proven through its education system that applies an integral education concept, an education system that does not only focus on learning which requires students to understand and master the material, but also how students can apply the knowledge gained through the learning process in their daily lives.<sup>8</sup> The inculcation of character values is carried out both through formal learning and through daily life at the boarding school. Students are trained to live independently by serving their daily needs, they are also trained to live a simple life with limited boarding school facilities. The relationship between students and teachers is one of obedience, as is the relationship

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<sup>7</sup> Najwa Mu'minah, "Character Building Dalam Konsep Pendidikan Imam Zarkasyi Ditinjau Dari Filsafat Moral Ibnu Miskawaih," *Jurnal Filsafat* 25, no. 1 (2015): 100–133.

<sup>8</sup> Abdul Karnaen, Hakim As-Shidqi, and Akrim Mariyat, "The Policy of Moral Education on KH Imam Zarkasyi's Thought at Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2014): 163–182.

between students and *kyai* as leaders of the boarding school. The process of instilling essential values in children through a series of learning and mentoring activities so that students as individuals are able to understand, experience, and integrate the values that are goals in the educational process, boarding school education system seems to be character education itself. Because the boarding school education system does make it possible to instill values through a series of learning activities and mentoring students in their life.

The underlying values of Gontor Islamic Boarding life behavior can be distinguished into two, these are essential values and instrumental values and their implementation with discipline. Essential values are values that are constructed by the pioneers of Gontor Islamic Boarding School and become part of an inseparable personality between himself and boarding school. These values in Gontor Islamic Boarding School can be presented in two forms these are *Panca Jiwa Pondok Modern* (Five Principles of Modern Boarding School) and *Motto Pondok Modern* (Mottoes of Modern Boarding School).<sup>9</sup>

The essence of the Islamic boarding school is located in its soul, life in a boarding school inspired by the moods that can be formulated in Five Principles of Modern Boarding School (*Panca Jiwa Pondok Modern*) as follows: (1) sincerity; (2) simplicity; (3) independent; (4) Islamic Brotherhood (*ukhuwah islamiyah*); and (5) free spirit.<sup>10</sup> *Sincerity* is the base of all the souls of the Gontor Islamic boarding school and it is carried out with the sole intention of worship, *lillah* (for Allah). The boarding school creates an atmosphere where all actions are based on sincerity, such as sincerity in associating, in exhorting advice, in leading and being led, sincerity to educate and be educated, as well as sincerely disciplined. The life in the boarding school is pervaded by an atmosphere of *simplicity*. Simple does not mean passive nor does it mean poor and destitute. It is precisely in the spirit of simplicity that there are values of strength, ability, fortitude, and self-control in the face of life's struggles. *Independent* is a powerful weapon that Islamic boarding schools provide to their students. Being independent does not only mean that students are able to learn and practice taking care of all their own interests, but the boarding school itself as an educational institution must also be able to be independent so that it never relies on the help or compassion of others. The spirit of *Islamic Brotherhood* is the basis of interaction between students and teachers in the pesantren life system, from which a willingness to share in joy and sorrow grows, so that joy and sadness are shared. This Islamic brotherhood is not only for their time in boarding school, but also affects the unity of the people in society after joining the community. *Free Spirit* is free in thinking and doing, free in determining the future, free in choosing the way of life, and even free from various negative influences from outside, society. A free spirit is instilled in students in order to make students optimistic in facing of all difficulties. Therefore, freedom means freedom in positive lines, with responsibility; both in the boarding school itself, and in the lives of the people.

The values established in Gontor Islamic boarding school life include sincerity, simplicity, *ukhuwah Islamiyyah*, independence, and freedom. These values, as

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<sup>9</sup> Ana Maulida Sabila, Happy Susanto, and Anip Dwi Saputro, "Education Thought Imam Zarkasyi and Relevance to the Development of Islamic Education in Indonesia," *Istawa: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 1 (2020): 19–38.

<sup>10</sup> Rahmawati, "Education Leadership Perspective KH. Imam Zarkasyi."

explained earlier, are instilled in various educational processes that take place in Gontor Islamic boarding schools. The value of sincerity for example, is not only taught in teaching materials in subjects such as *mahfudhat*, *mutala'ah*, interpretation of the Al-Qur'an, and the Prophet's traditions about morals, but the values contained in the teaching material are also directly practiced in the daily life of the students. The value of sincerity, for example, is practiced by the students in receiving the knowledge taught by the teachers, while the teachers also practice sincerity in carrying out their duties as teachers by sincerely carrying out their duties without ever demanding a salary from the boarding school.

