

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS CHARACTER THROUGH ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING

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Abstract

This study examines the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning in developing students' religious character. The research aims to analyze the learning process, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and describe the role of Islamic Religious Education in strengthening students' moral and spiritual values within the school environment. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to obtain comprehensive data related to the implementation of religious character education. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation studies concerning school programs and learning activities. The findings reveal that Islamic Religious Education learning contributes significantly to the development of students' religious character through the application of habituation methods, role modeling, guidance, and motivational approaches. Religious activities integrated into school culture strengthen students' discipline, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, and spiritual awareness. Supporting factors include teacher involvement, positive school culture, parental support, students' motivation, and adequate educational facilities. Inhibiting factors include negative social influences, excessive use of digital media, differences in family backgrounds, and limited student self-discipline. The study concludes that the successful development of students' religious character requires continuous cooperation among schools, teachers, parents, and communities in implementing consistent Islamic value education within students' daily lives.

Keywords: islamic religious education, religious character, character education, islamic values, students' moral development.

Introduction

Religious character education has become an essential aspect of the educational process in modern schools due to the increasing moral and social challenges faced by students (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023). Educational institutions are

expected not only to develop intellectual competence but also to cultivate ethical behavior, spiritual awareness, and social responsibility among learners (Sari, 2017; Azizah et al., 2023). Rapid technological advancement, globalization, and unrestricted access to information have

significantly influenced students' attitudes and behavior in everyday life (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023). Cases of indiscipline, disrespect, dishonesty, bullying, and declining moral awareness among students indicate the importance of strengthening character education within schools (Ilmi et al., 2023; Adawiyah et al., 2022). Islamic Religious Education plays a strategic role in addressing these issues because it contains moral teachings and spiritual values that guide students toward positive behavior (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023). The integration of Islamic values into educational activities is therefore necessary to support the development of balanced individuals who possess both academic competence and noble character (Ilmi et al., 2023; Sari, 2017).

Islamic Religious Education is a compulsory subject designed to help students understand, appreciate, and practice Islamic teachings in daily life (Rahmawati et al., 2019). The learning process does not merely focus on transferring religious knowledge but also emphasizes the formation of attitudes, habits, and moral conduct based on Islamic principles (Azizah et al., 2023; Ilmi et al., 2023). Students are expected to apply values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, respect, compassion, and tolerance in their interactions with others (Ilmi et al., 2023; Azizah et al., 2023). Effective Islamic Religious Education encourages

learners to develop awareness of their responsibilities toward Allah, themselves, society, and the environment. Teachers play a central role in ensuring that religious values are internalized meaningfully through classroom instruction and practical activities (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023). The success of Islamic Religious Education can be observed through students' behavioral changes and their commitment to practicing Islamic teachings consistently (Ilmi et al., 2023; Adawiyah et al., 2022).

Character development through Islamic Religious Education requires systematic learning strategies that involve cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions simultaneously (Ilmi et al., 2023; Sari, 2017). Religious character cannot be formed solely through theoretical instruction because students need practical experiences and continuous reinforcement in their daily activities (Ilmi et al., 2023; Azizah et al., 2023). Learning activities should therefore include habituation, role modeling, discussion, reflection, and direct practice of Islamic values within the school environment. Teachers are expected to create a learning atmosphere that encourages students to develop positive attitudes and moral awareness (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023). Educational approaches that emphasize interaction, empathy, and spiritual reflection contribute significantly to students'

character formation (Ilmi et al., 2023; Sari, 2017). The effectiveness of character education is strongly influenced by the consistency of educational practices implemented by teachers and schools (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023).

The role of teachers in developing students' religious character is highly significant because teachers serve as educators, role models, mentors, and motivators in the learning process (Rahmawati et al., 2019). Students often imitate the attitudes and behavior demonstrated by teachers in both academic and social situations. Positive teacher behavior such as discipline, honesty, politeness, responsibility, and fairness becomes an important example for students to follow (Azizah et al., 2023; Ilmi et al., 2023). Teachers also provide guidance and support when students encounter moral or personal challenges during their educational journey. Strong communication between teachers and students contributes to the creation of a supportive and religious learning environment (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Sari, 2017). Effective teacher involvement therefore becomes one of the key factors in the successful implementation of religious character education (Ilmi et al., 2023; Azizah et al., 2023).

