

**LEVERAGING ISLAMIC EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT TO AIMED FUTURE**

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the implementation of character education based on Islamic values in elementary schools, focusing on the strategy of integrating these values in the educational process. This research is based on the importance of character education that is in line with Islamic teachings in forming a generation with noble character. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a case study type, involving the principal, deputy principal for curriculum, teachers, and students as the main informants. Data was collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which included data reduction, data presentation, and verification. The results of the study show that Islamic values are integrated into the curriculum, applied through active and participatory learning methods, supported by routine religious activities, and strengthened by the example of teachers and staff. Cooperation with parents also plays an important role in ensuring the consistency of character education at home and school. The results of this research lie in the provision of a model for the implementation of character education based on Islamic values that can be a reference for other schools in an effort to build a generation with strong character and noble character.

Keyword: *Character Education, Islamic Values, Curriculum Integration*

A. INTRODUCTION

Character education is a central issue in the formation of a young generation with morality and integrity in the midst of a crisis of social values (Atmaja, 2023; Harmadi et al., 2022; Vhalery, 2024). Moral degradation in the context of a dynamic global society can be seen from various social phenomena such as rampant intolerance, corruption, and lack of social empathy (Ataman et al., 2024; Hafizi & Wiyono, 2023; Hart, 2022). This raises concerns about the quality of the nation's next generation. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) has a strategic role in building students' character, considering that religious values can shape individual morality from an early age (Hariyadi et al., 2023; Ilyas et al., 2024; Pramono & Hanita, 2021).

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According to data from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), efforts to integrate religious values and character are part of the national education policy to strengthen the nation's identity (Sakban & Sundawa, 2023; Supadi & Fauzi, 2024). Therefore, this study is relevant because it examines effective PAI teaching strategies in building the character of students who are religious and have noble character.

Previous studies have examined the influence of PAI on the formation of student character. Several studies have shown that religious values-based teaching methods can improve students' morality and ethics (Chao, 2023; Harmadi et al., 2022; Hart, 2022; Kurnanto et al., 2023). However, the studies focus more on a general approach without paying attention to specific and contextual teaching strategies. Meanwhile, research that integrates character values in the PAI curriculum as a whole is still limited (Arif et al., 2023; Istiyono et al., 2021; Sanjani, 2024; Sodikin et al., 2022). Therefore, this study is here to fill the gaps in the literature by exploring special strategies that can be applied by educators in the character-based PAI learning process.

Various studies have discussed the relationship between Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and the formation of student character. Yumnah (2021) examined the effectiveness of lecture methods in building students' moral values, while Aswie & Amarulloh (2024) found that a local values-based approach can strengthen the integration of religious character. A study by Ulum & Syafi'i (2022) reveals the importance of contextual learning methods in teaching PAI, while Anggraini & Retnawati (2022) research emphasizes the role of teachers as role models in instilling Islamic values. In another study, Rasyidi & Al Idrus (2024) noted the lack of specific strategies in the literature related to character teaching through PAI. Meanwhile, Rahmatullah et al. (2022) explore the use of digital technology as a learning medium to strengthen students' character. Finally, research by Supadi & Fauzi (2024) shows that the experiential learning approach can increase students' understanding of ethical and moral values. Although diverse, these studies have not fully explored a systematic and comprehensive strategy in integrating character education into PAI, which is an important gap for further research.

The limitations of previous research show the need to explore more innovative strategies in character-based PAI learning. This research offers a new approach by focusing on collaborative learning strategies, experiential learning methods, and technology integration in PAI learning (Atmaja, 2023; Harmadi et al., 2022; Vhalery, 2024). Thus, the novelty of this study lies in the development of adaptive learning models that are in accordance with the needs of the times. This strategy is expected to be a solution to the challenges faced by teachers in implementing character education effectively in various educational environments.

This study aims to answer the main question: "What is an effective strategy in implementing character-based Islamic Religious Education in schools?" The derivative questions raised include: what strategies are the most relevant to be applied at various levels of education, how the strategies affect the character of students, and what are the obstacles faced by teachers in the implementation process. Another goal is to design practical guidelines for educators in integrating character values into the PAI curriculum in a systematic and sustainable manner.

