

## **The Effectiveness of Habituating Religious Activities in Building Positive Character and Moral Values in Students at School**

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### **Abstract**

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This study aims to examine the effectiveness of habituating religious activities in building positive character and moral values in students at school. Religious activities such as congregational prayers, reciting prayers, and other religious practices are believed to influence students' character development, especially in shaping discipline, responsibility, and empathy. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method in several schools that integrate religious activities into daily routines. The results show that habituating religious activities plays a significant role in improving students' positive character traits, such as discipline, respect, and social awareness. Therefore, the habituation of religious activities can be an essential factor in shaping students' moral character, ultimately supporting the achievement of more holistic educational goals.

### **Keywords:**

Religious Habituation, Positive Character, Student Morals

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### **Introduction**

Education is guidance given to children in an effort to develop the potential that exists in the child so that his development comes out and can be applied to everyday life. Education plays a very important role, especially religious education to be implemented and taught to students, with the aim that students have good morals, noble personalities and can live in society in accordance with God's guidance, the teachings of our religion.

This refers to the objectives of National Education as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 Article 3 SISDIKNAS (National Education System). Law Number 20 of 2003 Article 3 SISDIKNAS (National Education System) which states that the aim of national education is to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to make the life of the nation intelligent, aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003). 2003: 5).

Education is basically a human need and a field that will always be related to human life. Therefore, education is the responsibility of every member of society, nation and state in order to form a new generation for a better survival of humanity (Ruyadi, 2022: 43). Likewise, the role of Islamic

education among Muslims is one form of realizing the ideals of continuing to preserve, instill and transform Islamic values to the nation's future generations so that these values continue to be embedded, function and develop in accordance with the times. However, we are currently in an era of globalization which is marked by extraordinary developments in the field of technology, the flow of information is increasingly open and has almost no barriers. The development of the times and the flow of global life cannot be stopped any longer. Almost all the time in this day and age you can easily access and view news on the internet or television. Current developments certainly have many positive impacts, but it cannot be denied that they can also have negative impacts. Children live in diverse situations, containing all possibilities, because they are always influenced by many different factors, not only at home and at school but also in society in general and by the influence of the natural environment and even the development of increasingly advanced technology. The magazines and diaries that children read, the films they watch, the social networks they view, the friends they socialize with, all have the ability to influence the development of a child's personality.

One of the problems faced by society, especially educators, is that students no longer respect their teachers, ethics and morals are starting to disappear. In newspapers and media *online*, we often see cases of delinquency by minors, such as saying impolite words, frequently uttering dirty words, bullying fellow friends, hugging without shame between men and women, watching adult videos, sexually assaulting minors, rape, getting pregnant out of wedlock, and many other cases of delinquency. This makes the goal of education seem to lose its existence.

Phenomena like the one above show that something is starting to fade from this country, the moral character of the Indonesian people is decreasing day by day or in other words moral decline. Therefore, character education is needed to improve the behavior or attitudes of current and future generations. All of these phenomena indicate that the Indonesian nation is in a crisis of character which is the fundamental foundation in building the Indonesian nation. Character is a person's character, character, morals, or personality as mental, moral, character qualities or strengths that are formed from the internalization of various virtues that are believed to be used as a basis and driving force in thinking, behaving, and acting, as well as distinguishing one individual from another. Character is influenced by genetic factors and a person's environmental factors (Suwardani, 2020). However, we cannot blame anyone, because character problems are our common problems, so we need to think about how the Indonesian people can get out of these various problems. One of the efforts made by the government is the existence of a policy on character education designed by the government since 2010 (Nursalam, 2020: 3).

Character formation is instilling habits about what is good in students so that they understand, then are able to feel what good values are and can apply them to everyday life (Suwardani, 2019: 9-10). Implementing character education begins in childhood, especially in elementary school, as a basis for continuing education. Elementary/MI children's education is basic education in a child's life, meaning that a child's education at this age has an important influence on their life in the future. By implementing character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, it is hoped that it can be a solution to social problems that occur in society. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is an Islamic basic education institution that combines general education with Islamic education (Sukatin, 2020: 90). Elementary/MI children's education is basic education in a child's life, meaning that a child's education at this age has an important influence on their life in the future.

