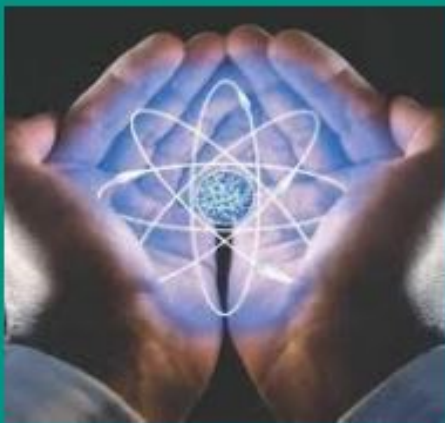


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By Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo

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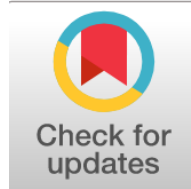
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Fostering Gratitude and Character Through Role Playing in Moral Education

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Abstract

General Background: Character education has become a pivotal concern in modern pedagogy, particularly in religious and moral subjects. **Specific Background:** One approach gaining attention is the role playing model, which engages students actively in moral reasoning and character development. **Knowledge Gap:** However, empirical studies that analyze its application specifically within the context of gratitude in Islamic character education remain limited. **Aims:** This study aims to analyze the implementation of the role playing model in shaping character education related to gratitude in Akidah Akhlak learning at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. **Results:** Using a qualitative phenomenological approach with observation, interviews, and documentation, findings indicate that role playing facilitates the internalization of feelings, values, and perspectives. The structured process—beginning with prayer and material explanation, followed by group division, script discussions, dramatization, and meaning reflection—promotes character traits such as gratitude, sincerity, patience, care, and responsibility. **Novelty:** This study highlights how direct student engagement through dramatization uniquely fosters affective and behavioral dimensions of character. **Implications:** Despite some challenges (e.g., student shyness, classroom dynamics), the method demonstrates strong potential in cultivating religious values, suggesting broader applicability in moral education contexts.

Highlights:

- Promotes internalization of religious values through active participation.
- Enhances moral traits like gratitude, sincerity, and responsibility.
- Uses dramatization to foster empathy and character understanding.

Keywords: Role Playing, Character Education, Gratitude, Akidah Akhlak, Islamic Learning

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Introduction

Various efforts made by education staff in shaping the character, a, pu in collaboration with parents, the community to shape the character of students so that they can have the nature of responsibility, care for others and so on. The biggest enemies of the Indonesian nation are ignorance, corruption, poverty, students who often fight, pragmatism and the realization of various negative behaviors in society, which needs further attention. Therefore, in the world of education, one of the solutions that can be done to minimize this is to be able to carry out various forms of good character education.

These problems of deviation arise due to a decrease in character value. Character is considered as the values of calculation with God, oneself and with others in the community so that it is able to realize all behaviors or words based on noble cultural values, religious norms, and local customs that meet the values of customs. The target of character education is not only targeted at early childhood, or adolescents, even this character education is more broadly intended for adults, for example, it can form character education for students, namely adult students, this is because education is very important to be used in fulfilling human resources. The function of national education is also related to the formation of character education as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 article 3 which contains national education aims to develop abilities and form the character and civilization of the Indonesian nation with dignity to educate the life of the nation[1].

In the role-play learning model, educators provide students with the opportunity to participate in activities that demonstrate a specific role in people's lives. Role-playing activities are learning activities that are designed to achieve specific educational goals and can be used to shape and strengthen character education. By using this model, students can put themselves in situations and roles that will encourage them to better understand their own and others' principles and beliefs. According to Joice and Well, learning models are categorized into the following groups: information processing models, personal learning, behavioral models, and role playing models. [2]. One of the learning models that has the ability to teach and shape is role-playing. The role playing model is a learning model that is used with the goal of experiential learning. By using role-play models, students can learn positive behaviors, attitudes, and language in others.[3]

Role-playing models have been discussed in a large number of previous studies. This is evidenced by a previous literature review entitled "The Application of Role-Playing Methods to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in the Material on the Relationship of Living Beings and the Environment". The results of this study show that students in grade IV of SDN Sindang II have learned more about the relationship between living things and their environment through the use of role-playing for nine cycles. Students from class I completed 26.92%, class II 57.69%, and class III 92.31% .[4] The difference between the previous research can be seen from the focus, where the research applied role-playing methods to improve learning outcomes, especially in the field of science. Meanwhile, previous studies have used more quantitative approaches. On the other hand, the research being conducted by the researcher this time puts forward a role-playing model applied by lecturers to support the development of student character education with a qualitative approach. This indicates that there is a gap in existing research. Therefore, this study aims to find new aspects by linking role-playing models with character education development. The role play model has been a topic of extensive discussion in previous research, including a study called "Application of Role Playing Methods to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Material on the Relationship between Living Beings and the Environment. " This particular study demonstrated that the model can successfully enhance the cognitive development of elementary school students in science classes. Nevertheless, the focus of that study was primarily on cognitive improvement, neglecting the affective elements or character development of the students. Unlike the earlier research, this study purposefully employs the role-playing model as the key educational method to promote character building among students, particularly to instill the value of gratitude in the Moral Faith course at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. By engaging students in roles that mirror real-life scenarios related to gratitude, this model seeks to encourage the internalization of moral and spiritual virtues, including self-awareness, sincerity, responsibility, and a humble attitude. Thus, the role-playing models utilized in this study serve not only as a teaching technique but also as a strategic means to enhance the overall integrity of students' Islamic character, aligning with the core objective of character education in Islamic higher education.

