

CHARACTER EDUCATION-BASED ON RELIGIOUS APPROACH: IMPROVING STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT SMPIT SAMAWA CENDIKIA

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Abstract

The research investigates implementing a religious approach to enhancing students' understanding of Islamic principles and fostering religious character development. This research employs a qualitative methodology focusing on implementing a religious approach to gather data from various sources. The findings showed that students demonstrated a deeper understanding of Islamic concepts and their practical application. Students engaged more in Islamic practices like prayer, fasting, and charity. Students displayed better behaviour, including politeness, respect, and helpfulness. Students' academic performance improved, reflecting the positive impact of religious education. The program fostered acceptance of differences and tolerance towards others. Students developed the ability to analyze and critically examine Islamic teachings. The study acknowledges a potential limitation in memorization: the need to comprehend the meaning. Some students might memorize verses without fully understanding their meaning. However, the benefits of repetition and the potential for future understanding are highlighted. The study suggests that the religious approach to character education at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia successfully shapes students' knowledge, character, and social attitudes.

Keywords: *Character, Religiosity, Principles, Knowledge, Behavior*

A. Introduction

Character education based on a religious approach integrates religious values and teachings into character development programs to form individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also wealthy in moral and ethical values¹. The character approach emphasizes the importance of integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in education so that students can internalize the values into their daily behavior. In the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), this includes moral knowledge, feelings, and actions explored and developed based on Islamic values.

Faith-based character education offers a framework to address modern society's moral and ethical challenges, such as materialism, consumerism, and hedonism, by providing a solid foundation for forming good character³. This education teaches learners to understand and appreciate religious values, such as honesty, responsibility,

and empathy, applied in their social interactions.

Faith-based character education also plays a vital role in shaping the identity of students⁴. By understanding and practicing religious teachings, learners can develop a sense of pride and confidence rooted in positive values⁵. This assists them in making wise decisions and acting in ways that reflect the moral principles they have learned. In addition, faith-based character education can be an effective medium in promoting tolerance and understanding among religious communities⁶. By learning the universal values found in different religions, learners can learn to respect differences and cooperate with people from diverse backgrounds. This is especially important in a pluralistic society where cooperation and harmony between social groups are essential to expected progress.

Faith-based character education is relevant to the school environment and can be applied in other social contexts, such as the family, community, and workplace.

¹ Mardiah Astuti, Herlina Herlina, and Ibrahim Ibrahim, "Role of Islamic Religion Education in Shaping Student Character" *Jurnal Visionary: Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Dibiidang Administrasi Pendidikan* 12, no.1 (March 4, 2024): 77–88, <https://doi.org/10.33394/vis.v12i1.9821>.

² Muhammad Junaedi Mahyuddin, Handayani Sura, and Fitriyanti Sulaiman, "Role of Islamic Religion Education in Shaping Student Character Study of the Islamic Counseling Revolution in the Formation of the Character Education of the Age of the Mental Revolution 4.," *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran (JRPP)* 7, no. 3 (June 9, 2024): 6927–35, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v7i3.29325>.

³ Syech Zainal and Raya Agni, *Memahami Kurikulum 2013: Perspektif Guru IPA untuk Pengajaran yang Efektif* (Mega Press Nusantara, 2024).

⁴ Astri Sutisnawati, Arifin Maksum, and Arita Marini, "Implementasi Pendidikan Multikultural Berbasis Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila P5 di Sekolah Dasar," *DWIJA CENDEKIA: Jurnal Riset Pedagogik* 7, no. 3 (December 22, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.20961/jdc.v7i3.79769>.

⁵ Ahmad Farid, "Internalisasi Karakter Pendidikan Islam Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany Tangerang Selatan," *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan FKIP Universitas Lampung*, April 1, 2024, 142–55, <http://e-jurnal.fkip.unila.ac.id/index.php/prosem/article/view/456>.

⁶ Ahmad Ansyori, "Nternalization of the Character of Islamic Education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Wali Songo Asy-Syirbaany Tangerang South The Role of Islamic Education in Promoting Peace and Tolerance in Multicultural Societies," *Kaipi: Kumpulan Artikel Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (March 4, 2024): 12–18, <https://doi.org/10.62070/kaipi.v2i1.50>.

⁷ Seongkyeong Jeong and Hwanbo Park, "Can School Cultivate Active Global Citizens? Exploring School and Student Factors Related to Students' Global Citizenship in the Republic of Korea," *Asia Pacific Education Review*, April 13, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-024-09961-6>.

⁸ Winarno and Muhlisin, "Urgency and Implementation of Experience-Based Islamic Religious Education," *Cigarskruie: Journal of Educational and Islamic Research* 1, no. 2 (March 17, 2024): 168–88, <https://doi.org/10.5281/r9e9gb40>.