School culture also has an important influence on the development of students' religious character through Islamic Religious

Education learning (Sari, 2017; Ilmi et al., 2023). A positive school environment encourages students to practice religious values consistently in both formal and informal activities (Rahmawati et al., 2019; Azizah et al., 2023). Religious programs such as congregational prayer, Qur'an recitation, Islamic celebrations, and moral guidance activities strengthen students' spiritual awareness and discipline (Azizah et al., 2023; Ilmi et al., 2023). Cooperation between teachers, school leaders, parents, and the community further supports the effectiveness of character education initiatives (Sari, 2017; Rahmawati et al., 2019). Educational values that are integrated into daily school activities help students develop habits that reflect Islamic teachings. A conducive school culture contributes significantly to the formation of respectful, disciplined, and morally responsible students (Ilmi et al., 2023; Azizah et al., 2023).

Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to analyze the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning in developing students' religious character. The research was conducted in a school environment where Islamic values were integrated into daily learning activities and character education programs. Data were collected through

classroom observations, interviews with Islamic Religious Education teachers, school principals, and students, as well as documentation studies related to school programs and learning activities. Observations were carried out to identify teaching methods, teacher-student interactions, and students' behavioral responses during the learning process. Interviews were conducted to obtain comprehensive information regarding strategies, challenges, and efforts implemented in strengthening students' religious character. Documentation data included lesson plans, school regulations, religious activity schedules, and other supporting educational records relevant to the research focus.

The data analysis process was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to obtain accurate and systematic findings. Data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were categorized based on themes related to Islamic Religious Education learning and students' religious character development. The validity of the data was strengthened through triangulation techniques by comparing information from different sources and research instruments. The researcher also applied continuous observation and careful interpretation to ensure the credibility and consistency of the findings. The results of the analysis were presented

descriptively to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning in fostering students' religious character. This research is expected to contribute to the development of effective character education practices within educational institutions.

Results and Discussion

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning plays a significant role in developing students' religious character within the school environment (Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020; Wilanda et al., 2021). Learning activities are designed not only to deliver religious knowledge but also to strengthen students' moral awareness and spiritual attitudes. Teachers integrate Islamic values into classroom instruction, daily interactions, and school activities to encourage students to practice positive behavior consistently (Furqon, 2021; Hidayati, 2022). Religious character development is reflected through students' discipline, honesty, responsibility, politeness, and respect toward others. The learning process emphasizes the importance of connecting religious understanding with practical application in everyday life. Effective implementation of Islamic Religious Education contributes to the formation of students who possess balanced intellectual, emotional, and spiritual qualities (Wahyuni &

Nurhidayah, 2020; Wilanda et al., 2021).

Teachers hold a central position in the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning because they function as educators, role models, mentors, and motivators for students (Furqon, 2021; Hidayati, 2022). Positive attitudes demonstrated by teachers provide direct examples that influence students' behavior and character formation. Students tend to imitate the discipline, honesty, politeness, and responsibility consistently practiced by teachers in school activities. Teachers also encourage students to develop moral awareness through advice, guidance, and reflective learning activities (Wilanda et al., 2021; Nuriyanti et al., 2020). Classroom interactions that emphasize respect and empathy create a supportive environment for character development. Strong teacher involvement therefore becomes an important factor in strengthening students' religious values and ethical behavior (Hidayati, 2022; Nuriyanti et al., 2020).

The learning process applied in Islamic Religious Education involves various methods that support the internalization of religious values among students. Habituation methods are implemented through repeated religious activities such as prayer, Qur'an recitation, greeting practices, and disciplined behavior in daily

routines (Nuriyanti et al., 2020; Furqon, 2021). Role modeling methods enable students to observe and imitate positive examples demonstrated by teachers and school communities. Discussion and reflective activities help students understand the meaning and relevance of Islamic teachings in social life (Wilanda et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020). Guidance methods provide opportunities for students to receive direction and support in overcoming personal and behavioral challenges. Motivational approaches further encourage students to apply Islamic values consistently in academic and social environments (Hidayati, 2022; Nuriyanti et al., 2020).