The provisional hypothesis of this study is that innovative and contextual teaching strategies in PAI can significantly improve students' character. This research is also expected to provide practical implications for the development of Islamic religious education in elementary schools. In addition, the findings of this study are expected to be able to make a theoretical contribution to the development of a character education model based on Islamic values. Another implication is the improvement of teachers' competence in designing learning that is not only cognitive-oriented but also affective and spiritual aspects.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research focuses on SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur as an analysis unit or material object. The selection of this location is based on several considerations. First, this school has unique characteristics in integrating Islamic values into various aspects of education, ranging from the curriculum to daily activities. Second, SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur shows a strong commitment to strengthening students' character through various programs that actively involve teachers, students, and parents. Third, this location was chosen because it reflects educational dynamics that are relevant to the purpose of the research, namely exploring the application of Islamic values in the formation of student character. With its diverse socio-cultural background, this school is an apt representation to understand how a holistic approach to character education is applied effectively in the primary school environment.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the phenomenon in depth in a real context (Williams, 2021). The case study provides space for researchers to explore various aspects related to the application of Islamic values and character education at SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur comprehensively. Through case studies, researchers can capture the complexity and peculiarities of the character education process that takes place in this school. The design of this study aims to explore empirical data from various relevant information sources and explore the relationship between policies, teaching practices, and students' responses to character education. Thus, this research is expected to provide a holistic and in-depth picture of the implementation of Islamic values in schools.

The source of information in this study consists of several key informants, namely the principal, Vice Principal for Curriculum, Biology teachers, and students. The principal was chosen as the main informant because he has a strategic role in directing character education policies in schools. Waka Curriculum provides insight into the integration of Islamic values in the curriculum and learning methods. Biology teachers are selected to study how these values are applied in the learning of general subjects. Meanwhile, students become an important source of information to understand how they respond and internalize the values taught. The diversity of these informants is expected to provide rich and in-depth data related to various perspectives in the implementation of character education in schools.

Table 1. Resources

Resources	Job Title/Role	Purpose of Data Collection
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Principal	School leaders	Understand school policies related to character education and Islamic values.
Vice Principal for Curriculum	Curriculum manager	Exploring information about the integration of Islamic values in the curriculum and learning methods.
Biology Teacher	Biology subject instructor	Examining the application of Islamic values in the learning process of general subjects.
Learners	Student	Knowing students' responses, experiences, and understanding of Islamic values taught at school.

The data collection process in this study is carried out through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out to directly observe the learning process, routine religious activities, and interactions between teachers and students in the school environment. In-depth interviews were conducted with the principal, the Curriculum Waka, Biology teachers, and several students to dig up information related to the application of Islamic values and character education. Documentation includes analysis of curriculum documents, school work programs, and relevant activity records. The combination of these three techniques is expected to be able to produce rich and valid data, so that it can provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation of Islamic values in schools.

The data analysis in this study follows the Miles and Huberman model which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and data verification (Köhler, 2024). Data reduction is carried out by filtering and selecting relevant data from the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of tables, matrices, or narratives (display data) to facilitate further analysis. The verification process is carried out by drawing conclusions and confirming data through source triangulation. In addition, the analysis methods used include content analysis to understand the meaning of textual data, discourse analysis to study narratives and contexts, and interpretation analysis to provide meaning to the observed phenomena. Through this approach, it is hoped that the research can produce valid and accountable findings.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Integration of Islamic Values in the Curriculum

The integration of Islamic values in the learning curriculum in schools aims to combine religious teachings with the academic education process, so that students not only gain worldly knowledge but also understand and practice religious principles in daily life. In practice, this integration is carried out by inserting values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and cooperation in various school subjects and activities. For example, in exact subjects, students are taught about the importance of honesty in completing assignments and exams, while in religious education lessons, they gain an in-depth understanding of Islamic teachings and how to apply them in everyday situations. Activities such as group discussions or Islamic values-based projects help students to apply these principles in a practical way. In addition, schools may also hold programs or activities that specifically

emphasize Islamic values, such as character day programs that focus on Islamic values.

The integration of Islamic values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and tolerance is an integral part of the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) curriculum at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur. These values are taught not only in theoretical form, but also through real practice in students' daily lives. Teachers at these schools strive to inculcate Islamic teachings in a way that reflects those principles in their interactions with students. For example, in PAI learning, students are taught the importance of honesty and responsibility through concrete examples and tasks that encourage them to apply these values. Discipline and cooperation are instilled through group activities and projects involving collaboration, while tolerance is practiced in discussions that address diversity and mutual respect. By integrating Islamic values thoroughly in the learning process, schools not only provide academic knowledge to students but also equip them with a strong moral foundation in accordance with religious teachings, preparing them to become individuals of integrity and ethics. The principal said, "The school pays great attention to the integration of Islamic values into every aspect of learning in general and in religious subjects in particular as a form of Islamic religious education. Values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and tolerance are taught not only through theory but also through practice that reflects those values in everyday life."