The process of forming a person's character, especially for children, must be carried out by instilling values about good and bad things so that from this instillation students are able to appreciate and know what is good or bad based on their own experience. In building this character, it is also hoped that students can have the attitudes and behavior that were exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. Students are expected to be able to imitate and make the Prophet Muhammad a role model for themselves. As Allah has explained in Q.S. Al-Ahzab/33: 21 (Al-Qur'an Ministry of Religion, 2019). From this verse it can be seen that we Muslims are commanded by Allah to always imitate the characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Because, he is a role model for humans in all things. A good example is in the Prophet. The main point of this verse is the importance of imitating the Prophet's morals and actions in everyday life.

Matta quoted by Aisyah, in the book entitled *Character Education Concept and Implementation* said that there are several rules for character formation, namely:

- a. Gradually, meaning that the process of change, improvement and development must be carried out in stages and carried out with great patience because this requires a long time.
- b. Continuity, meaning that character is formed through a long process of habituation. Therefore, continuous practice and habituation is needed.
- c. Momentum, meaning using various moments of events as a starting point in instilling character. This is related to religious holidays.
- d. Intrinsic, meaning that a child's character will be formed strongly and perfectly if it is driven by their own desires, not because of other people's coercion. Therefore, children need to be exposed to exemplary stories and examples of people who are influential in their lives.
- e. Guidance, meaning that someone else needs help to guide and direct the child to form good character. Character formation requires the presence of an educator to direct, guide and evaluate children's development (Aisyah, 2018).

Zahrudin in his book Zubaedi entitled *Character Education Design (Conception and Application in Educational Institutions)* explains how to grow and improve outwardly commendable character through:

- a. Education. With education, one's vision will broaden. The better a person's level of education and knowledge, the better able to recognize what is praiseworthy and what is reprehensible.
- b. Obey and comply with existing laws and regulations in society and the country. For a Muslim, of course he follows the rules outlined by Allah in the Koran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.
- c. Habits and good morals can be improved through habitual good intentions or activities.
- d. Choose good social circles, the best social circle is to make friends with ulama (believers) and scientists (intellectuals).
- e. Through struggle and effort (Zubaedi, 2011).

There are 18 character education values that have been formulated by the Ministry of National Education which are identified as originating from religion, Pancasila, culture and national education goals. These character values are: Religious, Honest, Tolerant, Discipline, Hard work, Creative, Independent, Democratic, Curiosity, National Spirit, Love for the Motherland, Respect for achievements, Friendly, Love of peace, Love of reading, Care for the environment, Social care, and Responsibility (Suratinem, 2021).

The scope of character in the Islamic view and the values of character education in the Islamic view include:

- a. Human relationship with Allah SWT: obedient, accepting consequences, sincere, optimistic, working hard, responsible, self-awareness, self-introspection.
- b. Human relationship with oneself: honest, responsible, consistent, independent, disciplined, hard working, self-confident, open-minded.
- c. Human relationships with other humans: honest, trustworthy, responsible, consistent, brave, hard working, friendly, affectionate.
- d. Human relationship with nature: love cleanliness, love animals, care for plants, care for the sustainability of nature (Wiyani, 2018).

Actually, character education is not something new in the Indonesian national education system. Currently, there are two subjects given to develop students' morals and character, namely Religious Education and Pancasila and Citizenship Education (PPKn), which in the independent curriculum, PPKn subjects have been replaced with Pancasila Education. However, character development through these two subjects has not provided satisfactory results, so character development needs to involve more subjects, even in all existing subjects (Andres, 2023:20). Therefore, teachers should be able to implement character education involving many subjects or if necessary in all subjects and character education should be developed by schools with the guidance of teachers with various habituation activities

which may be carried out outside school hours. Habits always start from orders, role models and experience and also use rewards or punishments (Mudjib, 2022: 32). The habits that are carried out will become something ingrained in the flesh, such as the habit of carrying out prayers. Once a habit is formed, prayer becomes a human habit.

Providing habituation in character formation at schools/madrasahs can be implemented in several activities such as religious activities. Religious activities aim to deepen students' knowledge about religion, and be able to practice the material taught in class, as well as an effort to foster religious behavior which includes responsibility, discipline and student cooperation in order to become better (Puspitasari, 2019: 33). Religious activities that can become a habit in schools include: first, schools/madrasahs carry out habits to strengthen students' morals which are realized by always sending greetings and smiles, having clean behavior, having discipline, and getting into the habit of reading the Koran and memorizing it. Second, schools/madrasahs carry out habituation activities in the form of *ubudiah* activities such as carrying out *dhuha*, noon and *asr* prayers in congregation with teachers and school residents. Third, commit to habituation to strengthen faith (*Islamic faith*) At school, this commitment is done by integrating the values of unity in each subject. Fourth, the habituation done by the school community in order to commemorate the big day of Islam (Prasetya, 2021: 67).

