

Fasting as a Means of Developing a Disciplined and Pious Personality

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Abstract

In Islam, fasting is not merely understood as an act of abstaining from food and drink but also as a means of developing a disciplined and pious personality. This study aims to analyze the role of fasting in fostering discipline and enhancing individual piety. The research employed a library research approach by reviewing various scholarly sources, including journal articles, books, and other relevant literature. The findings indicate that fasting contributes significantly to the development of self control, time management discipline, and spiritual awareness. Furthermore, fasting embodies important educational values such as patience, honesty, responsibility, and social concern, all of which contribute to the formation of an Islamic personality. The discussion reveals that the effectiveness of fasting in shaping personality is strongly influenced by an individual's understanding of its underlying values, the surrounding social environment, and consistency in practicing the lessons of fasting beyond the month of Ramadan. Therefore, fasting can serve as an effective means of cultivating a disciplined and pious personality when performed with sincerity, awareness, and deep spiritual reflection.

Keywords: fasting; personality development; discipline; piety; Islamic education.

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INTRODUCTION

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is a fundamental act of worship prescribed in Islamic law. As one of the Five Pillars of Islam, it is obligatory for every Muslim who has reached the age of religious responsibility (mukallaf) and is free from legitimate exemptions ('udhr). Through fasting, Allah intends to cultivate individuals who are pious, morally upright, and beneficial to themselves and society. Consequently, fasting is not only a religious obligation but also an essential means of developing a personality grounded in piety. By observing fasting, individuals discipline their souls, train themselves to adhere to specific rules and schedules, refrain from prohibited actions, and increase their commitment to righteous deeds and virtuous conduct (Syaifi, 2019).

Fasting is not merely the act of abstaining from food and drink from dawn until sunset. Rather, it serves a broader educational purpose by nurturing the human soul, teaching individuals to overcome desires and regulate their impulses. Through this process, individuals develop resilience and the ability to control emotions and behaviors that may otherwise lead to wrongdoing. Fasting encourages patience and perseverance, enabling individuals to face life's challenges with greater emotional stability.

Moreover, fasting teaches self restraint not only in fulfilling physical needs but also in managing psychological and social needs, both of which are essential for human well being. Failure to regulate emotional and social needs often contributes to conflict, disputes, and deteriorating interpersonal relationships (Angel et al., 2024). Embedded within the practice of fasting are numerous educational values that can guide individuals in their daily lives. The discussion of Islamic educational values extends beyond empirical

and scientific considerations to include the internalization and appreciation of moral principles that contribute to effective character development. As one of the central pillars of Islam, fasting functions as a spiritual guide for Muslims in strengthening their faith and piety toward Allah SWT through the cultivation of self restraint and control over worldly desires (Aryanto, 2022).

Ramadan also serves as an important opportunity for character development among children. Through fasting, children learn perseverance, patience, sincerity, resilience, solidarity, and compassion toward others. The month of Ramadan provides parents with a valuable opportunity to foster positive character traits by guiding and exemplifying the practice of fasting. In addition, fasting teaches individuals to uphold honesty and sincerity in their interactions with themselves and others. Honesty represents a fundamental moral virtue and serves as a cornerstone for ethical behavior in all aspects of life (Enny Nazrah, 2021).

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design. This approach was selected because the study aimed to examine and gain an in depth understanding of the concept of fasting in Islam and its role in developing a disciplined and pious personality based on written sources and scholarly literature.

The data sources consisted of both primary and secondary materials. Primary data were obtained from the Qur'an and Hadith related to the practice of fasting. Secondary data were collected from books, scientific journal articles, and previous studies relevant to the topics of fasting, personality development, discipline, and piety. These sources were accessed through various academic references and databases, including Google Scholar.

Data were collected using documentation techniques, which involved identifying, reviewing, and recording relevant literature concerning fasting, character formation, discipline, and piety. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative method. This analytical approach involved describing, interpreting, and synthesizing concepts and theories derived from the selected sources to provide a systematic understanding of the role of fasting in shaping a disciplined and pious personality.

To enhance the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings, relevant literature from various scholarly perspectives was critically examined and compared. The synthesis of these sources enabled the researchers to formulate a comprehensive interpretation of how fasting contributes to personality development within the framework of Islamic education.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

Based on findings from various studies, fasting has significant positive effects on individuals' physical, psychological, and spiritual well being. From a physical health perspective, fasting provides the digestive system with an opportunity to rest, thereby promoting more balanced metabolic processes. Restricting food intake to the pre dawn meal (suhour) and the breaking of the fast (iftar) contributes to improved digestive function and may facilitate natural detoxification processes within the body.

In addition to its physical benefits, fasting has been shown to enhance self control. Individuals who observe fasting are trained to endure hunger and thirst while simultaneously regulating emotions such as anger and excessive desires. This process indirectly cultivates patience by encouraging individuals to delay the fulfillment of their needs until the appropriate time. Patience is a fundamental value in Islamic teachings, as fasting trains individuals to remain steadfast when facing challenges, refrain from sinful behavior, and consistently perform acts of obedience to Allah SWT (Anggraini, 2019).