Effective educational methods that apply in educational life at Gontor Islamic Boarding School for character education can be formulated as follows:<sup>11</sup> (1) exemplary (*uswatun hasanah*), used to develop the personality of the students; (2) habituation, used to form character building such as fostering disciplined and moral awareness; (3) learning by instruction, is used in all aspects of life at the boarding school so that the students can experience the values of education and at the same time the most effective means of internalizing the boarding school values; (4) learning by doing, which is used to instill the noble values of boarding school education so that these values can be felt immediately by the students; (5) criticism, is used to learn to criticize properly and to accept criticism sincerely; (6) leadership, is developed in various aspects of the life of the students, especially students in grades V and VI

#### **E. Ahmad Dahlan as Islamic Education Figure**

Ahmad Dahlan was born in Yogyakarta on August 1, 1868, his nickname is Muhammad Darwis. He was the fourth of seven children. He was among the twelfth descendants of Maulana Malik Ibrahim, one of the leading among Walisongo, the pioneer of the spread of Islam in Java. At the age of his 15, he went on hajj and lived in Mecca for five years. During this period, Dahlan began to interact with reformer thoughts in Islam, such as Muhammad Abduh, Al-Afghani, Rasyid Ridha and Ibn Taimiyah. When he returned to his village in 1888, he changed his name to Ahmad Dahlan. In 1903, he returned to Mecca and stayed for two years. At this time, he briefly taught to Syeh Ahmad Khatib who was also a teacher of NU (Nahdatul Ulama) founder, KH. Hasyim Ashari.<sup>12</sup>

On November 18, 1912 Ahmad Dahlan founded the Muhammadiyah organization to carry out the ideals of Islamic reform in Indonesia. Dahlan wanted to make a reform in the way of thinking and doing charity according to the guidance of Islam. He wanted to invite Indonesian Muslims to return to live according to the guidance of the al-Qur'an and al-Hadith.<sup>13</sup> And since the beginning, Dahlan has determined that Muhammadiyah is not a political organization but a social organization and engaged in education. In his *da'wah*, Dahlan made many major targeted efforts, such as establishing medical homes, hospitals, orphanages, maintenance of the poor, schools, and madrassas after Muhammadiyah was established. The experience of managing the

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<sup>11</sup> Abdurrahim Yapono, "Filsafat Pendidikan Dan Hidden Curriculum Dalam Perspektif KH. Imam Zarkasyi (1910-1985)," *TSAQAFAH* 11, no. 2 (2015): 291–312.

<sup>12</sup> M. Nasruddin Anshoriy Ch, *Matahari Pembaruan: Rekam Jejak KH Ahmad Dahlan* (Galangpress Group, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Wahyu Lenggono, "Lembaga Pendidikan Muhammadiyah (Telaah Pemikiran KH Ahmad Dahlan Tentang Pembaruan Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia)," *Islamadina: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 19, no. 1 (2018): 43–62.

organization was gained by Ahmad Dahlan from his activeness in Boedi Utomo and Sarekat Islam organizations. The success of this organization cannot be separated from the biography of Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan who has a strong personality and his way of propaganda by showing tolerance and introducing reforms in Egypt so that the Muhammadiyah organization is a way to spread the ideas of reforms in Indonesia.

At the beginning of Muhammadiyah establishment, Dahlan received resistance from his family and the surrounding community such as various slanders, accusations, incitement, insistently which mentioned that he founded a new religion that violates Islam, he was fake *Kyai* for imitating the Christian Dutch and he must be killed for being *kafir*.<sup>14</sup> Ahmad Dahlan considered that the state of society was in low economically, politically, socially, and culturally due to colonialism and religious life that is incompatible with the Qur'an and Hadith causes a fatalistic and static attitude. To overcome this situation, a new awakening of consciousness is needed for the public to have the self-reliance to change itself, returning to the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith is believed to be a way of rebuilding self-identity and self-confidence, the courage to fight against evil (oppression) as having the will to build goodness (independence). These are the basis of Muhammadiyah establishment educational struggle. In Indonesia education system, Muhammadiyah pioneered the modernization of Islamic education, fought for Islamic religious lessons taught in public and private schools, and established educational institutions ranging from Kindergarten to Higher Education. Today, Muhammadiyah has thousands of schools and hundreds of universities throughout Indonesia.