The results of the interviews revealed that in schools, great attention is paid to the integration of Islamic values into every aspect of learning, with a special focus on religious subjects. Important values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and tolerance are integrated not only through the delivery of theory but also through practice that reflects those values in students' daily lives. This means that the teachings of Islam are not only delivered in the form of subject matter, but are also practiced in daily activities and interactions at school.

With this approach, the school ensures that students not only understand these concepts academically, but also apply them in real action, so that these values become an integral part of their daily lives as in line with the results of the following interviews, "we have several programs such as Islamic character week where each month focuses on one main character value. In one week, we hold various Islamic-based activities such as *Istighosah* stories, *diba'*, and social activities as a form of tolerance that focuses on religious values. In addition, we also hold activities such as congregational prayers and joint recitation that strengthen the practice of Islamic values in daily life."

The results of the interview explained that the school has several special programs, such as the Islamic character week, which are designed to instill key character values through an Islamic-based approach. Each month, Islamic character week focuses on one key character value, which is integrated into various activities throughout the week. These activities include Islamic-based events such as *Istighosah* stories, *diba'*, as well as social activities that emphasize tolerance and religious values.

The school also organizes activities such as congregational prayers and reciting together as in line with the following interview results. The activity not

only teaches Islamic values but also strengthens the practice of those values in students' daily lives, "the value of cooperation is taught through group activities where students must work together to complete a task or project. We teach that cooperation is an important part of Islamic teachings that teach its people to help each other and work together in goodness. Tolerance is taught by respecting differences among students and understanding that Islam teaches its people to live in peace with everyone, regardless of their background or beliefs." The results of the interviews show that the school actively teaches the value of cooperation and tolerance through various activities that focus on group-based learning and interaction between students. In the context of cooperation, students are involved in group assignments or projects where they must work together to achieve a common goal. The school teaches that cooperation is an important principle in Islamic teachings, which encourages people to help each other and work together in goodness. The value of tolerance is taught by emphasizing the importance of respecting differences among students and understanding that Islam teaches its people to live in peace with everyone, regardless of their background or beliefs.

The integration of Islamic values in the school curriculum is an important strategy to form students who are not only academically superior but also have a strong character and in accordance with religious teachings. Through this approach, students are taught to internalize values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and tolerance, which are then applied in their daily lives. Real practices, such as group assignments and value-based projects, as well as routine religious activities such as congregational prayers and recitations, provide students with opportunities to practice those values in a supportive and structured environment. The approach ensures that religious education is not only theoretical but also practical, allowing students to develop strong morals and ethics. Thus, the integration of Islamic values in education not only improves students' academic competence but also equips them with a solid moral foundation, preparing them to become individuals with integrity and ethics in society.

The integration of Islamic values in the educational curriculum has proven to be effective in shaping the character of religious and ethical students. The application of Islamic values through a thematic approach is able to increase students' moral awareness, especially in the aspects of honesty and responsibility (Harmadi et al., 2022; Safitri, 2024; Supadi & Fauzi, 2024). Another study by Hart (2022) emphasized that group-based activities and collaborative projects that integrate the values of cooperation and tolerance have a positive impact on students' social attitudes. In addition, research by Ilyas et al. (2024) found that routine religious practices, such as congregational prayers and recitation activities, contribute significantly to instilling discipline and strengthening students' spirituality. The results of this study indicate that the integration of Islamic values not only strengthens the cognitive aspects of students, but also builds a solid foundation of character, which then has an impact on their behavior in daily life. This is in line with a holistic approach that places education as a means of moral and spiritual development, in addition to mastery of academic knowledge.

Active and Participatory Learning Methods

Active and participatory learning methods are pedagogical approaches that emphasize the direct involvement of students in the learning process, allowing them to play an active role in learning activities. In this method, students not only become recipients of information but also actively participate through various activities such as group discussions, projects, simulations, and educational games. The approach encourages students to think critically, collaborate with classmates, and apply knowledge in practical contexts. By involving students in the learning process, this method aims to improve their understanding of the subject matter, develop social skills such as communication and cooperation, and motivate them to learn in a more fun and interactive way. On the other hand, the method also helps students develop problem-solving skills and creativity, as they are often faced with situations that require independent thinking and decision-making. Overall, the active and participatory learning method creates a dynamic and collaborative learning environment, which supports students' academic and personal development.