Based on the explanation above, the phenomenon of religious habituation is similar to that carried out at MI Al-Falah in Tigarun Village, Central Amuntai District, North Hulu Sungai Regency. Every morning the teachers enter the class and guide the students to recite the Al-Qur'an for 15 minutes, invite the students to read the prayer at the beginning and end of learning, the teachers take turns coaching and guiding the students to carry out the *dhuha* prayer activities in congregation every Friday morning, carry out *tahsin* & *tahfidz* activities every Friday afternoon, carry out midday prayers in congregation and consistently to commemorate Islamic holidays every year. This makes researchers think that this is one of the efforts of schools and teachers to build student character. Therefore, based on the explanation above, researchers are interested in conducting this research

### **Literature Review**

The formation of student character through religious activities has become a major concern in the world of education. Many studies show that religious activities can contribute significantly to forming positive character in students. Character education must receive more attention to form a strong foundation for noble morals in students, especially in elementary schools. This is done so that students have awareness of the importance of good values and have a commitment to always do good in everyday life (Mustoip, 2018: 4).

Character education is not only learning in subjects but is an instillation of character values in all school members which includes awareness and willingness to implement all values both towards the creator, the environment, oneself and the nation so that they become human beings through habits or religious activities at school as a forum for forming the character of students. In research conducted by Hikmah Sisilia Mafhum entitled *The Influence of Religious Activities on the Formation of Students' Character at SD Inpress Timbuseng, Pattallassang District, Gowa Regency*, (2021) concluded that there is an influence of religious activities on the formation of students' character, this is proven by the contribution of religious activities being greater than other factors.

In another study entitled *The Influence of School Culture on the Religious Character of Students at SD IT Noor Hidayah* written by Intan Nuraeni and Erma Labudasari (2021). From the results of this research, there is an influence of school culture on students' religious character. This research focuses on examining one character, namely the religious character. How a religious school culture can influence the religious character of its students.

Another research written by Abrar Rizqa Febriyani, Sunarto, I'anutut Thoifah (2021) with the title *The Influence of 4 Religious Programs on the Morals of Students at MUHAMMADIYAH 8 BATU SMP*. In this research, 4 religious programs were studied and the results were found that the 4 religious programs had different effects on students' morals. The religious program consists of congregational prayers, morning tadarus, Friday infaq and dhuha prayers.

Overall, these studies show that religious activities can play an important role in forming students' character, but their success is greatly influenced by factors such as implementation methods, the school environment, and the example of educators. This research aims to further explore how the habit of religious activities can influence the formation of students' character in schools.

### **Research methods**

This research uses quantitative research methods. Quantitative research methods are research methods using numbers and data collection statistics. In quantitative methods determine the population and sample. The population of this study is all grades 3 to 6, this is because these classes carry out all the religious activities at the school. This research was taken using a saturated sampling technique, namely a sample that represents the total population. This is usually done if the population is considered small or less than 100. This is based on Arikunto's opinion that for mere *ancer-ancer*, if there are less than 100 subjects, it is better to take all of them, so that the research is population research (Arikunto, 2006: 134). In the process of data collection techniques using questionnaires, documentaries and observations. The technique for processing the collected data is carried out *editing, coding*,

*skoring, tabulating* and data interpretation was carried out. After the data is presented and interpreted, the data is then analyzed using the Product Moment correlation formula.

## **Research Results and Discussion**

### **1. Habituation of Religious Activities**

Getting used to (*habituation*) is a relatively permanent and automatic process of forming attitudes and behavior through a repeated learning process, whether carried out together, in groups or individually (Baiti, 2021: 131-132). Habituation must start from an early age, as is done from elementary school, which is carried out continuously, regularly and programmed and always given supervision so that good habits are formed for students. Good habits in the school environment within the school rules, if carried out well by all members of the school, can create good personalities for members of the school community.