As such, this approach could have a broad and sustainably impact the character-building of individuals and society.

Faith-based character education requires commitment and cooperation from all parties involved in the education process, including educators, parents and communities. Educators must have the knowledge and skills to integrate religious values into the curriculum and teaching methods. At the same time, parents and communities must support this effort by providing an environment conducive to learners' moral and spiritual growth¹⁰.

Overall, character education based on a religious approach is a comprehensive and multidimensional strategy that not only focuses on intellectual development but also the formation of a whole character¹¹. It is a long-term investment in the nation's character-building that will benefit current and future generations. Research has shown that incorporating religion into correctional interventions can lead to significant changes in offenders' attitudes and behaviors¹².

Furthermore, utilizing religion-related stimuli in cognitive bias modification interventions for alcohol use disorder patients has shown promising results in reducing approach tendencies toward alcohol and increasing meaning in life, especially in faith-based rehabilitation settings¹³. The findings highlight the potential of religious elements in shaping character education and moral development, emphasizing the importance of integrating religious teachings into the educational curriculum for a holistic approach to character building.

Religion-based character education, especially Islam, is a fundamental aspect in shaping individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also wealthy in moral and ethical values¹⁴. Islamic teachings, with their universal principles, offer a robust framework for character development, where values such as honesty, patience and empathy are instilled from an early age¹⁵. Schools, as educational institutions, play a vital role in this process,

⁹ Laurance Joseph Splitter, "The Imperative of Reasonableness: Democracy and Education," in *Identity, Reasonableness and Being One Among Others: Dialogue, Community, Education*, ed. Laurance Joseph Splitter (Singapore: Springer Nature, 2022), 211–90, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6684-2_7.

¹⁰ Helen Hanna, "Young People's Rights to, in and Through Education," in *Young People's Rights in the Citizenship Education Classroom*, ed. Helen Hanna (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), 65–104, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-21147-9_3.

¹¹ Adriana Denisa Manea, "Influences of Religious Education on the Formation Moral Consciousness of Students," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, LUMEN 2014 - From Theory to Inquiry in Social Sciences, Iasi, Romania, 10-12 April 2014, 149 (September 5, 2014): 518–23, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.08.203>.

¹² "Saved, Salvaged, or Sunk a Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Faith-Based Interventions on Inmate Adjustment," *The Prison Journal* 96, no. 4 (June 10, 2016): 600–622, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885516650883>.

¹³ "Protocol for an RCT on Cognitive Bias Modification for Alcohol Use Disorders in a Religion-Based Rehabilitation Program," *BMJ Open* 12, no. 9 (September 1, 2022): e060820–e060820, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-060820>.

¹⁴ Rayhanur Royyan and Nur Hidayat, "Konsep Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter (Telaah Pedoman Kemendiknas 2010)," *Wacana Akademika: Majalah Ilmiah Kependidikan* 8, no. 1 (May 7, 2024): 90–101, <https://j.ustjogja.ac.id/index.php/wacanaakademika/article/view/16589>.

¹⁵ Yusuf Hadijaya et al., *Multicultural Management in Education Units* (umsu press, 2024).

Through the curriculum and daily activities, we are providing an environment conducive to the learning and practice of these values¹⁶.

Activities such as collective prayers and recitation of religious texts strengthen students' understanding of their religious teachings and promote a sense of community and solidarity among them¹⁷. The example shown by teachers, as authority figures, is very influential in instilling desired behaviors. Through their actions and words, teachers can serve as role models that inspire students to internalize and practice the values in their daily lives.

Character-building strategies implemented in schools, such as psychological approaches involving guidance and counseling, structured lesson plans, and extracurricular activities designed to enrich students' experiences, all contribute to the formation of strong characters¹⁸. This holistic approach not only focuses on the academic aspect but also on students' social and emotional development, ensuring that they grow into balanced and responsible individuals.

The positive impact of faith-based character education is seen not only in the school environment but also in the wider community¹⁹. Students raised with these values are likely to be better citizens, contributing to social harmony and well-being²⁰. They are more likely to exhibit noble behaviors, such as kindness and generosity, and to respect differences, creating a more inclusive and tolerant society.

Strong character education, rooted in religious teachings, is a long-term investment in the future of society²¹. This helps in creating the next generation who are not only successful in academic achievement, but also in living meaningful and fulfilling lives, enriched by deep and lasting values. Thus, the role of schools in integrating religious character education becomes very important, as they mold the individuals who will shape the future of our society²².