Religious activities organized within the school environment contribute significantly to strengthening students' religious character. Programs such as congregational prayer, Islamic celebrations, Qur'an reading activities, and moral guidance sessions provide practical experiences for students in implementing Islamic teachings (Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020; Wilanda et al., 2021). Participation in religious activities helps students develop discipline, cooperation, and social responsibility within the school community. Students also gain opportunities to strengthen spiritual awareness and emotional control through regular worship practices. Religious programs conducted consistently create habits

that positively influence students' attitudes and behavior. School activities that integrate Islamic values therefore support the effectiveness of character education comprehensively (Furqon, 2021; Nuriyanti et al., 2020).

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning also emphasizes the importance of developing students' moral responsibility in social interactions. Students are encouraged to demonstrate honesty, respect, compassion, and tolerance in their relationships with teachers, peers, and the surrounding community (Wilanda et al., 2021; Hidayati, 2022). Educational activities help students recognize the consequences of their actions and develop awareness of ethical behavior based on Islamic principles. Teachers guide students in resolving conflicts peacefully and respectfully through communication and reflection (Nuriyanti et al., 2020; Furqon, 2021). Students who understand moral responsibility are more likely to contribute positively to their social environment. Religious character education therefore supports the development of harmonious and respectful relationships within schools (Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020; Wilanda et al., 2021).

Students' discipline becomes one of the important indicators of successful religious character development through Islamic Religious Education learning. Discipline is

reflected in students' punctuality, obedience to school regulations, participation in worship activities, and responsibility in completing academic tasks (Wilanda et al., 2021; Nuriyanti et al., 2020). Teachers consistently reinforce disciplined behavior through supervision, guidance, and positive reinforcement during learning activities. Students gradually develop awareness that discipline is closely related to responsibility and self-control in Islamic teachings. Continuous practice of disciplined behavior strengthens students' ability to manage their actions effectively in different situations. The cultivation of discipline therefore contributes positively to students' personal and academic development (Furqon, 2021; Hidayati, 2022).

Islamic Religious Education learning further contributes to the development of students' emotional and spiritual maturity. Learning activities encourage students to control negative emotions, respect differences, and demonstrate empathy toward others in daily interactions (Hidayati, 2022; Nuriyanti et al., 2020). Spiritual values introduced through religious instruction help students develop patience, sincerity, humility, and gratitude in facing various challenges. Students become more capable of making positive decisions based on ethical and religious considerations. Teachers also support emotional development by creating a comfortable

and respectful learning atmosphere within the classroom (Wilanda et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020). The integration of emotional and spiritual education strengthens students' ability to interact positively within society (Furqon, 2021; Nuriyanti et al., 2020).

The school environment plays an essential role in supporting the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning in character development. A positive school culture encourages students to practice Islamic values consistently in both formal and informal situations (Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020; Wilanda et al., 2021). School regulations, religious programs, and teacher supervision contribute to the establishment of disciplined and respectful behavior among students. Cooperation among teachers, school leaders, and parents further strengthens the consistency of character education efforts (Hidayati, 2022; Nuriyanti et al., 2020). Students who learn within a supportive environment are more likely to internalize religious values effectively. The presence of a conducive educational atmosphere therefore enhances the success of religious character formation (Furqon, 2021; Wilanda et al., 2021).

Challenges in implementing Islamic Religious Education learning remain present despite the positive outcomes achieved in character development programs. Differences in

students' backgrounds, family environments, and social influences may affect the effectiveness of value internalization among learners (Nuriyanti et al., 2020; Hidayati, 2022).

Exposure to negative media content and peer pressure also creates obstacles in maintaining students' moral consistency outside the school environment. Teachers are therefore required to apply adaptive and engaging learning strategies to maintain students' motivation and participation (Furqon, 2021; Wilanda et al., 2021). Continuous communication between schools and parents becomes important in addressing behavioral challenges faced by students. Effective cooperation among educational stakeholders helps strengthen the sustainability of character education programs (Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020; Nuriyanti et al., 2020).