The following research entitled "Descriptive Study of RPG Learning Models Based on Social Learning Theory Based on Creative Pedagogy" shows that the role playing model based on Social Learning theory through a pedagogical approach is expected to be able to educate individuals to become quality individuals through education. This can be seen from the theoretical review that has been described, such as in the context of role play that requires students to communicate, move, think, analyze, and imitate movements or attitudes during the learning process. [5]. This study has significant differences compared to the research currently being conducted by researchers. This research emphasizes more on role-playing models based on social learning theories to explore students' creativity. On the other hand, the research being conducted by researchers is oriented towards role-playing models to shape students' educational characters. Thus, researchers have the opportunity to add new elements from previous studies by analyzing aspects of character education development through the use of role-playing models. The study titled "Descriptive Study of RPG Learning Models Based on Social Learning Theory Based on Creative Pedagogy" highlights that using role-playing models rooted in social learning theory can enhance students' cognitive, emotional, and physical skills through communication, movement, critical thinking, and mimicking behavior during the learning experience. Nevertheless, this research has not specifically aimed at instilling particular Islamic

character values that are essential in religious education at Islamic universities, particularly moral-spiritual values derived from Islamic teachings. Moreover, the subjects examined in the study are mainly confined to elementary and secondary students, failing to address the context of students anticipated to become thoughtful Muslim intellectuals with strong integrity and deep religious awareness. In this regard, the author's research provides a fresh insight by utilizing the Role Playing model as a teaching tool, concentrating on the structured and contextual internalization of gratitude, which is vital for students' Islamic character development in the Moral Faith course at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The Role Playing Model is designed to help students not just understand the concept of gratitude intellectually but also to embody, experience, and apply it in their actual behaviors, both on campus and in everyday life. Therefore, the current research undertaken by the investigator addresses a gap in prior studies, specifically the absence of implementing the Role Playing model aimed at nurturing students' spiritual and moral character based on Islamic principles, particularly through the internalization of gratitude, within the realm of Islamic education at universities. This methodology aims to cultivate students who are not only educated in beliefs and ethics but also demonstrate moral and spiritual awareness in their conduct as individuals of faith and devotion, aligning with the objectives of Islamic higher education.

The aim of this research is to explore how the Role Playing model is applied, including its definition, goals, and stages of learning. This will be accompanied by an examination of the definition of character education, its importance, how the Role Playing learning model contributes to character education, and students' reactions to this model in educational activities, which can assist instructors in improving student behavior and attitudes.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative phenomenological approach [6]. According to Moleong, qualitative research is a structured type of investigation that yields data in the form of textual descriptions and interviews with the subjects being observed. The phenomenological method is a specific qualitative approach where the researcher directly observes the activities and events experienced by the research subjects at the study site [7]. This research took place at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta, the subjects of this study are lecturers of Akidah Akhlak and PGMI students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. In this study, the researcher used observation, interview, and documentation data collection techniques [8]. The participants in this study are 1 lecturer of the moral faith course and 14 students of the PGMI study program. The sample selection technique used is purposive sampling is a sample determination technique with certain considerations. This research examines the role playing model for character formation in the moral faith course, so the data source is the lecturer and the student concerned in the learning.[9]

Interview guidelines "Implementation of Role Playing Model to Realize Character Education in the Moral Faith Course of Gratitude Material at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta"

1. General Information

Informant Name:

Position (Lecturer/Student):

Subjects: Moral Beliefs

Main Material: Gratitude

2. List of Interview Questions for Lecturers

1. How do you design learning using the Role Playing model in the Gratitude material?
2. What are the main considerations in choosing this model for Thanksgiving material?

1. How is the implementation of the Role Playing model in the classroom when the Thanksgiving material is delivered?
2. What kind of role or scenario is used to illustrate the concept of gratitude?
3. What was the initial response of students to this Role Playing model?

1. In your opinion, how does the application of Role Playing affect the development of gratitude characters in students?
2. Is there a change in students' attitudes or behaviors after participating in Role Playing? Can you tell us an example?

1. How do you evaluate the success of using Role Playing in instilling a character of gratitude?
2. Are there any obstacles faced in implementing this model? What is the solution?

3 . List of Interview Questions for Students

a. Experience of Participating in Role Playing

1. What do you think about the application of the Role Playing model in the Moral Faith course of the Gratitude material?
2. Tell us about your experience when participating in the Role Playing.

b. Understanding the Concept of Gratitude

1. After participating in Role Playing, do you feel more aware of the meaning of gratitude? How do you interpret gratitude afterwards?
2. Does this model help you to apply gratitude in your daily life?

c. Influence on Attitude and Character

1. Have there been any changes in your attitude or habits of gratitude after following this learning? Can you give an example?
2. How does this Role Playing model compare to other learning methods in terms of character development?

d. Suggestions for Role Playing Implementation

The data analysis techniques applied in this research include data condensation, data presentation, and the refinement/verification of conclusions.[10]