Religious practice has been shown to increase empathy and compassion in individuals, contributing positively to emotional intelligence and moral behavior²³. Studies

¹⁶ Idan Pakaya and Febrianto Hakeu, "Peran Tri Pusat Pendidikan KI Hajar Dewantoro Dalam Transformasi Kurikulum Merdeka," *PEDAGOGIKA* 14, no. 2 (October 31, 2023): 172–80, <https://doi.org/10.37411/pedagogika.v14i2.2740>.

¹⁷ John R. Hinnells, "Who's Who of World Religions," in *Who's Who of World Religions*, ed. John R. Hinnells (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1991), 1–456, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-09500-1_1.

¹⁸ Ina ter Avest et al., "Normative Citizenship Education in Plural Societies: A Dialogical Approach to Possible Tensions Between Religious Identity and Citizenship," in *Religion, Citizenship and Democracy*, ed. Alexander Unser (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 221–43, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83277-3_12.

¹⁹ Mardian Effendi, Idi Warsah, and Syaiful Bahri, "Implementasi Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Adab di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu Khoiru Ummah" (masters, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Curup, 2024), <https://e-theses.iaincurup.ac.id/6138/>.

²⁰ Hani Hastangka et al., "Kearifan Lokal Pancasila, Sejarah, Dan Budaya Bangsa," 2024, 245, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11387976>.

²¹ Shalahuddin Muhammad et al., "Penanaman Nilai Akhlak Berbasis Pendidikan Islam Sebagai Landasan Teori Pendidikan Karakter Di Sekolah," *Burangrang: Jurnal Pusat Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (P3M)* 2, no. 1 (June 26, 2024): 44–53, <https://journal.albadar.ac.id/index.php/burangrang/article/view/216>.

²² Oren Satipa Mulia, "Membentuk Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Kesalehan Masyarakat," *KAMALIYAH: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 1 (May 31, 2024): 129–44, <https://ejournal.stai-mifda.ac.id/index.php/kamaliyah/article/view/522>.

²³ Nurmaulista Ym, vitriani, and Finanta, "Emotional Intelligence Relationship to Moral Behavior of X-Class Students of Smk Muhammadiyah in Pekanbaru City," *EduTeach: Jurnal Edukasi dan Teknologi Pembelajaran* 4, no. 1 (November 21, 2023): 41–50, <https://doi.org/10.37859/eduteach.v4i1.5814>.

show that religiosity is positively correlated with moral emotions and empathy, promoting kindness and love towards others²⁴. In addition, individuals with high piety tend to show more compassion towards themselves and others, with significant positive relationships between religious orientation and self-compassion and compassion levels²⁵. Engaging in religious practices can foster empathy, compassion, and altruism, leading to more empathetic and caring individuals in society²⁶.

Faith-based education plays an important role in promoting integrity and honesty through various strategies. By integrating Anti-Corruption Education and Islamic Religious Education, educators can develop the introduction of honest character in early childhood, emphasizing the learning theory of neuroscience²⁷. In addition, efforts to instill honesty in students involve mentoring programs, fostering commitment through shared responsibility, and enforcing established rules. Islamic Religious Education teachers also play an important role in instilling the value of honesty in students, facilitating effective learning processes and assignments while observing students' honesty and enthusiasm during learning activities²⁸. Islamic religious education institutions serve as platforms for nurturing integrity and honesty among students, contributing to the development of morally upright individuals²⁹.

Character education in Indonesia has become a priority in order to form the next generation that is not only academically intelligent but also rich in moral and spiritual values³⁰. Character education is not only limited to teaching moral values theoretically, but also through daily practice³¹. This can include activities such as community service, social activities, or programs that support the development of student leadership and independence. Thus, character education becomes a comprehensive educational process that not only sharpens the intellect but also shapes the character of students to become individuals with high integrity³².

Effective character education requires collaboration between school, family, and community³³. Parents and teachers should work together to set a good and consistent

²⁴ Nini Adelia Tanamal, "A Religiosity Review of The Spiritual Motherhood Approach for Women," *JAGADDHITA: Jurnal Kebhinnekaan Dan Wawasan Kebangsaan* 2, no. 2 (June 28, 2023): 54–69, <https://doi.org/10.30998/jagaddhita.v2i2.1945>.

²⁵ Ilham Mundzir, "Praktik Pedagogis Islam Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Melalui Program Pemberdayaan Keluarga Duafa," *Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Kemuhammadiyah* (JASIKA) 4, no. 1 (March 28, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.18196/jasika.v4i1.82>.

²⁶ Ani Nur Afifah, "Hubungan Nilai Keperawatan Dengan Penerapan Caring Islami Di Rumah Sakit Islam Sultan Agung Semarang" (Undergraduate, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang, 2024), <https://Repository.Unissula.Ac.Id/34223/>.