Meanwhile, religion is everything that exists in religion and everything that is related to religion (Munawaroh & Ashoumi, 2019: 26), with the aim of forming the character of students who believe and are devoted to God Almighty, forming a noble personality in accordance with the teachings of the religion Islam, as well as increasing understanding, appreciation and practice of religious teachings in students' lives. Through religious activities, school members respect and respect each other's differences, create harmony between school members and create a school atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

Religious activities at MI Al-Falah Tigarun include reading prayers together in class, tadarrus Al-Qur'an, midday prayers and noon prayers in congregation and commemoration of Islamic holidays. As is known, the religious activities mentioned above have been implemented and have become a habit for the school community, especially students at MI Al-Falah Tigarun. Based on this, researchers made observations and distributed questionnaires containing routine religious activities. The questionnaire was filled in by students who had been determined as research samples. The questionnaire contained 15 items in the form of questions. Through a questionnaire, it was found that the average value of habituation to religious activities at MI Al-Falah, Tigarun Village, Central Amuntai District, North Hulu Sungai Regency was 50.24. Thus, the author can analyze that the habituation of religious activities at MI Al-Falah, Tigarun Village, Amuntai Tengah District, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency is in the interval 48-50 with an average value of 50.24 in the sufficient category.

### **2. Formation of Student Character**

Character formation is an effort that involves all parties, including parents, schools, the school environment, and the wider community. The combination, harmony and continuity of the parties contribute directly to the formation of a person's character. This means that without involvement from all parties, character education will stagnate, be slow and weak and even threaten to fail (Aisyah, 2018: 28).

Shaping a child's character requires several efforts to achieve good results, this process is carried out gradually and continuously on an ongoing basis. This process will become a habit and will subsequently become a person's character. The indicators of student character formation that were studied were creating trust, creating respect, creating a sense of affection, getting students used to greetings, saying hello, smiling and getting students used to speaking in good and polite language.

The questionnaire containing these indicators was filled in by students who had been determined as research samples. The questionnaire contained 15 items in the form of questions. Through a questionnaire, the average character score for MI Al-Falah students in Tigarun Village, Amuntai Tengah District, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency was 49.66. Thus, the author can analyze that the character formation of MI Al-Falah students in Tigarun Village, Amuntai Tengah District, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency is in the interval 50-53 with an average score of 49.66 in the sufficient category.

After knowing the results of the 2 types of questionnaires, a hypothesis test was carried out to process the data that had been collected from the habituation of religious activities of MI Al-Falah Tigarun students (Variable The relationship between these two variables is calculated using a formula *product moment correlation*. Ser- has been carried out calculations known that the value *product moment correlation coefficient* between habituation to religious activities and character formation of MI Al-Falah students, Tigarun Village, Amuntai Tengah District, Hulu Sungai Regency is 0.4751. Next, these results will be consulted with the r table at 5% and 1% levels, according to the number of respondents of 33, to find a table of values *product moment correlation* then the formula is used to find df, which is 31. So, the r table value can be seen in the table *product moment correlation coefficient*, the 5% and 1% levels are 0.3440 and 0.4421.

Based on the values in the table, it can be compared with the values obtained, namely  $r_{count} > r_{table 5\% \text{ level}}$ , namely  $0.4751 > 0.3440$  and  $r_{count} > r_{table 1\% \text{ level}}$ , namely  $0.4751 > 0.4421$ . Based on the results of the analysis above, the author can conclude that there is a significant influence between the habit of religious activities on the character formation of MI Al-Falah students, Tigarun Village, Central Amuntai District, North Hulu Sungai Regency. Thus the hypothesis is accepted



with a calculated  $r$  value of 0.4751, this is because the calculated  $r$  is greater than the  $r$  table at the 5% and 1% levels.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that one of the ways schools use to shape the character of their students is through religious activities carried out at school because they are carried out continuously. Routine religious activities at school, such as praying before and after studying, reciting the Koran, dhuha and noon prayers in congregation, tahsin and tahfidz and commemoration of Islamic holidays. The habit of religious activities has a significant influence on the formation of student character at MI Al-Falah Tigarun or in other words  $H_a$  accepted and  $H_{the}$  rejected. This is based on the calculation of the hypothesis test, the correlation coefficient results are obtained *product* moment is 0.4751 with a sufficient level of correlation and  $H_a$  accepted because the correlation is sufficient with a value of 0.4751, where the calculated  $r$  is greater than the  $r$  table level of 5% (0.3440) and 1% (0.4421). Therefore, there needs to be support from the school community to continue to be committed to carrying out activities with positive value such as religious activities. Getting used to religious activities can be an effective strategy in forming students' superior character and noble character so that it has a positive impact on their lives.

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