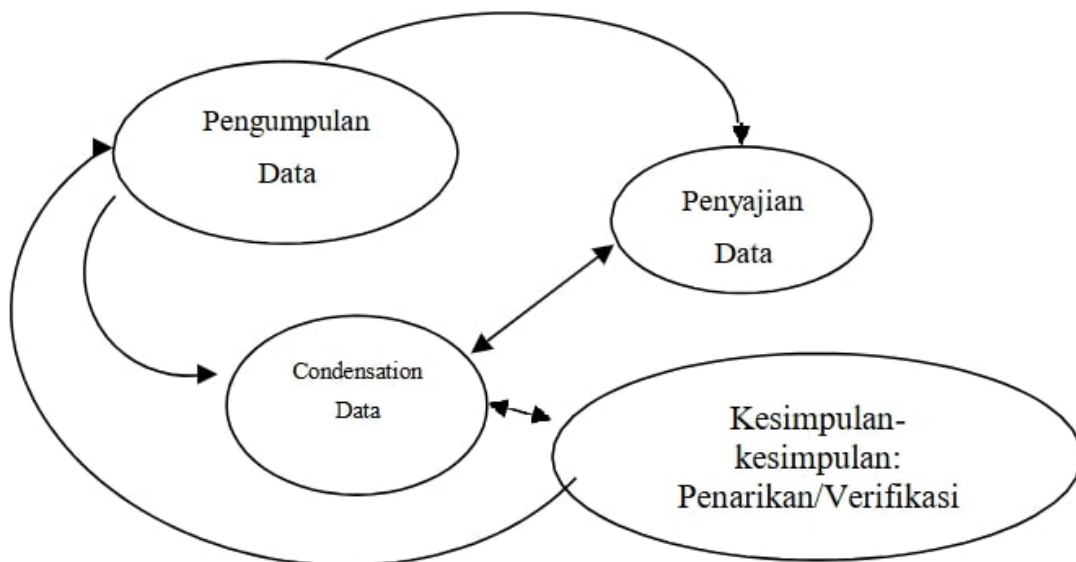


Figure 1. Miles and Huberman Data Analysis Model

Data Condensation, data condensation involves the process of choosing, simplifying, summarizing, and/or altering data to reflect a comprehensive portion of written records, interview transcripts, documents, and other research materials. At this phase, the researcher gathers the interview information collected to ensure that the data aligns closely with the needs of the research. Conduct interviews to collect information that is pertinent to the research focus.

a) Data Condensation, data condensation involves the process of choosing, simplifying, summarizing, and/or altering data to reflect a comprehensive portion of written records, interview transcripts, documents, and other research materials. At this phase, the researcher gathers the interview information collected to ensure that the data aligns closely with the needs of the research. Conduct interviews to collect information that is pertinent to the research focus.

b) Data Display, data presentation entails organizing and integrating information in a way that facilitates interpretation and action. Presenting data aids in comprehending ongoing situations and enables actions, such as conducting further analysis or taking steps based on insights gained. This phase of data presentation showcases interview results that have been reformatted for clarity and usability as a foundation for drawing conclusions. This step entails the researcher displaying data obtained from the interviews conducted.

c) Conclusions Drawing (Verification) the third vital analytical task is to draw conclusions and confirm findings. From the onset of data collection, a qualitative analyst begins to look for the significance of items, keeping track of the sequence of explanations, potential adjustments, cause-and-effect relationships, and assertions. Final conclusions might not be finalized until data collection has concluded, influenced by the magnitude of the sets of field records, their categorization, storage, and retrieval techniques employed, along with the researcher's expertise. The conclusion-drawing phase involves determining outcomes based on the interviews conducted with informants and the data gathered, ensuring it addresses the posed research question. [11]

The researcher implemented a data validity evaluation through triangulation. Triangulation is a method for collecting data that involves integrating multiple existing data sources. The specific triangulation approach that the researcher employed is source triangulation, which is intended to verify the authenticity of data by examining various sources.[12]. For instance, the information gathered from the principal, subject teachers, or students can reveal similar opinions as well as differing experiences. To affirm the data's validity in this investigation, the researcher concurrently utilized source triangulation and member checking. Source triangulation involves analyzing and comparing data from different main informants, including lecturers of the Akidah Akhlak course and students attending the lectures. This procedure is designed to ensure that information from various viewpoints is consistent, thereby providing a well-rounded understanding of how the Role Playing model influences the development of gratitude in students. Moreover, the researcher performed member checking by presenting the transcriptions and summaries of interviews to the informants for validation. This step aims to minimize any biased interpretations by the researcher and ensures that the meanings captured align with the original sentiments and experiences of the informants [13]. Thus, the validity of the data is systematically maintained, strengthening the credibility and reliability of the findings of this research in the context of the development of character education based on the Role Playing model in the Islamic university environment.

Result and Discussion

A. Definition of Role Playing Model

A model is a simplified copy or mimesis of an object, concept, or system that serves as a representation or description of the original. A notion or example of a program, system, or process that can serve as a guide or reference to accomplish objectives can also be understood as a model. A model can serve as a reference to accomplish learning objectives and can depict a stage or method in the learning process [14]. A learning modality, according to Joy and Weil, is a strategy or pattern that can be applied to create learning resources, direct a classroom, or create a long-term planner. Teachers can utilize the learning model as a mode of choice, which allows them to select the most suitable and efficient learning mode to meet learning goals [15].

When teaching and learning activities are conceptually comprehensive and both practically and scientifically possible, they are referred to as learning models. Specifically, the word "model" refers to a conceptual framework that serves as a guide when performing an action. The learning model, according to Toeti Soekanto and Udin Saripudin Winataputra, is a conceptual framework that outlines a methodical process for structuring learning experiences in order to accomplish particular learning objectives. It also acts as a guide for teachers and learning designers as they plan and carry out teaching and learning activities. Teaching and learning activities are therefore actually achievement, well-organized activities. It can have many learning strategies in a single learning model. For instance, the role playing model can be implemented using a number of different techniques, including the lecture method (the teacher explains the problem), the assignment method (students are asked to find solutions to the problem problems in the role-playing activity), and the discussion method (students discuss the role that was performed) [16]. Role playing is a form of educational game that is used to explain feelings, attitudes, behaviors and values, with the aim of living the feelings, viewpoints and ways of thinking of others such as imagining yourself as in other people's circumstances [17].

The role playing learning approach offers students the opportunity to practice acting in roles and situations that will raise awareness of both their own and others 'values and beliefs. The role-playing learning approach is a training approach that gives students the opportunity to engage in activities that fit their particular life. Students can develop their ability to appreciate something related to the teacher-provided material and learn more effectively if they can do it themselves and experience it firsthand. This is why the role-playing learning model is used with students in the learning process to encourage activity and character. Even while learning occurs in the classroom during role-playing, students are conditioned to certain settings outside of it. Furthermore, role-playing is frequently designed as an exercise where students pretend to be someone else outside of the classroom for example [18].