²⁷ Yoesoep Edhie Rachmad et al., *Buku Ajar Pendidikan Karakter* (PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2024). ²⁸ Imam Purniawan, "Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Menanamkan Nilai Kejujuran Pada Siswa Kelas V Di SD Negeri 02 Rawajitu Utara Kabupaten Mesuji" (undergraduate, IAIN Metro, 2023), <https://repository.metro.univ.ac.id/id/eprint/8279/>.

²⁹ Nadia Yusri et al., "The Important Role of Islamic Religious Education in Forming Islamic Personality," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2024): 12–12, <https://doi.org/10.47134/pjpi.v1i2.115>.

³⁰ M. I. Suhifatullah, *Menggal Potensi Batin: Strategic Management Character Education to Increase the Spiritual Intelligence of Students* (Mega Press Nusantara, 2024).

³¹ Iman Subasman and Faat Nasyiruddin, "Islamic Education System in Character Building: Evaluation of the Programme of Admission to Schools in Pangandaran," *Journal on Education* 6, no. 4 (May 10, 2024): 18147–60, <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v6i4.5732>.

³² Asari and Muhlisin, "Implementation of Village Policy in Improving Student Akhlaq through Religious Programs," *Cigarskrue: Journal of Educational and Islamic Research* 1, no. 2 (March 11, 2024): 89–98, <https://doi.org/10.5281/a0gd8v07>.

³³ Winarno and Muhlisin, "Urgency and Implementation of Experience-Based Islamic Religious

Education.”

example in terms of behavior and ethics³⁴. The community also has an important role in supporting school efforts, for example, through participation in school programs or providing moral support to students. With good synergy between all parties, character education can be implemented successfully and create a positive impact on the younger generation³⁵.

Every school should not only focus on developing religious aspects, but also other aspects of character such as social care, life skills, and emotional intelligence. It is a balanced and comprehensive approach, which can produce graduates who not only excel in knowledge, but also in wisdom and humanity.

The integration character education in curriculum through a holistic and multidimensional approach, which includes students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor development should be applied. The curriculum is designed to not only provide academic knowledge, but also to instill moral and spiritual values. This is done by integrating general education and religious education, creating a synergy between science and religious values. In practice, the school applies various active and participatory learning methods, where students are invited to be directly involved in the learning process through discussions, group projects and field activities that support character development.

Character education is an important aspect in the world of education. In addition to equipping students with science, schools also have the responsibility to form good character. Religious approaches, particularly Islam, offer a solid foundation of values for character development. This literature review will examine how character education based on a religious approach can improve students' Islamic knowledge.

The concept of character education has become a hot topic in the world of education. Character education aims to instill moral values and noble morals in students. Various studies emphasize the importance of combining character education with religious values. Islam, as a religion that emphasizes moral and ethical aspects, has great potential to become the foundation of character development.

The religious approach to character education utilizes the main sources of religion, such as the Quran and Hadith, as well as the stories of prophets and companions as examples. This approach aims to form a character that is faithful and pious, as well as has noble morals. Several studies have proven the effectiveness of the religious approach in character education. Studies conducted³⁶ in Indonesia, it shows that a well-designed Islamic religious education (PAI) can strengthen students' character based on religious values. Another study proposes a PAI learning model that is oriented towards character development through the stages of knowing (cognitive), doing (psychomotor), and becoming (affective)³⁷. Likewise,

³⁴ Fransiskus Janu Hamu, "Prosocial Engagement in Catholic Religious Education towards the Formation of Student Character Through the Similarity of Teachers," *NALAR: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan* 2, no. 1 (April 29, 2023): 43–50, <https://doi.org/10.56444/nalar.v2i1.904>.

³⁵ Rina Aspar, "Implementation of Character Education Management in Developing Interests, Attitudes and Positive Behaviors of Students in SDN 2 Sukajawa Kec Tanjung West Karang Bandar Lampung Learning Year 2023/2024," *UNISAN JURNAL* 3, no. 4 (April 30, 2024): 853–67, <https://journal.an-nur.ac.id/index.php/unisanjournal/article/view/2729>.

³⁶ Nur Ainiyah, "Pembentukan Karakter Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam," . . *Volume*. 13 (2013).

³⁷ Muhsinin Muhsinin, "Model Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Nilai-Nilai Islam Untuk Membentuk Karakter Siswa Yang Toleran," *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (September 26, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v8i2.751>.

the development carried out³⁸ further strengthens that *the Islamic educational model is effective to create characteristic of empathy toward Z generation*.