Teachers at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur apply active and participatory learning methods to encourage student involvement directly in the learning process. These methods include group discussions, role-playing, and simulations, which are designed to make students more actively participating and engaged in learning. With this approach, students not only gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter, but can also apply character values in the Islamic context in a practical way. In group discussions, students can explore and discuss values such as honesty and tolerance, as well as how to apply them in everyday life. Role-playing and simulations allow students to practice these values in situations similar to real life, so that they can better understand and internalize the teachings of Islam.

Through these methods, schools not only teach theory but also guide students to implement character values in practice, creating an interactive and contextual learning environment, "in schools here strongly emphasize the use of active and participatory learning methods, both in conventional forms with learning media and modern learning today with the advancement of technological facilities. role-playing, and simulation. The goal is for students to be able to actively participate in learning and understand and apply character values in the context of Islam in a practical way. In this group, of course, it is also one of the efforts to train student responsibility" The results of the interview revealed that in this school, the use of active and participatory learning methods is highly emphasized, both through conventional approaches with traditional learning media and modern methods that take advantage of technological advances. The methods applied include group discussions, role-playing, and simulations.

The main purpose of the method is to encourage the active involvement of students in the learning process, as well as to help them understand and apply character values in the context of Islam in a practical way. Group discussions allow students to share ideas and learn collaboratively, while role-playing and simulations provide hands-on experiences that help students practice those values in realistic situations, "in learning about the value of responsibility, we divide students into small groups and give them topics of discussion regarding responsibility in different situations, whether at home, school, and the environment. Each group then presented the results of the discussion and we discussed it together. Through these

discussions, students learn to express opinions, listen to others, and work together in groups." The results of the interviews showed that in learning the value of responsibility, the school applied a method that prioritized group discussion to provide practical experience for students. By dividing students into small groups and providing them with topics of discussion related to responsibilities in various contexts such as at home, school, and school environments, it facilitates an active and participatory learning process.

Each group was asked to discuss their topic and present the results of the discussion in front of the class. The discussion and presentation were then discussed together by all students and teachers. Through this method, students not only learn about the concept of responsibility but also hone communication skills, such as expressing opinions and listening to others, as well as strengthening the ability to cooperate in groups, "Students are generally very enthusiastic and involved in the learning process. They feel more excited to learn because this method makes them actively participate and interact with their friends. Many students showed an improvement in their understanding of the material and the application of character values in daily life." the results of the interviews showed that students at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur showed a high level of enthusiasm and active involvement in the applied learning process. Learning methods that prioritize active participation, such as group discussions, role-playing, and simulations, make students feel more excited and motivated to learn. Because they are directly involved in interactive and collaborative activities, students not only better understand the subject matter but are also better able to apply the character values taught in daily life. This active involvement helps students to internalize and apply character values such as responsibility and cooperation, thereby increasing their understanding and developing a sustainable positive attitude.

Based on research conducted by Pramono & Hanita (2021), active and participatory learning methods significantly increase student engagement in the learning process and strengthen critical and collaborative thinking skills. The study found that group discussions and simulations encourage students to exchange ideas and solve problems together, which in turn improves material understanding and social skills. Methods such as role-playing not only help students understand abstract concepts but also facilitate the internalization of character values (Faiz et al., 2023; Sakban & Sundawa, 2023), such as responsibility and cooperation (Sanjani et al., 2024), in real-life situations (Zuhdi et al., 2024). In addition, the results of research conducted by Ridlo & Yanti (2023) in Indonesia show that the use of active learning methods based on religious values increases students' learning motivation and strengthens the practice of moral and spiritual values in daily life. These studies support an active and participatory approach as an effective strategy in learning, not only to improve academic outcomes but also to shape students' character and social skills.