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning ultimately aims to produce students who possess strong religious awareness, noble character, and positive social behavior. Character development achieved through religious education contributes not only to students' personal growth but also to the improvement of school culture and social harmony (Wilanda et al., 2021; Furqon, 2021). Students who internalize Islamic values demonstrate greater responsibility, discipline, empathy, and respect in their interactions with others. Consistent

educational practices and supportive school environments strengthen the effectiveness of religious character formation among learners (Wahyuni & Nurhidayah, 2020; Hidayati, 2022). Islamic Religious Education therefore serves as an important foundation for preparing students to become morally responsible individuals in society. The success of religious character education reflects the importance of integrating moral and spiritual values into the educational process comprehensively (Nuriyanti et al., 2020; Wilanda et al., 2021).

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Developing Students' Religious Character Through Islamic Religious Education Learning

The development of students' religious character through Islamic Religious Education learning is influenced by various supporting factors within the educational environment (Dewi, 2022; Fauzi, 2024). One of the main supporting factors is the active role of teachers in implementing character education consistently during the learning process. Teachers who demonstrate positive behavior, discipline, honesty, and responsibility provide meaningful examples that encourage students to imitate similar attitudes in daily life. Effective communication between teachers and students also strengthens emotional relationships and creates a supportive atmosphere for moral development (Syarifuddin, 2024; Fauzi,

2024). Students tend to respond positively when teachers provide guidance, motivation, and constructive reinforcement in both academic and social activities. Strong teacher involvement therefore contributes significantly to the success of religious character formation among students (Syarifuddin, 2024; Dewi, 2022).

A conducive school environment also becomes an important supporting factor in strengthening students' religious character (Dewi, 2022; Fauzi, basri, 2024). Schools that integrate Islamic values into daily routines and institutional culture create opportunities for students to practice religious teachings consistently. Activities such as congregational prayer, Qur'an recitation, Islamic celebrations, and moral guidance programs encourage students to develop spiritual awareness and disciplined behavior (Fauzi, 2024; Dewi, 2022). School regulations that emphasize respect, responsibility, and ethical conduct further support the implementation of character education. Educational environments characterized by order, cleanliness, cooperation, and mutual respect positively influence students' attitudes and social interactions. Positive school culture therefore strengthens the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education learning in developing students' moral character (Fauzi, 2024; Dewi, 2022).

Parental support plays a crucial role in reinforcing religious values taught within the school environment (Prasetyo & Widyastuti, 2021). Parents who provide consistent guidance, supervision, and moral education at home help students apply Islamic teachings in everyday life. Harmonious cooperation between schools and families contributes to the continuity of character education beyond classroom activities. Students who receive positive reinforcement from parents generally demonstrate stronger discipline, responsibility, and commitment to religious practices. Family environments that prioritize honesty, respect, and worship activities support students' emotional and spiritual development effectively. Consistency between educational values at school and home therefore becomes an important element in successful character formation (Prasetyo & Widyastuti, 2021; Fauzi, 2024).

Students' personal motivation and willingness to learn also influence the success of religious character development through Islamic Religious Education learning (Dewi, 2022). Learners who possess strong interest in religious activities are more likely to participate actively in classroom discussions, worship programs, and moral guidance activities. Positive motivation encourages students to practice Islamic values voluntarily in both academic and social situations.

Teachers support this process by providing appreciation, encouragement, and meaningful learning experiences that strengthen students' confidence and moral awareness. Active student participation contributes to the effectiveness of character education programs implemented within schools. High learning motivation therefore becomes an important factor in strengthening students' religious attitudes and behavior (Dewi, 2022; Prasetyo & Widyastuti, 2021).

The availability of educational facilities and learning resources further supports the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning effectively (Fauzi, 2024). Facilities such as prayer rooms, Qur'an learning materials, religious books, and multimedia learning resources help students understand Islamic teachings more comprehensively. Schools that provide adequate infrastructure create learning environments that support spiritual and moral development. Educational media and interactive learning methods also increase students' interest and participation during classroom activities. Proper facilities enable teachers to conduct religious programs and practical worship activities more effectively. Adequate educational resources therefore contribute positively to the internalization of Islamic values among students (Fauzi, 2024; Dewi, 2022).