From a spiritual perspective, fasting contributes significantly to the enhancement of religious awareness and piety. The practice encourages individuals to strengthen their relationship with Allah SWT and improve the quality of their worship as a whole (Sabir & Srikandi, 2025). Previous studies have also demonstrated that fasting positively influences the development of spiritual intelligence, particularly among children. Early habituation to fasting can foster good moral conduct and strengthen awareness of one's relationship with God and fellow human beings (Septiani et al., 2024).

Furthermore, fasting plays an important role in personality and character development. It serves as a means of cultivating humanitarian values, purifying the soul, and elevating an individual's spiritual dignity. The significance of fasting extends beyond the regulation of physical needs, encompassing psychological and social dimensions that are essential to human life (Azis, 2015).

These findings suggest that fasting remains highly relevant in the modern era because it addresses contemporary needs for moral and spiritual development. The values embedded within fasting contribute to character education by promoting honesty, responsibility, and social awareness. Individuals who practice fasting sincerely tend to demonstrate greater honesty, self confidence, and moral integrity. Moreover, fasting fosters empathy toward others, particularly those who experience economic hardship, which is reflected through charitable acts such as zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (Angel et al., 2024). Overall, fasting contributes to the formation of disciplined personalities characterized by self regulation and strong spiritual values.

Discussion

In Islam, fasting is not merely understood as a ritual act of abstaining from food and drink; rather, it represents a process of spiritual purification (*tazkiyat al nafs*) aimed at developing a better and more virtuous personality. This perspective is consistent with previous findings indicating that fasting enhances spiritual awareness and strengthens individual piety (Sabir & Srikandi, 2025).

The structured timing of meals during Ramadan, specifically between suhoor and iftar, demonstrates how fasting cultivates discipline in managing daily routines. Such regularity encourages the development of organized behavioral patterns, which serve as the foundation of personal discipline. This observation aligns with studies highlighting the positive influence of fasting on bodily functions and healthy lifestyle habits. Moreover, the ability to refrain from hunger, thirst, and emotional impulses during fasting illustrates its function as a form of self control training. Within the framework of Islamic education, self control is considered a fundamental element of moral development because individuals who can regulate their desires are more capable of avoiding negative behaviors and making ethically sound decisions (Hermanto, 2026).

Fasting also possesses a profound spiritual dimension as a form of *riyadhah ruhaniyah* (spiritual discipline and training). Through this practice, individuals develop a heightened awareness that all actions are observed by Allah SWT, encouraging them to become more patient, sincere, and obedient. Consequently, fasting strengthens the

development of a pious character and reinforces commitment to religious values (Sabir & Srikandi, 2025).

Furthermore, fasting functions as a medium of moral education by instilling virtues such as honesty, patience, and social empathy. This educational process is particularly evident in the development of spiritual intelligence among children who are introduced to fasting from an early age (Septiani et al., 2024). Therefore, the benefits of fasting extend beyond physical well being, serving as an effective means of cultivating discipline and strengthening piety through self regulation, habitual orderliness, and the internalization of spiritual values.

The findings also indicate that fasting is not merely a ritual obligation but a comprehensive educational practice with broad implications for personality development. The self discipline cultivated through fasting forms a critical foundation for individual growth across spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions. This observation supports the view that fasting can reduce social conflicts, interpersonal tensions, and relational disharmony because it encourages emotional regulation and balanced fulfillment of psychological needs (Azis, 2015).

Additionally, fasting as an expression of patience reinforces its role in strengthening faith and religious commitment. Patience in facing hardships, avoiding prohibited actions, and consistently fulfilling religious obligations constitutes an important indicator of piety. Consequently, fasting contributes not only to spiritual devotion but also to the development of mental resilience and moral integrity (Anggraini, 2019).

From the perspective of character education, fasting makes a substantial contribution to the cultivation of honesty and social responsibility. Since fasting is a deeply personal act of worship known ultimately only to Allah SWT, it encourages individuals to practice honesty even in the absence of external supervision. Moreover, the experience of enduring hunger and thirst fosters empathy toward those who are less fortunate, thereby enhancing social concern and charitable behavior. In this regard, fasting serves as an effective means of developing individuals who are not only personally righteous but also socially responsible members of society (Angel et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Fasting is not merely a ritual act of worship but also serves as an important means of developing a disciplined and pious personality. Through the practice of abstaining from food, drink, and various desires, fasting trains individuals to cultivate self control, patience, and orderliness in their daily lives. Over time, these habits contribute to the development of discipline, which is reflected in a more organized and regulated lifestyle.

Furthermore, fasting functions as an effective medium for spiritual development by strengthening an individual's piety toward Allah SWT. Through sincere observance of fasting, individuals are encouraged to draw closer to God, improve the quality of their worship, and refrain from actions that are contrary to Islamic teachings. This process not only enhances one's vertical relationship with Allah but also promotes the development of positive moral character and ethical behavior in social interactions.

Therefore, fasting can be understood as a comprehensive educational process encompassing physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. Its benefits extend beyond religious observance to include character formation, moral development, and the cultivation of social responsibility. Consequently, the consistent and mindful practice of fasting is expected to produce individuals who are disciplined, morally upright, and characterized by a high level of piety.

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