This literature review identifies the need for further research related to effective methods and strategies in implementing character education based on a religious approach. In addition, it is important to examine how this approach can improve not only the character, but also the Islamic knowledge of students holistically.

The religious approach offers great potential for the development of students' character. Existing studies show the effectiveness of this approach in shaping character based on Islamic values. However, further research is needed to optimize learning methods and strategies, as well as assess their impact on increasing knowledge and practice of Islamic teachings in students.

B. Method

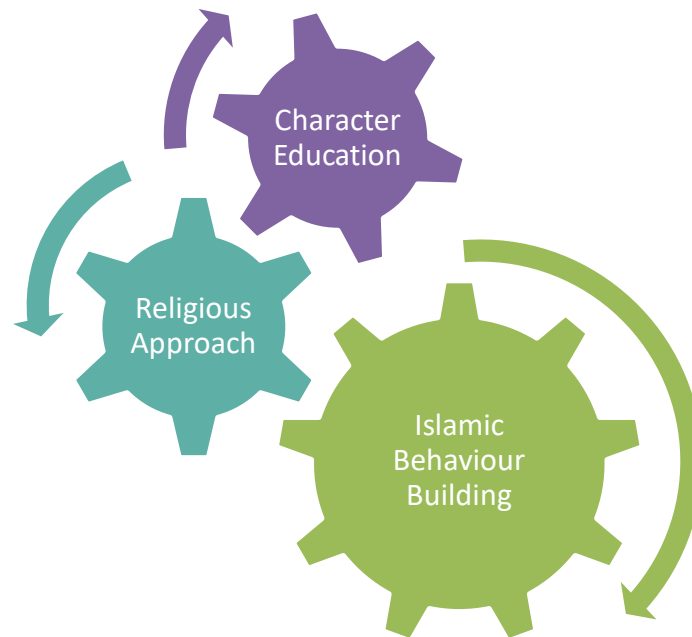
The research method used is a qualitative method. Research data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, group discussions, and document studies. In the observation stage, the researcher directly observed the learning process and interaction between teachers and students to understand the application of religion-based character education. Then, researchers conducted in-depth interviews with teachers, students, and parents to get their perspectives on the effectiveness of this approach. Then, after making sure that the two stages were sufficient, the researcher held a group discussion with teachers and students to dig deeper into their experiences and views. Finally, researchers analyze related documents such as curriculum, lesson plans, and student evaluation records.

C. Finding and Discussion

Results

The implementation of character education based on a religious approach at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia showed positive results in improving students' knowledge of Islamic religion education. This is evident from some indicators, among others, students show a better understanding of Islamic religious material, both conceptually and applied. Students are more active in practicing Islamic values in everyday life, such as Sholat, fasting, zakat, and sedekah. Students show better noble morals, such as politeness, respect for parents and teachers, and helping each other. In addition, positive results are also seen from the increased academic grade of students, which reflects the positive impact of Islamic religious education in the school. Thus, the religious approach at the University of Cendikia can be considered effective in shaping the student's character and knowledge of religion holistically. It can be seen to figure 1 below:

Figure 1 Pattern System Implementation of Character Education



Character education is a learning process that aims to instill moral, ethical, and positive attitudes in individuals. In the context of this diagram, character education serves as a common foundation for holistic personal development.

The religious approach refers to the use of religious teachings, in this case Islam, as a source of values and guidelines for behavior. Religious teachings provide a strong moral framework to shape the character of individuals.

The formation of Islamic behavior is the ultimate goal of the character development process. Through character education and religious approaches, it is hoped that individuals can develop behavior that is in accordance with Islamic values, such as honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and so on.

Relationship Between Components

1. Character Education as a Strong Foundation for the Development of Islamic Behavior. Moral values instilled through character education will help individuals understand and appreciate religious teachings more deeply.
2. The Religious Approach as a Clear Guide to Good and Bad Behavior. By studying and practicing religious teachings, individuals can form behavior that is in accordance with Islamic values.
3. The Formation of Islamic Behavior as the ultimate goal of this entire process is the formation of individuals who have good Islamic behavior. This behavior will be reflected in daily life, both in social interactions, family, and in carrying out worship.

Proses Dinamis

This system is dynamic, meaning that the three components influence each other and run continuously. Character education will continue along with individual development, and a religious approach will provide renewal and reinforcement of the values that have been learned.

Implication

Character education and religious approaches must be harmoniously integrated in the learning process. Teachers and parents play an important role as role models in the formation of students' character. In addition to theory, practice in practicing religious values is essential to form appropriate behavior. The character development process needs to be evaluated periodically to see how far the goals have been achieved.