Religious Routine Activities

Regular religious activities in schools play an important role in strengthening students' character education by harmonizing moral and spiritual values in their daily lives. Through various activities such as congregational

prayers, Qur'an readings, and religious studies, students are taught to internalize religious teachings that support the development of positive attitudes and behaviors. In addition, the activity provides an opportunity for students to learn about ethics, responsibility, and empathy in the context of religion, which contributes to the formation of strong character. Programs such as religious lectures, discussions of moral values, and religious-based social activities also help students overcome personal and social challenges, as well as foster a sense of solidarity and concern for others. With the regular integration of religious values in education, students not only acquire religious knowledge but also character skills that are beneficial for their lives outside of school." The school has various regular religious activities such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an, and joint prayers that are carried out regularly. These activities are designed to help students internalize the spiritual values and characters taught in the Islamic religion." Routine religious activities at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an, and praying together are integrated into students' daily schedules to strengthen character education. Congregational prayers that are held regularly teach discipline, togetherness, and a sense of responsibility to students. In addition, reading the Qur'an regularly not only increases religious knowledge but also helps students understand and internalize the moral and spiritual values contained in the sacred text.

Praying together before starting daily activities teaches the importance of starting each activity with good intentions and asking for blessings. By involving students in these activities, they consistently strive to create an environment that supports the development of students' character in accordance with Islamic teachings. This also shows the school's efforts in aligning character education with religious values, shaping the personality of students who have noble character and have high social concern, "every day before starting lessons, we hold a prayer together and read the Qur'an on a certain day. In addition, every Friday, all students and teachers carry out congregational Friday prayers at school. This activity is not only a religious routine but also a moment to strengthen the relationship between students and teachers and instill the values of discipline and togetherness." This is also in line with the results of an interview with the vice principal for student affairs, "Routine religious activities such as congregational prayers and reading the Qur'an provide opportunities for students to reflect on Islamic teachings and apply them in their daily lives. For example, through congregational prayers, students learn about the importance of time discipline, patience, and togetherness. Reading the Qur'an regularly helps students understand the moral and ethical messages contained in it, so that they can apply these values in their lives."

The results of the interview illustrate how routine religious activities at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur function as a tool to strengthen student character education. Regular religious activities such as joint prayers and reading the Qur'an before lessons, as well as congregational Friday prayers, serve not only as spiritual routines but also as tools to strengthen character education. Praying together and reading the Qur'an help students start the day with good intentions and reflect on the teachings of Islam, while congregational Friday prayers strengthen the relationship between students and teachers and instill the values of discipline, patience, and togetherness.

Through involvement in these activities, students are taught to apply moral and ethical values in daily life, thus supporting the formation of a positive and community-oriented character.

The commemoration of Islamic holidays at SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur such as the Prophet's Birthday, *Isra Mi'raj*, and Ramadan is celebrated with various activities that emphasize religious values and character. During the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday, for example, students are involved in religious lecture activities that teach about the example of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and how to apply his noble qualities in daily life. *Isra Mi'raj* is commemorated with activities that emphasize spiritual journey and closeness to Allah, such as discussions about the event and joint prayers. During the month of Ramadan, SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur held various sharing activities with others, such as collecting and distributing food to those in need, which taught the value of caring and sharing. In addition, competitions related to Islamic knowledge, such as memorization of prayers or stories of the prophets, are held to motivate students in learning and applying their religious knowledge. These activities not only strengthen students' religious understanding but also develop their character, such as empathy, humility, and a sense of social responsibility. By integrating these values into the celebration of Islamic holidays, SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur strives to make character education an inseparable part of students' religious experience.

Table 4.2 Internalization of School Islamic Activities

Activities	Frequency	Purpose	Internalized Values	Information
Congregational prayer	Every day	Teaching the importance of time discipline and togetherness	Discipline, togetherness, obedience	Carried out before or after learning activities
Reading the Qur'an	Every given day	Helping students understand Islamic teachings and moral values	Honesty, patience, responsibility	Conducted before starting the lesson
Prayer together	Every day	Accustom students to be grateful and ask for guidance from Allah	Gratitude, humility	Conducted before and after lessons
Commemoration of the Prophet's Birthday	Annual	Reminding students of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH	Love for the Prophet, simplicity, example	Filled with religious lectures and competitions
Commemoration of <i>Isra Mi'raj</i>	Annual	Teaching the importance of prayer and the events of <i>Isra Mi'raj</i>	Faith, discipline, obedience	Filled with religious lectures and religious dramas
Ramadan Activities	Annual (during the month of Ramadan)	Increasing charity and social awareness	Simplicity, honesty, social responsibility	Sharing with others, religious lectures, and competitions