Thus, it can be said that the role-playing learning model is a way of teaching that produces a dramatic environment that encourages students to act out their roles, be more active, and interact with others while also indirectly helping them to solve problems and comprehend the material in order to meet the learning objectives. Role playing is a useful tool for students to: explore their feelings, gain inspiration and understanding that affect their attitudes, perceived values, develop skills and attitudes in solving problems, and delve into the subject in various ways. Its goal is to help students find their sense of self (identity) in the social world and solve problems with the help of

groups. Therefore, it can be concluded that the role-playing understanding model was created as a result of a group's social approach, which makes use of everyday situations to better understand both themselves and other people as their own keys. The goal is next to make it as socially awkward as possible for students to be in each position.

B. Role Playing Model Steps

Huda claims that the following are the steps in the role-playing learning model:

1. In relation to the lesson content, the instructor prepares the scenario's topic.
2. The participant, or player, is selected by the instructor. Teachers and students decide who will play it after debating each player's character. The teacher can select the right student to play this game, or each group can decide for itself.
3. Every student talks about the issues in their scenario with every group.
4. Students then take on roles within each group.
5. Each student received a worksheet pertaining to the scenario in each group after completing the display.
6. Every group turned in its findings.
7. In general, the teacher offers findings and assessments [19].

C. Definition of Character Education

Education is the process of attempting to help people mature by altering their attitudes and behaviors. Education is humanization, or an endeavor to humanize people, according to Dinn Wahyudin. This endeavor aims to assist humans (students) in living in line with their human dignity. The Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 outlines the concept of education. Education is defined as a deliberate and organized effort aimed at fostering an environment and process for learning, enabling students to actively develop their inherent potential to possess spiritual strength, self-discipline, character, intellect, high moral standards, and capabilities essential for themselves, their communities, their nation, and their government. The term "character" originates from the Latin word "Character," which encompasses meanings such as temperament, nature, psychological characteristics, ethics, personality, or morals. In the context of character, it is understood as the essence of humanity, reflecting a range of traits that are influenced by individual life experiences. Character refers to the psychological, moral, or ethical attributes that define an individual or a collective group [20].

Character refers to the principles of human conduct linked to God, oneself, other people, the environment, and one's nationality, represented through thoughts, behaviors, emotions, words, and actions based on religious guidelines, laws, etiquette, culture, and traditions. Experts define character education as follows:

1. Ryan and Bohlin describe character education as the process of guiding students to make sound choices and follow established rules. It helps students enhance their understanding, skills, and capabilities, equipping them to make responsible and wise decisions.
2. Mulyasa views character education as an initiative aimed at nurturing children's souls, both mentally and physically, steering them toward a more humane and improved civilization.
3. Barnawi and Arifin state that character education involves teaching children to make thoughtful decisions and apply these choices in their everyday actions so they can positively impact their surroundings. Barnawi and Arifin again explain character education as a means of guiding children to make wise choices and implement these in their daily lives, enabling them to contribute positively to their environment.
4. Ahmad Sudrajat describes character education as a framework for embedding character values within the school community, which encompasses elements of knowledge, willingness or intent, and actions to practice these values towards God, oneself, others, the environment, and one's nationality, aiming to develop individuals into better human beings [21].

It can be inferred that character education is a deliberate initiative aimed at developing students into positive individuals with strong morals, in alignment with the Graduate Competency Standards (SKL), so they can apply these values in real life. Education must play a proactive role in enhancing the quality of Human Resources (HR) that are knowledgeable and capable of tackling contemporary challenges, since character education is a fundamental approach to instilling character values in all individuals through both formal and informal education, encompassing understanding, awareness, intent, and the implementation of comprehensive values.

D. Character Education Values

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, there are 18 character values that need to be cultivated at every educational level and institution in Indonesia. These values include: (a) Religious, which refers to an attitude of adherence and dedication in comprehending and practicing the religious beliefs one follows, exhibiting tolerance towards the religious practices of others, and fostering harmony and coexistence; (b) Honesty, defined as behavior that aligns knowledge, words, and actions (recognizing what is right, speaking truthfully, and acting correctly), establishing the individual as trustworthy; (c) Tolerance, which embodies respect for diversity in religion, beliefs, ethnicities, customs, languages, races, and perspectives, while maintaining a peaceful coexistence amid these differences; (d) Discipline, associated with behaviors that consistently align with all relevant laws or regulations; (e) Hard work, which signifies a commitment to putting forth significant effort to complete various tasks, challenges, and responsibilities to the best of one's ability; (f) Creativity, encompassing behaviors that demonstrate innovative thinking in addressing problems, resulting in new methods or improved outcomes; (g) Independence, reflecting the ability to solve tasks or issues without relying on others; (h) Democratic, which indicates an attitude and mindset that embodies fair and equal rights and responsibilities among individuals; (i) Curiosity, which characterizes a mindset and behavior showing eagerness to explore and understand more about what is seen, heard, and learned; (j) Nationalism, which is an attitude that prioritizes the interests of the nation and state over personal or group interests; (k) Love for the homeland, indicating a sense of pride, loyalty, concern, and appreciation for one's own language, culture, economy, and politics, thus resisting external influences that may harm the nation; (l) Respect for achievements, showing openness to the accomplishments of others while recognizing one's own weaknesses without diminishing the motivation to achieve more; (m) Communicative, friendly, or proactive, representing open and respectful interactions with others to foster effective collaboration; (n) Peace-loving, embodying the qualities of bringing about a tranquil, safe, and harmonious presence in a community; (o) A love for reading, characterized by a habit of dedicating time, willingly, to read a range of materials such as books, journals, magazines, and newspapers for personal growth; (p) Environmental awareness, indicating an ongoing effort to protect and sustain the surrounding environment; (q) Social responsibility, reflecting compassion for individuals and communities in need; and (r) Responsibility, representing an individual's attitude and actions in fulfilling various duties and commitments related to oneself, society, the nation, the state, and religious obligations [22].