According to Ahmad Dahlan, Islamic education at that time was only understood as a process of traditional devolution and socialization of individual and social behavior that has become the standard model in society. Education does not give students the freedom to create and take initiatives. This resulted in the implementation of education in a unidirectional manner. Even though he explained that the development of critical power, a dialogical attitude and appreciating the potential of reason and a holy conscience are strategic ways for students to achieve high knowledge. From this discussion, it can be seen that he wants to lay the foundation for the vision of reforming Islamic education through the harmonious and integral merging of the modern education system and traditional education.

In the field of education and teaching, Ahmad Dahlan has made educational reforms. Modernization in the education system is carried out by exchanging the boarding school system with modern education in accordance with the demands and developments of the time. The content of the curriculum in Muhammadiyah schools gives more content to general sciences, whereas in the religious aspect, at least Muhammadiyah school alumni can carry out the five daily prayers, and recite the sunnah prayers, read the holy book of the Qur'an and write Arabic letters knows the principles of faith.

## **F. Ahmad Dahlan's Character Education Concept**

The concept of character that has been initiated by Ahmad Dahlan is built on the truth through the will of God which is written in the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as the

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<sup>14</sup> Abdul Munir Mul Khan, *Kiai Ahmad Dahlan: Jejak Pembaruan Sosial Dan Kemanusiaan: Kado Satu Abad Muhammadiyah* (Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2010).



human ability to choose the truth itself. Good or bad human character must be guided by the role of the Qur'an and Sunnah in order to achieve integration.

Through education, Ahmad Dahlan also seeks to instill character in his students. He divided education into three types, 1) character education, as an effort to foster good human character, based on the Qur'an and Sunnah; 2) individual education, as an effort to foster an intact, sustainable individual awareness between the supple and the intellectual, between reason and mind, and between the world and the hereafter; and 3) community education, as an effort to foster the balance and desire of people's lives.<sup>15</sup>

In each of his reform efforts Ahmad Dahlan prioritizes the formation of morals for Indonesian youth. This is because Ahmad Dahlan is fully aware that the future of the nation rests on the shoulders of his youth. Therefore, he founded Hizbul Wathan as a group of Muslim youths, and Aisyiyah as an association of Muslim girls. The two associations are useful for educating Muhammadiyah youths so that someday they become Muslims who are meaningful, have good character, are useful for themselves and for the public as well as piety to Allah based on the guidance of Islam. So than his purpose of character education is to form Muslim human beings who have noble character, broad views and understand the problems of worldly science and are willing to fight for the progress of society broadly anytime and anywhere.

According to Ahmad Dahlan, the basis of character education is based on Islamic perspective has consists of three things, (1) faith, (2) knowledge and (3) charity, which form the basis of all his educational efforts.<sup>16</sup> Faith (belief) in the heart which becomes the initial basic which is then followed by knowledge to support the beliefs that you already have, the character education process that carried out by Ahmad Dahlan for his students was slowly but surely. Courage to act or do good deeds is something more important than just reading and memorizing as many verse of Qur'an as possible. Memorizing many verse of Qur'an but not balanced with understanding and carrying out the contents of the verse was considered less useful by him, Therefore, his method in teaching his students is not only reading and memorizing the verse of Qur'an, but by understanding the meaning and then implementing them or practicing kindness in daily life. He also explained that the material for character education is to teach the Al-Quran and Hadiths where the material of Al-Quran and Hadith includes: worship, equality, the function of human actions in determining their destiny, deliberation, proving the truth of the Al-Quran and Hadith according to reason, cooperation between religion, culture, progress and civilization, passion and will, democracy and liberalization, freedom of thought, the dynamics of life and the role of humans in it, and morals.

In a preferred character education it is prioritized through attitude and behavior towards themselves and towards others. Therefore character education must be adjusted to the education that has been taught in Qu'ran and Sunnah. Because it

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<sup>15</sup> Miftachul Huda and Mulyadhi Kartanegara, "Ethical Foundation of Character Education in Indonesia: Reflections on Integration between Ahmad Dahlan and Al-Zarnūjī," in *International Conference of Malay Muslim Prominent Scholars. Selangor: Kolej Universiti Islam Antarbangsa (KUIS)*, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Mohamad Ali, Sodik Azis Kuntoro, and Sutrisno Sutrisno, "Pendidikan Berkemajuan: Refleksi Praksis Pendidikan KH Ahmad Dahlan," *Jurnal Pembangunan Pendidikan: Fondasi Dan Aplikasi* 4, no. 1 (2016): 43–58.

contains very basic knowledge regarding character education taught by Allah and His Messenger. These thoughts that Ahmad Dahlan's reference in providing education to all of his students, so that they can form characters that are in accordance with religion, nation and state and religious education is one of the fundamental support for the achievement of the character's education.