Sharing with others	During Ramadan and special events	Teaching care and empathy to others	Caring, empathy, social responsibility	Compensation to the underprivileged, charity activities
Religious lectures	Optional and Friday	Providing an in-depth understanding of Islamic teachings and moral values	Honesty, responsibility, discipline	Held on Fridays or Islamic holidays

Table 2 provides an overview of the routine religious activities at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur and how these activities help internalize spiritual values and character in students. Congregational prayer activities carried out every day before or after learning activities teach students about the importance of time discipline, togetherness, and adherence to religious teachings. Reading the Qur'an which is carried out every day before starting the lesson helps students understand the teachings of Islam and moral values such as honesty, patience, and responsibility. The joint prayer that is carried out every day before and after the lesson makes students accustomed to giving thanks and asking for guidance from God, instilling gratitude and humility. The commemoration of Islamic holidays such as the Prophet's Birthday and Isra Mi'raj is filled with activities that emphasize religious values and character. The Prophet's Birthday commemoration reminds students of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and is filled with religious lectures and competitions that teach love for the Prophet, simplicity, and example. The commemoration of Isra Mi'raj, which teaches the importance of prayer and the events of Isra Mi'raj, is filled with religious lectures and religious dramas that instill faith, discipline, and obedience.

During the month of Ramadan, sharing activities with others, religious lectures, and competitions increase students' charity and social awareness, instilling the values of simplicity, honesty, and social responsibility. Sharing with others, which is carried out during Ramadan and other special events, teaches students about caring and empathy for others, by providing compensation to the underprivileged and other charitable activities. The religious lectures held provide an in-depth understanding of Islamic teachings and moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline. In addition, competitions related to Islamic knowledge, which are held periodically during special events, increase students' knowledge of Islamic teachings competitively, instilling a spirit of learning, sportsmanship, and confidence.

Religious activities in schools have a strategic role in shaping students' character by instilling moral and spiritual values consistently (Khotimah et al., 2024; Purwanto & Wafa, 2023; Zaini, 2023). The study found that routine practices such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an, and praying together were able to increase students' discipline and sense of responsibility (Arifin, 2024; Saharani et al., 2024). Research by Tuala et al. (2024) also confirms that activities to commemorate Islamic holidays, such as the Prophet's Birthday and *Isra Mi'raj*, strengthen students' understanding of the importance of imitating the Prophet's morals and internalizing exemplary values in daily life. In addition, research

conducted by Muhammad et al. (2021) shows that socio-religious activities, such as sharing with others during the month of Ramadan, are effective in fostering a sense of empathy and social concern in students. Thus, various religious activities that are integrated in the school curriculum function not only as religious learning but also as an effort to build a character with noble character and responsibility for the community.

Setting an Example and Setting an Example

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and school staff play an important role in implementing and exemplifying Islamic values and character in daily life. They not only teach religious theories and concepts in the classroom, but also demonstrate the practical application of those values through their actions and attitudes. Teachers and staff at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur are actively involved in social activities such as sharing with others, providing compensation to the underprivileged, and participating in community service. Through this hands-on engagement, they show students how values such as caring, empathy, and social responsibility can be embodied in real action. In addition, they maintain behavior and ethics that are in accordance with Islamic teachings in daily interactions at school, such as speaking politely, showing respect, and being fair. Thus, PAI teachers and school staff become real examples for students in internalizing and practicing Islamic values and good character, both in the school environment and in daily life.

The example of the teacher at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur is very important to be a role model for students, because through this example students can see firsthand how the values taught are applied in daily life. Teachers who demonstrate behavior that is in accordance with Islamic moral and ethical values, such as honesty, discipline, and empathy, provide a real example that students can follow. When teachers show a fair and compassionate attitude in interacting with students, they not only teach theory, but also provide practical learning on how to behave and behave well. This helps students to understand and internalize those values more deeply, as they can see the real application of those values in everyday actions.

By being a good role model, teachers play a role in shaping students' character, motivating them to behave positively, and encouraging them to apply the values they have learned in their own lives, "at school we strongly emphasize the importance of role models from teachers and school staff. We believe that exemplary is one of the most effective methods of character education. PAI teachers and school staff always strive to be a real example in applying Islamic values and character in daily life."