Jamal Ma'ruf Asmani noted that there are four recognized types of character that are applied in the learning process, listed as follows: a. Character education rooted in religious values, which reflects the truth of divine revelation (moral preservation). b. Character education founded on cultural values, such as ethics, Pancasila principles, literary appreciation, examples from historical figures, and more. c. Character education focused on the environment (environmental preservation). d. Character education based on individual potential, which pertains to personal attitudes that arise from the awareness of enhancing one's abilities aimed at improving educational quality [23].

E. Implementation of the Role Playing Model in the Learning of Moral Beliefs Gratitude Material

Additional research can be done on religious subjects or courses using materials from teachers in the classroom. For instance, using the Role Playing learning design in the MI Material of Gratitude course for the PGMI study program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, The Gratitude stuff at the PGMI Study Program at UIN Sunan Kalijaga includes the following learning steps:

1. The lecturer opened the learning by reading the opening prayer, then checking the presence of the students. Then the teacher informs the material to be studied and the purpose of the learning competence.
2. It was followed by explaining the concepts of "Gratitude".
3. After that, the lecturer formed a group into two groups to carry out the role laying learning model.



Figure 2. *Group Discussion to Determine Role Playing Dialogue*

4. The lecturer instructs students to discuss in their respective groups to discuss in making a script or scenario that will be displayed related to gratitude material.

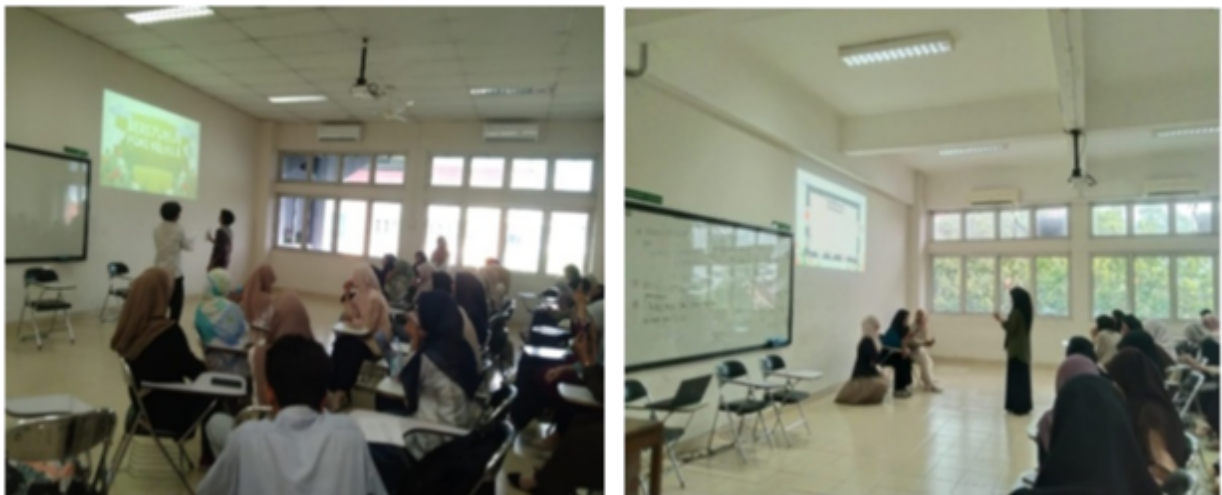


Figure 3. *Each group performed role playing gratitude material*

1. Once the discussion concluded, every group was tasked with acting out scenarios based on their assigned roles connected to the theme of gratitude. There were two groups, each with distinct scripts. In Group A, the role play depicted a child who shows little appreciation for the food provided by his mother. Eventually, the child observes a less fortunate family with simpler meals, prompting his mother to teach him the importance of being thankful for the provisions that Allah SWT has granted. Group B performance involved two friends at the canteen who were purchasing food; however, their meal was not superior to what their friend had due to their limited allowance from their parents. Their friend advised them not to compare their blessings to those of others and to consistently appreciate the gifts bestowed upon them by Allah SWT.

2. Following the performances, each group presented the outcomes of their drama that related to the theme of gratitude.

3. The lecturer highlighted that the role-playing exercises showcased by each group can positively influence the character education of individuals. This occurs because every group thoroughly examined the gratitude concept and demonstrated its principles through their role plays, allowing students to learn that gratitude is a vital aspect of character development that can be integrated into their lives.

The following is a diagram of the role playing process, including:

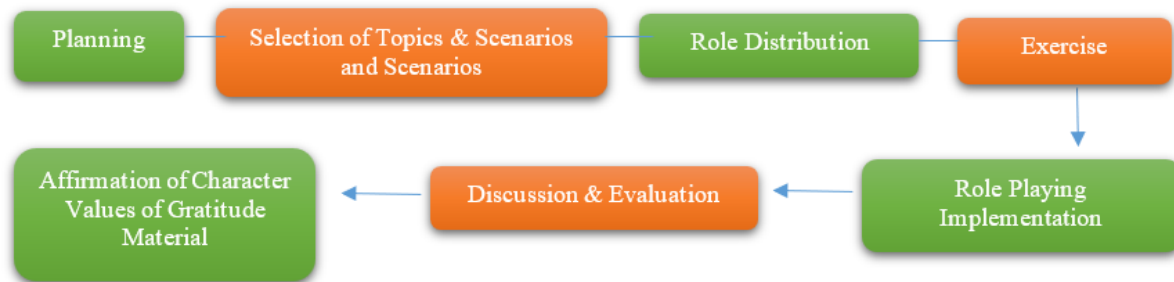


Figure 4. *Diagram of the Role Playing Process*

The introduction of teaching Moral Faith through the Role Playing approach in the Thanksgiving lesson starts with the planning phase. During this stage, educators identify the essential skills and indicators to be met, which include comprehending the concept of gratitude and being able to express it in everyday life. Following this, the teacher selects a relevant theme and develops a basic storyline that connects to the students' experiences, like a narrative about a student appreciating their health, knowledge, or friendships. This narrative is designed to illustrate how gratefulness can be exhibited in real life through both words and actions. The next phase involves assigning roles to the students. These roles may consist of the lead character (for instance, the student receiving a kindness), classmates, guardians, teachers, and a narrator if necessary. Each student taking on a role is anticipated to grasp their responsibilities in conveying gratitude through thoughtful words, genuine expressions, and deeds that embody appreciation towards Allah SWT. Once the roles are allocated, students are provided with the chance to rehearse the scenario under the teacher's guidance. During this rehearsal, the teacher offers directions, ensuring that each word and gesture from the students conveys the essence of gratitude, such as saying "Alhamdulillah" sincerely or demonstrating humbleness and generosity toward others.