Despite the presence of supporting factors, several inhibiting factors continue to affect the development of students' religious character (Dewi, 2022; Syarifuddin, 2024). One significant obstacle originates from the influence of social environments outside the school setting. Negative peer interactions and unhealthy social trends may weaken students' commitment to practicing Islamic values consistently. Students are often exposed to behaviors that contradict moral teachings through their surrounding environment and daily interactions. Such conditions create challenges for teachers in maintaining students' ethical awareness and disciplined attitudes. External social influences therefore become an important concern in the implementation of character education programs (Syarifuddin, 2024; Dewi, 2022).

The rapid development of technology and unrestricted access to digital media also present challenges in developing students' religious character (Syarifuddin, 2024). Many students spend considerable time using social media, online entertainment, and digital platforms that may expose them to inappropriate content and negative behavior patterns. Excessive use of technology can reduce students' interest in educational and religious activities when not properly supervised. Exposure to harmful information may influence students'

attitudes, communication styles, and social interactions negatively. Teachers and parents therefore need to provide supervision and guidance regarding the responsible use of technology among students. Digital influences have become one of the major obstacles in maintaining students' moral and spiritual consistency (Syarifuddin, 2024; Dewi, 2022).

Differences in students' family backgrounds further influence the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education learning in character development (Prasetyo & Widyastuti, 2021). Some students come from family environments that provide limited supervision and insufficient moral guidance at home. Lack of parental attention toward worship activities, discipline, and ethical behavior may reduce the reinforcement of values introduced in school. Students who experience unstable family conditions often face emotional and behavioral challenges that affect their learning process. Inconsistent educational practices between home and school environments can weaken students' understanding and application of religious values. Family-related factors therefore become important considerations in developing effective character education strategies (Prasetyo & Widyastuti, 2021; Dewi, 2022).

Limited student awareness and low self-discipline also become obstacles in the implementation of

religious character education programs (Dewi, 2022). Some students demonstrate low motivation to participate actively in worship activities, classroom learning, and moral guidance sessions. Difficulties in controlling emotions, maintaining discipline, and following school regulations may hinder the process of value internalization among learners. Teachers are required to apply patient, creative, and adaptive approaches to address different student characteristics and behavioral challenges. Continuous supervision and reinforcement remain necessary to encourage positive behavioral changes among students. Student-related internal factors therefore influence the overall effectiveness of character education implementation (Dewi, 2022; Syarifuddin, 2024).

The success of developing students' religious character through Islamic Religious Education learning depends on the ability of schools, teachers, parents, and communities to maximize supporting factors while addressing existing obstacles effectively (Fauzi, 2024; Dewi, 2022). Cooperation among educational stakeholders strengthens the consistency of moral guidance and religious reinforcement provided to students. Continuous evaluation and improvement of learning strategies are necessary to adapt to social and technological changes affecting students' behavior. Educational

institutions must create supportive environments that encourage students to practice Islamic values consistently in daily life. Strong commitment from all parties contributes significantly to the formation of disciplined, responsible, and morally aware individuals. The balance between educational support and obstacle management therefore becomes essential in achieving successful religious character development among students (Prasetyo & Widyastuti, 2021; Syarifuddin, 2024).

Conclusion

The development of students' religious character through Islamic Religious Education learning demonstrates that the integration of Islamic values within educational activities contributes significantly to the formation of moral awareness, spiritual attitudes, discipline, responsibility, and positive social behavior among students. Effective implementation is supported by the active role of teachers, conducive school environments, parental involvement, students' motivation, and adequate educational facilities that strengthen the internalization of religious values in daily life. Various learning methods such as habituation, role modeling, guidance, and motivation further enhance the effectiveness of character education programs within schools. Several inhibiting factors, including negative

social influences, excessive exposure to digital media, differences in family backgrounds, and low student self-discipline, continue to present challenges in maintaining the consistency of students' moral behavior. Continuous cooperation among teachers, parents, schools, and communities therefore becomes essential in strengthening religious character education comprehensively. Islamic Religious Education learning ultimately serves as an important foundation for preparing students to become disciplined, responsible, ethical, and spiritually aware individuals capable of contributing positively to society.

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