The results of the interview underlined the importance of exemplary teachers and school staff in character education in schools. The school emphasizes that exemplary is a very effective method in shaping students' character. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and school staff strive to be a real example in applying Islamic values and character in daily life. They show behaviors and attitudes that are in accordance with these values, so that students can see firsthand how these values are applied. By being role models, teachers and school staff help students internalize and practice the values taught, both in the school environment

and in everyday life. This creates a learning environment that supports the development of students' character holistically, making them individuals with strong moral and ethical values, "always starting the class by giving greetings and prayers together. This is not only a routine, but also a way of showing the importance of starting the day with prayer. In addition, we always try to be honest, patient, and compassionate in interacting with students. For example, if any student makes a mistake, we gently remind them and give them understanding of the importance of the values of honesty and responsibility."

The results of the interview suggest that the teaching practice in this class is very focused on spiritual and moral values. They begin each day of teaching with greetings and prayers together, emphasizing the importance of starting the day with reflection and spirituality, which is not only considered a routine, but as a foundation in forming a positive atmosphere and respecting spiritual traditions. On the other hand, their approach to interacting with students is based on the principles of honesty, patience, and compassion. For example, when students make mistakes, teachers do not punish immediately, but provide understanding and guidance gently, showing the importance of honesty and responsibility values. The approach reflects an effort to build students' character while also teaching them about the consequences of their actions in an educational and constructive way.

Research by Indawati et al. (2022) confirms that teacher exemplary is one of the most effective methods in character education, especially in the elementary school environment. Teachers who demonstrate behavior in accordance with moral values, such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy, are able to exert a strong positive influence on students. This is in line with a study conducted by Snyman et al. (2023), which stated that the emotional relationship between teachers and students, through example and loving attention, plays an important role in shaping the character of students. Meanwhile, research by Boty et al. (2023) shows that consistent exemplary practices, such as starting classes with prayers and giving greetings, create a conducive learning atmosphere and motivate students to internalize moral and spiritual values. Teacher role models not only strengthen cognitive learning, but also support students' affective development, shaping them into individuals of noble character and responsibility for their social environment.

Cooperation with Parents

The school works closely with parents to ensure that Islamic values and characters taught in the school are also applied at home. This collaboration is important because effective character education requires consistency between the school and home environments. Teachers and school staff communicate regularly with parents to provide information about the values being taught and practical ways to apply them at home. Through annual meetings, workshops, and parenting programs, parents are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support the character development of their children. With close cooperation between schools and parents, values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and discipline can be practiced consistently by students, both in the school environment and at home. This can create synergies that strengthen the character education process and ensure that students can internalize and apply these values in various aspects of their lives.

Regular meetings with parents and counseling on character education and Islam are carried out at SD Negeri 2 Jatipungur to strengthen cooperation between schools and families. The activity aims to ensure that the values taught at school are also applied at home, thus creating a consistent environment for student character development. In this meeting, teachers and school staff provided information about the ongoing character education program and practical ways for parents to support them at home. On the other hand, counseling on Islamic values and their application in daily life is also provided to strengthen parents' understanding and skills in educating their children. With close communication and collaboration between the school and parents, it is hoped that students can internalize and practice the values taught consistently in various aspects of their lives, both at school and at home, "the school believes that the education of Islamic character and values is not only the responsibility of the school, but also the family. Therefore, we work closely with parents to ensure that the values we teach in schools are also applied at home."

The results of the interview confirmed that the school views character education and Islamic values as a shared responsibility between the school and the family. The school believes that in order for these values to be properly internalized by students, consistency is needed between what is taught at school and what is applied at home. Therefore, schools work closely with parents to ensure that the values taught in school are also applied at home. The collaboration is carried out through regular meetings and counseling, where schools provide information and guidance to parents on how to support character education and Islamic values at home. Thus, students get an environment that supports the development of their character holistically, both at school and at home, "we have held counseling on the importance of honesty and how to teach it to children. In this counseling, we explained the concept of honesty according to Islamic teachings, provided concrete examples, and discussed practical strategies that parents can do at home. We also engage psychologists and education experts to provide additional insights." The results of the interview revealed that the school has held counseling that focuses on the importance of honesty and how to teach it to children. In the counseling, the concept of honesty is explained based on Islamic teachings, providing a strong theological foundation for these values.