The role-playing activity took place in front of the class, where groups of students acted out the prepared scenarios. At the same time, their classmates watched and noted how the roles portrayed an attitude of thankfulness. Teachers also watched this activity to evaluate how well students grasp the concept of gratitude and its significance. Once all groups had completed their performances, the session moved into a discussion and review phase. The teacher encouraged students to talk about their feelings during the role play, prompting questions like, "What emotions did you experience while acting as a thankful person?" or "Why should we express gratitude in all situations?" This discussion allows teachers to gauge the students' comprehension of gratitude's role in everyday life.

In conclusion, the teacher emphasized the character traits associated with gratitude. The teacher pointed out that being thankful is a key component of good character and is greatly valued in Islam. Those who excel in showing gratitude will be cherished by Allah SWT and appreciated by others. Expressing gratitude should be evident in three areas: words (such as saying "Alhamdulillah"), emotions (feeling content and not easily complaining), and actions (performing good deeds and assisting others). With this message, it is hoped that students will not only grasp the concept of gratitude but also implement it in their everyday situations. The role-playing activity is conducted in front of the classroom, where student groups act out a pre-prepared scenario. Meanwhile, other students observe and note how the roles exhibit expressions of gratitude. Teachers also engage in this observation to evaluate the students' grasp and appreciation of gratitude's significance. Once all groups have performed, the session moves on to a discussion and assessment phase. The teacher encourages students to share their thoughts about their role-playing experiences, asking questions like, "What emotions did you experience while portraying a grateful character?" or "Why is it important to maintain gratitude in every situation?" This conversation allows teachers to gauge how well students recognize the relevance of gratitude in everyday life. To conclude, the teacher highlighted the moral values associated with the lesson on gratitude. The instructor explained that gratitude is a key part of good character that is highly valued in Islam. Those who practice gratitude are favored by Allah SWT and appreciated by others. Gratitude should be shown in three key ways: through words (like saying "Alhamdulillah"), through feelings (by being content and not easily complaining), and through actions (by performing kindness and assisting others). By stressing this, it is hoped that students will not only learn the

theoretical aspects of gratitude but also implement it in their everyday routines.

F. Student Responses to the Role Playing Model to Form Character Education in Learning Moral Beliefs Gratitude Material

According to students from PGMI at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, lecturers play a crucial role in facilitating the role-playing process when teaching the concept of gratitude, which significantly impacts the effectiveness of the learning experience. Many students expressed that their instructors serve as facilitators who not only offer technical guidance but also support, mentor, and encourage them throughout the process. One student noted that instructors act as facilitators who provide guidance and direction during the role-playing activities, while another mentioned that the lecturer also assisted in crafting scenarios, directing roles, and offering feedback to ensure that students truly understood the essence of gratitude. Beyond merely facilitating, lecturers also serve as guides for instilling values and motivating students. Learners indicated that prior to the role-playing sessions, the lecturer thoroughly explained the topic and presented various examples of everyday situations that embody the principle of gratitude, along with illustrative videos and relevant stories. This method aids students in grasping the significance of gratitude in practical terms, rather than viewing it solely as a theoretical idea. After all performances were presented, each group shared their interpretations of the drama connected to the gratitude theme. The lecturer pointed out that the role-playing model exhibited by each group has the potential to shape individuals' character education, largely because every group analyzed the gratitude framework and demonstrated the concept through their role-playing. This enables students to learn from their performances, recognizing gratitude as a vital aspect of character education applicable in everyday life.

PGMI students mentioned that the role-playing technique is infrequently utilized by instructors in their teaching, with only a few educators employing it. This situation is regrettable, given that the Role Playing learning approach has significant potential for enhancing character education. The objective of teaching moral values is not only to impart cognitive knowledge but also to contribute to the development of students' personalities and ethics. In this regard, Role Playing serves as an appropriate technique as it engages students directly in social situations that necessitate the expression of attitudes, comprehension of values, and empathy for actual circumstances. From the perspective of the constructivist approach, knowledge and moral values gain greater significance when learners actively create them through experiential learning. Within the Role Playing framework, students are not merely observers; they are participants who need to address moral dilemmas, appreciate others' viewpoints, and devise solutions grounded in the faith and ethical principles they have learned. This activity supports the internalization of values, which is fundamental to character education.

The next question is whether the role playing model can help in fostering character education. The use of the Role Playing model in learning is not only effective in delivering material, but also very helpful in shaping character education. Students revealed that this model makes it easier for them to capture and act out character values, because they are directly involved in presenting the behavior they want to shape. One of the respondents emphasized that with role playing, we seem to be directly immersed in the material that we will run in our daily lives. The Role Playing method allows students to experience real situations in a simulated manner, which makes learning more lively and meaningful. Through this active involvement, students can understand and internalize values such as gratitude, empathy, responsibility, and positive attitudes. One of the students said that this method helps to understand other people's points of view and internalize values, which is an important part of character education in the perspective of Islam and general education. Role Playing creates a learning space that brings theory closer to life practice. Thus, this method not only shapes understanding, but also touches the affective realm of students, which is an important foundation in the development of a whole character. From all the responses, it can be concluded that the Role Playing model makes a significant contribution to student character education. This model has been proven to be able to be a bridge between teaching materials and real life, strengthen emotional engagement, and foster awareness of moral values that can be internalized sustainably in daily life. Thus, the use of the Role Playing model is worthy of continuing to be developed in learning Islamic values and character in universities.