The character development pattern system you presented provides a comprehensive framework for forming individuals of noble character. By integrating character education, religious approaches, and the formation of Islamic behavior, it is hoped that a young generation can be produced who have faith, piety, and noble character.

³⁸ Muhammad Miftakhuddin, "Pengembangan Model Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Empati Pada Generasi Z," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 17, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.2020.171-01>.

individuals as well as being tolerant in interacting with their surroundings. This proves that Islamic education in such schools has not only a positive impact on the academic aspect, but also on the formation of character and social attitudes of students in general.

In addition, the religious approach applied at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia also provides an opportunity for students to develop critical and analytical thinking skills in understanding the teachings of Islam. Thus, students not only passively memorize information, but are also able to understand and reflect on the meaning of the religious teachings they are studying. This course will help students in preparing themselves to face the challenges and changes that exist in today's modern society. For example, in the lessons of Islam, students at SMIT Samawa Cendikia are taught not only to memorize the verses of the Qur'an, but also to understand its meaning and to associate it with everyday life. For example, when studying the concept of trust, students not only learn about the meaning of the word but are also given an understanding of the importance of trust and responsibility in all aspects of life. Thus, students not only become passively believing individuals, but also able to apply religious values in everyday life to be better individuals and beneficial to society. However, there are examples of cases in which a student can memorize the verses of the Qur'an without understanding its meaning in depth, so only repeat it without having a proper understanding. For example, one can memorize a sentence about trust without actually applying it in everyday life, thus lacking the moral values that should be learned from the concept. Though there is a possibility that students can only repeat the verses of the Qur'an without a profound understanding, but with such repetition they can still gain the spiritual benefits and blessings of the experience. In addition, with proper guidance and training, students can learn to understand the meaning and religious values contained in the verses spoken by them.

It will help them to associate religious teachings with real actions in everyday life. In addition, a deep learning process can also help students to appreciate and live religious teachings as a whole. Thus, the revelation of the Qur'an is not only a routine, but also a means of improving understanding and practice of moral values in the everyday life. Thus, students will not only be able to memorize the verses of the Qur'an properly, but also to apply them in various life situations. Thus, every verse that is translated will have a profound meaning and relevance to their lives. Thus, religious learning is no longer just a duty, but an integral part of shaping the character and morality of students.

Discussions

Engaging and Innovative Learning Approach

Teachers use a variety of interesting and innovative learning methods, such as discussions, games, and simulations, so that students are more enthusiastic and focused in

learning³⁹. In this modern era, the role of teachers is not only limited to conveying knowledge, but also a maestro who is able to deliver his students in an interesting and meaningful symphony of knowledge⁴⁰. Far from the monotonous traditional lecture method, innovative teachers now take advantage of various interesting and innovative learning methods, like listening MP3 al-Qur'an that captivates and arouses the enthusiasm of students.

The text discusses three teaching methods: discussions, games, and simulations. Discussions are likened to a harmonious orchestra where students exchange ideas, and the teacher facilitates like a conductor. Games, handled creatively by teachers, are engaging and informative, likened to a cheerful melody, stimulating participation and curiosity. Simulations are compared to drama performances, providing real-world experiences where students practice knowledge and develop skills, with the teacher acting as a director.

The combination of various interesting and innovative learning methods is like a beautiful reciting al-Qur'an, leading students on a learning journey full of enthusiasm and enthusiasm. Teachers, the maestro, play an important role in creating the various model of recitation, with their creativity, dedication, and passion to educate the nation's next generation.

The positive impact of the application of this interesting and innovative learning method is not only seen in the improvement of learning achievement, but also in the formation of students' character and personality. They become more active, creative, critical, and able to work well together.

In closing, the role of teachers in the modern era is not only limited to conveying knowledge, but also a maestro who is able to deliver their students in an interesting and meaningful symphony of knowledge. With a variety of innovative and creative learning methods, teachers foster students' love for science, leading them to a glorious future.

Instilling religious values in daily life

Teachers not only teach religious materials, but also instill religious values in daily life, so that students can practice these values in daily life. Through learning religious values, teachers can help students to become better individuals and have noble character⁴¹. Thus, students will not only be good at academics, but also have a good and moral personality.

³⁹ Ismail Ismail, "Character Education Based on Religious Values: An Islamic Perspective," *Ta'dib: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 21, no. 1 (September 25, 2016): 41–58, <https://doi.org/10.19109/td.v21i1.744>.

⁴⁰ Samantha K Clarke, "'Always with Kindness': The Life and Career of Music Educator and Conductor, Anthony Maiello," n.d.