Thus, Ahmad Dahlan's goal is to grow an Islamic society with Islamic character by following the pattern of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. Through his struggle to educate people towards changing behavior to become Islamic characters, as well as making a renewal in the way of thinking and doing good deeds according to the guidance of Islam with awareness and knowledge without any violence.

#### **G. Analysis of Purpose And Concept of Character Education According to Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan**

Character education is education that is very important for us, especially for children who are still in the world of education, because character education in the world of education is used as a forum or process to form the child's personality to become a good person. The similarities of Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan have in common in purpose of character education is that they both prioritize personality and character education. The development of the student character is a priority that cannot be negotiated in the learning process of both. When the Dutch colonial government was intensively implementing intellectual education, these two figures dared to take a stand by providing education with different concepts. Not only prioritizing intellect alone, their educational goal is to form good character in students.

In the concept of Islamic education, the most important thing to do is to use the methodology of Islamic education that comes from Allah's revelation, which is indirectly related to human faith. A person will be said to have the right faith and according to Islamic law if he has good morals / character.<sup>17</sup> So, good morals are a sign of the perfection of one's faith in Allah SWT so that every teaching in Islam has a rationale, as well as character education. As for the basis of character education is al-Qur'an and Sunnah. Both Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan emphasized the need for moral development that can be maximized in the education system in boarding school and schools. The concept of character education, they both aspire to develop children physically and spiritually based on Islamic guidance (Al-Qur'an and Sunnah). The thoughts of the two figures when combined can represent the thought of character education, in addition to prioritizing religious norms, as well as upholding the national cultural values in fostering student character. There is no way that a noble character or morality will be owned by a person if he does not have the right faith (*aqidah*) and sharia. A Muslim who has the right faith will surely owned in attitudes and behaviors in daily life based on his faith.

According to Pearson, role modeling in particular is as the heart and soul of a character education. The character education should be taught from a perspective "do as I do" and not "do as I say".<sup>18</sup> The similarity of the character education concept of

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<sup>17</sup> Eka Eka, "Revisiting Character Education from Islamic Perspective: A Quest for Character-Based Education in Indonesia," *Ulumuna* 21, no. 1 (2017): 1–33.

<sup>18</sup> Hilda Ainissyifa, "Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan UNIGA* 8, no. 1 (2017): 1–26.

Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan is that both of them prioritize the principle of exemplary / modeling and the importance of awareness through the dialogue process in teaching character to avoid indoctrination. The teacher's figure as a substitute for parents is in charge of providing an example or role model first before doing all the good things that must be followed by students. Exemplary methods as a method are used to realize educational objectives by exemplified good example to students so that they can develop both physically and mentally and have good and proper morality. Exemplary contributes greatly in the education of worship, morality, the arts and others. The atmosphere of educational institution should be used as a model by the world of modern education today. To create pious children with good manner and character, it is not enough for educators to just provide principles, because what is more important for students is a figure who provides an example in applying these principles. So that no matter how many principles are given without examples, it will only been meaningless.

## **H. Conclusion**

According to Imam Zarkasyi the purpose of character education is to make a good human being as taught in Alquran and hadith with piety, believe and fear to Allah. Gontor Islamic boarding school is a religious education institution that implements character education in an integrated manner in the entire educational process starting from the learning process, boarding school management, and the daily activities of students. The essence of the Islamic boarding school is located in its soul, life in a boarding school inspired by the moods that can be formulated in Five Principles of Modern Boarding School (Panca Jiwa Pondok Modern) as follows: (1) sincerity; (2) simplicity; (3) independent; (4) Islamic Brotherhood (*ukhuwah islamiyah*); and (5) free spirit.

The purpose of Ahmad Dahlan's character education is to form good character Muslim, broad views according to Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. And the basic concept of character education is based on Islamic perspective has consists of three things, (1) faith, (2) knowledge and (3) charity, which form the basis of all his educational efforts. Faith (belief) in the heart becomes the initial basic which is then followed by knowledge to support the beliefs that Moslem already have. He considers that good character is the main of good worship which received by Allah SWT.

Imam Zarkasyi and Ahmad Dahlan had some similarities in character education, these are (1) they both prioritize personality and character education. (2) they both emphasized the need for moral development that can be maximized in the education system in boarding school and schools. The concept of character education, they both aspire to develop children physically and spiritually based on Islamic guidance (Qur'an and Sunnah) (3) they both used exemplary / modeling method in character education implementation.

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