According to PGMI UIN Sunan Kalijaga students, the main character values that develop during the learning process are the value of gratitude, this shows that the simulative approach through role playing allows students to experience the meaning of gratitude firsthand, not only as a concept, but as a life attitude that can be practiced in various real situations. Students stated that they became more aware of the blessings they had, and were encouraged to appreciate and accept the situation more. In addition, the value of empathy also appears strongly by acting out challenging life situations or other people's roles, students learn to understand the feelings and perspectives of others. The principles of accountability, teamwork, and integrity are prominently highlighted in the practice of role-playing. This approach demands that students demonstrate self-discipline, fulfill their responsibilities, and act truthfully while performing their assigned roles, thereby aiding in the development of individuals prepared to tackle real-life situations. Additionally, other virtues that have emerged consist of modesty, perseverance, engagement, mutual regard, acceptance, bravery, and optimistic outlooks. Some students even bring up the importance of obedience and honoring others, indicating that role-playing not only engages emotional and social dimensions but also reinforces the ethical and moral framework of the students. Therefore, it can be inferred

that employing the Role Playing technique in teaching Gratitude effectively nurtures a wide range of essential character traits, which encompass religious, social, and personal values. This positions Role Playing as a key educational strategy in cultivating a well-rounded student character that is not only intellectually capable but also virtuous and prepared to ethically participate in communal life.

Students believe that the Role Playing method for learning about Gratitude offers benefits because it simplifies the material, aids in quicker recall, and allows them to experience the advantages right away. They mention that engaging in role-playing makes the classroom enjoyable, preventing the learning experience from becoming dull. Additionally, students report feeling more engaged and can relate to the value of gratitude in practical ways since they are actively part of the scenarios they enact. Some further note that this approach enhances empathy, communication skills, confidence, and prompts them to think critically about daily situations, enriching the learning experience.

On the other hand, students point out some drawbacks of the Role Playing method, such as the significant time required for preparation, discussions, and execution, which can lead to inefficiencies in class time. Moreover, the effectiveness of this approach largely depends on the active involvement and commitment of all students, which is occasionally lacking due to some feeling shy, unwilling to participate, or lacking confidence in their roles. This situation can hinder the effectiveness of learning. Students also express that if the lecturer does not manage the classroom well, especially when some participants are distracted or not following the role-play correctly, the environment can become less conducive to learning. Nonetheless, these drawbacks do not overshadow the significant advantages of this model when implemented with thorough planning and strong guidance from instructors.

Some learners experience discomfort when taking part in this role-playing model, which is linked to the theory of student engagement, specifically the theory of student involvement. Fredrick claims that student engagement can be seen through behaviors like participation and the amount of time students dedicate to tasks during the learning process at school. Reeve adds that student involvement seeks to create alterations in the learning environment, focusing on motivation, behavior, emotions, and cognitive aspects. Students who still feel shy or reluctant to join in the role-play model in the Moral Faith course related to Gratitude often do so because their emotional connection has not fully matured. Within the framework of Student Engagement theory, learning engagement is categorized into three primary dimensions: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. Cognitive engagement pertains to how students participate in learning through strategies that help them grasp the material, along with their own motivation and learning objectives. Emotional Involvement I, or Peer Relationships, pertains to students' feelings and interests in the classroom, including their connections with classmates, such as feeling positive about the class and belonging to a group. Emotional Engagement II, or the relationship with faculty, deals with students' attitudes and interests in their interactions with the academic community, which includes fostering effective communication with their instructors. Behavioral engagement captures visible actions, such as students attending class and participating in learning activities. It also encompasses behaviors like asking questions, engaging actively in class discussions, and concentrating on and following the learning process effectively during class.[24]

Students who hesitate to take part in role-playing activities are more likely to face challenges when it comes to emotional involvement. They experience feelings of psychological insecurity about performing in front of their classmates due to fears of ridicule, concerns about making errors in their roles, or worries about receiving negative judgments. This reluctance is frequently rooted in earlier experiences that do little to foster confidence within the academic setting. Moreover, this theory highlights that emotional engagement includes feelings of enjoyment, interest, and a positive connection to the learning task. If students lack comfort or confidence in the classroom, then activities that involve expression, such as role-playing, can lead to feelings of awkwardness or even rejection. Additionally, students who show low levels of behavioral engagement, marked by minimal participation in class, are likely to shy away from activities that necessitate being in the spotlight, as they perceive these tasks as beyond their comfort levels. Conversely, behavioral engagement plays a significant role in determining students' readiness for active learning methods like role-playing. Those who seldom interact, do not frequently ask questions, or are passive in discussions often struggle with role-playing scenarios, as this requires bravery, initiative, and a willingness to handle others' reactions in the classroom. At the same time, cognitive engagement, which refers to the mental involvement needed to solve problems or grasp the significance of learning activities, does not automatically occur, because the embarrassment dominating emotional aspects can hinder students from focusing on reflecting deeply about the values of gratitude they wish to express.

Moreover, the level of student participation is heavily impacted by the strength of the relationship between instructors and learners. When this connection is weak, students may not feel safe enough to engage in role-playing and express themselves freely. Those who lack experience with this technique may experience discomfort due to the absence of a supportive classroom environment, free from negative evaluations. To enhance students' behavioral, cognitive, and emotional involvement, educators should employ methods to create a welcoming, open, and trust-building learning environment. Initiating warm-up exercises, recognizing students' efforts, and gradually introducing role-playing activities can foster increased engagement. Therefore, the role-playing approach serves not only as a way to grasp the concept of gratitude intellectually but also as a means to instill character values by promoting comprehensive engagement across all dimensions.