⁴¹ Alif Lukmanul Hakim, "Role of Character Education in National Character Building: A Retrospection Noble Values of Muslim Religiosity," *AL-WIJDĀN Journal of Islamic Education Studies* 8, no. 1 (January 25, 2023): 161–82, <https://doi.org/10.58788/alwijdn.v8i1.1735>.

Teachers act as role models who inspire students to always practice religious teachings in their every action and behavior.

They also guide students to understand and appreciate differences between individuals and uphold tolerance in interacting with others. In addition, teachers also provide real examples in dealing with conflicts and challenges in daily life with a wise and patient attitude. Thus, the students will not only become intellectually intelligent, but also have social sensitivity and empathy for others. Teachers not only play the role of educators, but also as guides and role models for students in developing good personalities and characters.

They must be able to inspire and motivate students to reach their best potential, as well as provide encouragement and support when students face difficulties. Teachers must also have the ability to identify each student's individual needs and provide appropriate learning approaches. Thus, students can grow and develop holistically, not only in terms of academics, but also in terms of social and emotional skills. In addition, teachers must also be able to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, or background.

Setting good examples and examples

Teachers provide good examples and examples in practicing religious values, so that students are motivated to follow in the teacher's footsteps⁴². With the example of teachers, students can better understand and internalize religious values. This can also create a more harmonious and peaceful school environment.

Students will feel more comfortable and safer in undergoing teaching and learning activities because of the existence of teachers who are role models for them. Thus, the learning process can run smoothly and effectively. In addition, the presence of teachers who provide religious examples can also help students in overcoming various problems and conflicts that may arise in the school environment. Teachers are not only educators but also figures who can provide support and guidance to students in living their daily lives.

They not only teach the subject matter but also set a good example of how to behave and interact with others. With teachers who provide religious examples, students can learn to become better individuals with noble character. In addition, the presence of teachers who are role models can also motivate students to learn more actively and enthusiastically. Thus, the school environment will become more harmonious and conducive to the learning process. However, not all teachers have good personalities and behaviors as examples for students. Some teachers may have a negative attitude or are not in accordance with the

⁴² Daniel O'Connell, Maurice Harmon, and Amalee Meehan, "Will There Be Teachers? An Analysis of the Congruence of Religious Beliefs of Initial Teacher Education Students and the Patron's (Religious Education) Programme for Catholic Schools," *Religions* 14, no. 12 (December 2023): 1467, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14121467>.

religious values taught. This can make students feel confused and affected by the teacher's behavior. Therefore, it is important for schools to pay special attention to teacher selection in order to find suitable figures as role models for students. With teachers who set a good example, it is hoped that students can continue to be inspired and motivated to become better individuals and live a life with true religious values.

Parental Participation Strengthens the Foundation of Students Religious Education

In this modern era, the role of parents in children's religious education is increasingly crucial⁴³. Realizing this, SMPIT Samawa Cendikia happily welcomes the active participation of parents in various religious activities at school. This close collaboration between the school and parents is like a beautiful symphony, leading children to a deep and deeply rooted understanding of religion in them.

The participation of parents at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia is not just a formality, but a tangible manifestation of their concern and commitment in bringing children on the path of goodness. This can be seen from the various religious activities organized by the school, where parents are not only present as spectators, but also as active participants.

Parents take the time to attend regular recitation held at school, Parents actively guide their children in memorizing the Qur'an, both at home and at school. Parents accompany their children in various religious extracurricular activities, such as tahfidz, marawis, and scouting. Parents attend parenting seminars and workshops held by schools to improve their knowledge and skills in educating children about religion. Parents volunteer to volunteer in various religious activities at school, such as helping with event preparations, being student companions, and so on.

The active participation of parents in religious education at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia has a significant positive impact on their children's learning. This can increase the motivation to learn religion in children. Seeing the enthusiasm of parents in learning religion, children will be motivated to follow in their footsteps and be more active in learning religion. With the guidance and direction of parents at home, children will gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of religion. Building noble character and morals in children can make parents role models for children in applying religious values in daily life. On the other hand, establishing close communication between parents, schools, and children is something that must be done now. This is because parental participation in school activities opens up a closer communication space between parents, schools, and children, so that solid cooperation is established in educating children. Especially now, we can see in various social lives of the community, that when communication between parents and children is not well

⁴³ Uray Sarmila, Aslan Aslan, and Astaman Astaman, "The role of parents towards Youtube users in building children's religious behavior in kuala pangkalan keramat village," *Archipelago Journal of Southeast Asia Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (August 26, 2023): 116–22, <https://doi.org/10.37567/archipelago.v1i2.2459>.

established, the consequence is that children will look for other people as their confidants. So, it is feared that they will take the wrong step in establishing an emotional relationship other than their own parents.