In addition, this counseling provides concrete examples that help parents understand how honesty can be applied in everyday situations. Practical strategies that parents can do at home are also discussed, giving them effective tools and methods to teach honesty to their children. The school also engages psychologists and education experts in counseling to provide additional insights. These experts help enrich parents' understanding of children's psychological development and how the right approach can support the teaching of the value of honesty. Thus, counseling not only provides theoretical knowledge, but also practical guidance and professional support to ensure that the value of honesty can be taught and applied effectively at home," he said, "I assess its effectiveness through feedback from parents and changes in student behavior. Many parents report that their children show improvements in attitudes and behaviors at home, such as being more polite, honest, and responsible. In addition, our observations in schools also show that

students who are supported by parents in the application of these values tend to be more consistent in their positive behavior."

The results of the interview explained how schools assess the effectiveness of their character education and counseling programs. Assessment is carried out through feedback from parents and observation of changes in student behavior. Many parents report that their children show improvements in attitudes and behaviors at home, such as being more polite, honest, and responsible. On the other hand, the school also observes student behavior at school. The results of observation showed that students who received support from parents in the application of these values tended to be more consistent in showing positive behavior. This indicates that cooperation between schools and parents in teaching and implementing character values has a significant impact on the development of students' attitudes and behaviors. By using feedback from parents and observations at school, schools can ensure that the character education programs they run are effective and provide real benefits for students' character development as shown in Figure 1.

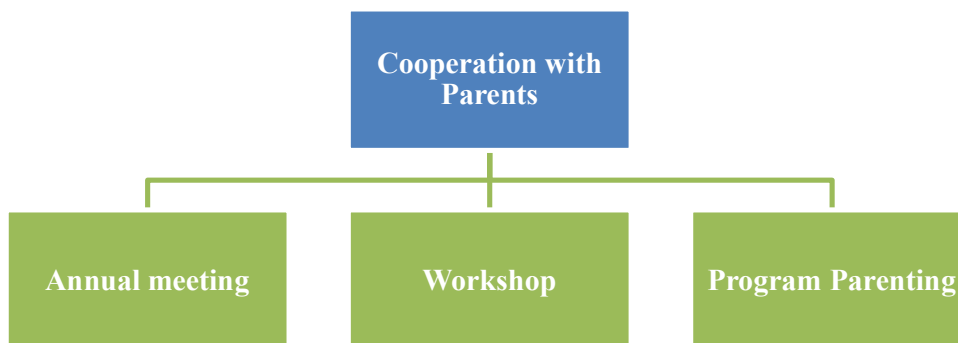


Figure 1. Chart of Cooperation in Character Programs

Yulianti et al. (2022) research confirms that parental involvement in children's education has a significant impact on student success, especially in character building. This is in line with a study by Ulum & Syafi'i (2022), which found that the active involvement of parents in children's character education increases the consistency of the application of moral values, both at home and at school. Furthermore, research by Istiyono et al. (2021) shows that effective communication between teachers and parents, such as through regular meetings and counseling, strengthens parents' understanding of the values taught in school and provides them with tools to support learning at home. Thus, this collaboration not only improves students' academic achievements, but also strengthens the internalization of moral values and character, creating a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also of noble character.

The research findings at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur are expected to contribute to enriching the literature on character education through religious education.

Through the implementation of programs and strategies, the school has succeeded in providing synergy between the school environment and the home in supporting the development of students' character. This shows that a collaborative approach is not only effective in improving students' understanding of values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy, but also encourages consistency of positive behavior across different environments. These findings underscore the importance of parents' active role in character education and can serve as a model for other schools that want to integrate moral values holistically through close cooperation with families.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings at SD Negeri 2 Jatipunggur, the integration of Islamic values in the curriculum, the application of active and participatory learning methods, and the implementation of routine religious activities have proven effective in supporting the development of students' character. These programs not only strengthen students' understanding of religious values, but also form consistent positive behaviors in the school environment. The provision of examples and examples by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and school staff plays an important role in encouraging the internalization of these values. In addition, close collaboration with parents through regular meetings and parenting programs strengthens support for character education, creating synergies between school and home that help students apply the values of honesty, responsibility, and empathy in daily life.

However, this study has some limitations. The findings are based on only one school, so generalization to the context of other schools with different social and cultural conditions needs to be done carefully. In addition, although collaboration with parents shows positive results, parental participation is uneven, which can affect the consistency of the implementation of values at home. This study also has not explored in depth the long-term impact of the character education program implemented. Therefore, further research involving more schools and monitoring the development of students' character in the long term is highly recommended to strengthen the validity of the findings.

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