This indicates that the concept of student engagement contributes to why some students feel apprehensive about taking part in role-playing activities, a subject that has been extensively examined in prior research. The 2024 study named "The Impact of Student Engagement and School Well-Being on Student Learning Motivation. [25] Reveals that when students are more engaged and experience a positive school atmosphere, their motivation to learn significantly increases. This research highlights the necessity of fostering an educational setting that promotes both student engagement and a sense of well-being to enhance students' motivation towards learning. Another investigation from 2023, titled "A Summary of Student Engagement in Learning within Higher Education," concludes, based on earlier research findings, that the developed assessment tools have been validated and shown to be reliable. This implies that the tool is effective in accurately and consistently gauging student participation in their learning processes.[26] The study successfully created an assessment instrument capable of measuring three types of engagement: Behavioral, Emotional, and Cognitive, featuring 23 reliable and valid items determined through Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Cronbach's alpha evaluations. A prior study titled "The Impact of Student Engagement and School Well-Being on Student Learning Motivation" found that students' motivation to learn is heavily affected by their engagement levels and overall well-being within the academic community.

If the research is linked to what scholars are currently exploring, it suggests that when students experience comfort, acceptance, and support from their educational setting both from instructors and peers during Role Playing activities, they become bolder in taking on roles and expressing gratitude through their actions in simulations. Conversely, low participation, particularly in emotional engagement, can lead them to feel shy, hesitant, or even withdraw from such activities. This directly impacts the aim of this study, which seeks to develop character education focused on gratitude through active learning. Achieving such character development requires full participation across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive domains. Furthermore, the study titled "Overview of Student Engagement in Learning in Higher Education" has identified a framework for measuring student engagement that includes three key elements: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. These three elements are highly relevant to this investigation. Behavioral engagement manifests through students' willingness to engage in scenarios that express gratitude; emotional engagement is indicated by their comfort and enjoyment while participating; and cognitive engagement is evident in their grasp of the importance of gratitude demonstrated in their roles. If any of these elements are lacking, such as feelings of embarrassment stemming from emotional disengagement, then utilizing Role Playing to cultivate gratitude will not achieve its full potential. Therefore, the concept of Student Engagement serves as a foundation for understanding student actions in Role Playing activities and acts as a crucial metric for evaluating the effectiveness of this approach in fostering gratitude character education, as detailed in the research focus at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

The utilization of this model in practice is shaped by several essential elements. Firstly, the size of the class plays a significant role. In larger classes (over 40 students), the engagement between instructors and learners becomes less profound, making it challenging for instructors to provide the individual attention necessary to boost the confidence of shy students. Conversely, in smaller classes (15 to 20 students), instructors have the chance to offer more personalized support, thereby enhancing the potential for emotional connection. In practical terms, large classes (more than 40 students) hinder instructors' ability to focus on individual needs, which impedes emotional bonding. On the flip side, smaller classes (15 to 20 students) and a welcoming social environment foster a greater sense of safety and encourage participation. Furthermore, good facilities, spacious environments, appropriate tools, and proper seating can enhance students' willingness to engage. Nonetheless, an academic culture that favors passive teaching may make role-playing techniques seem unfamiliar to students, necessitating a gradual introduction to help them feel capable and at ease. Therefore, the effective application of the Role-Play Learning model for developing gratitude in character education heavily relies on the harmony between engagement theory and classroom realities related to class size, facilities, educational culture, and personal connections. If these factors are lacking, students may struggle to engage fully in all three aspects of involvement, preventing the optimal achievement of instilling a sense of gratitude in them.

Second, the assistance provided by the facility plays a crucial role. A shortage of classrooms, absence of audio-visual tools, or fixed seating layouts can hinder comfort during Role Playing sessions. These sessions necessitate flexible space, seating arrangements that encourage interaction, and may also need props like costumes or multimedia to enhance the experience and engagement. When such facilities fall short, students may lose interest in actively participating. Third, the classroom's academic culture is also vital. If the setting is typically centered around passive lectures, introducing the Role Playing approach unexpectedly can catch students off guard, leading to embarrassment since they are not accustomed to performing or sharing their thoughts in front of classmates. Consequently, a gradual transition and adjustment period is essential for them to feel at ease and confident with this approach. Fourth, the relationships between students significantly affect participation. In a classroom where students are well-acquainted and comfortable with one another, they tend to be bolder in performing without feeling shy. On the other hand, in classes where students are not familiar or close, feelings of awkwardness in Role Playing tend to be more pronounced.

This reflection indicates that implementing the Role Playing Model requires more than just methodological design; it must also consider practical aspects in the environment to enhance Student Engagement and achieve effective character education focused on gratitude at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

Conclusion

This study successfully confirms that role playing is a learning method used to express emotions, attitudes, behaviors, and values, with the aim of feeling, understanding other people's points of view, and way of thinking (imagining ourselves in other people's situations). The implementation of the Role Playing method in learning Aqidah Akhlak regarding Gratitude material at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta has proven to be effective in fostering gratitude character education in students. Through role-playing activities that include discussions, screenplay, and appearances in front of the class, students not only gain an understanding of the concept of gratitude intellectually, but also feel it emotionally and in their behavior. Each group succeeded in conveying the meaning of gratitude in various real circumstances, such as remaining grateful despite facing life difficulties or disasters. This shows that Role Playing is not only a medium to convey material, but also as a means of internalizing character values that affect students' attitudes in daily life.

The practical implication of this study is the importance of special training for lecturers in designing role-playing scenarios that are relevant, realistic, and in line with students' lives so that they are more emotionally engaged. In addition, the provision of a wider and more flexible classroom is also important so that the role-playing process can take place properly. To overcome the obstacles of students who still feel embarrassed or hesitant to perform, lecturers can gradually introduce or practice basic communication skills before the Role Play activity.

In future research, it is recommended to quantitatively measure the effect of using this Role Playing method in the formation of student gratitude character by using standardized instruments that focus on Student Involvement and the Character Education Index. In this way, the effectiveness of this method can be proven more comprehensively, both in terms of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor students.

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