Initiatives such as those taken by SMPIT Samawa Cendikia demonstrate a strong commitment to student character development, which includes religiosity as one of the main pillars. Schools that adopt a religious character approach strive to integrate ethical values, honesty, responsibility and empathy in their curriculum, so that students can develop positive attitudes and behaviors both in the school environment and the community.

The vision and mission of SMPIT Samawa Cendikia, which focuses on character development, reflects a progressive step in the Indonesian education system. The school, by prioritizing religious values, strives to create a learning environment conducive to students' spiritual growth. This is an important endeavor as strong character education will help students face the challenges of an increasingly complex age with wisdom and determination.

SMPIT Samawa Cendikia, with its vision and mission, is one of the real examples of the implementation of holistic character education. The school not only focuses on developing religious aspects, but also other aspects of character such as social care, life skills, and emotional intelligence. It is a balanced and comprehensive approach, which can produce graduates who not only excel in knowledge, but also in wisdom and humanity.

SMPIT Samawa Cendikia integrates character education in its curriculum through a holistic and multidimensional approach, which includes students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. The curriculum is designed to not only provide academic knowledge, but also to instill moral and spiritual values. This is done by integrating general education and religious education, creating a synergy between science and religious values. In practice, the school applies various active and participatory learning methods, where students are invited to be directly involved in the learning process through discussions, group projects and field activities that support character development.

In addition, SMPIT Samawa Cendikia also implements extracurricular activities that support character building, such as social activities, community service, and leadership programs. These activities are designed to hone students' social skills, responsibility and empathy towards others. The school also emphasizes the importance of character education through real-life examples provided by educators and school staff, who are expected to serve as role models for students in exhibiting good and ethical behavior.

Character education at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia also involves parents and the surrounding community. The school strives to build partnerships with parents through open and active communication and involving them in various school activities. The community is also invited to participate in the character education program, both through moral support and activities that involve students in community projects.

The integration of character education in the curriculum at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia reflects the school's commitment to producing graduates who not only excel academically, but also have strength of character and integrity. This is an important effort in creating a young generation that is ready to face future challenges with wisdom, courage and high social awareness. Thus, character education becomes an integral part of the school's vision and mission in producing future leaders who are knowledgeable, insightful and beneficial to humanity.

SMPIT Samawa Cendikia emphasizes various character values designed to shape students into individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also rich in moral and

spiritual values. These values include honesty, integrity, empathy, cooperation, responsibility, and discipline. Honesty is considered the foundation of good character, encouraging students to always be transparent and trustworthy. Integrity teaches them to be consistent in principles and actions, while empathy helps them understand and respond considerately to the feelings of others.

Cooperation and responsibility are emphasized to develop students' ability to work in teams and take initiative. Discipline is taught to help students develop self-control and regularity in daily life. In addition, SMPIT Samawa Cendikia also emphasizes the importance of religiosity, which reflects respect for spiritual values and commitment to religious practices. These values are integrated into all aspects of school life, from the academic curriculum to extracurricular activities, creating an environment that supports students' holistic growth.

Character education at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia also includes the development of emotional intelligence, which enables students to recognize and manage their own emotions as well as those of others. This is important to assist them in building strong interpersonal relationships and in making wise decisions. Social care is also a focus, with the aim of instilling social awareness and a desire to contribute to society. Life skills, such as self-reliance and the ability to face challenges, are also emphasized to prepare students for an ever-changing world.

SMPIT Samawa Cendikia strives to develop religious values through various means, including through classroom learning, project-based activities and leadership opportunities. The school also ensures that these values are reinforced at home and in the community by involving parents and community members in the character education program. Thus, the character values emphasized at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia not only form the basis for students' academic growth, but also for their personal development as responsible and caring citizens.

Conclusion

This study shows that character education based on a religious approach is an effective strategy to increase students' knowledge of Islamic religious education. The implementation of this strategy at SMPIT Samawa Cendikia shows positive results and can be used as a model for other schools in improving the quality of Islamic religious education.

Thus, the researcher suggested to the entire SMPIT Samawa Cendikia community several things, including: teachers need to be equipped with adequate training on character education based on a religious approach. Teachers need to develop more innovative and interesting learning models so that students are more enthusiastic about learning. Parents need to be more active in supporting their children's religious education at home. Further research is needed to find out other factors that can affect the increase in students' knowledge of Islamic religious education.

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. This means that this research was only conducted in one school, namely SMPIT Samawa Cendikia. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to all schools. However, the results of this study can provide an overview of how character education based on a religious approach can be applied to increase students' knowledge of Islamic religious education.

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