

The Synergy of Religious Education and Character Education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom Bandung

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to obtain an overview of the planning, implementation, and supervision of the synergy of religious education and character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom Bandung. This research uses a descriptive method of qualitative approach, and data collection through interview techniques, observation, and documentation studies. The research results showed: (1) Planning the synergy of religious education and character education through the vision and mission of the madrasah in forming students who have noble character, memorize the Qur'an and have global insight. Implementation of the synergy of religious education and character education by habituating students in school time discipline, getting used to praying, saying greetings and kissing the teacher's hand, weekly memorization deposits, congregational prayers and ta'lim activities, and competition activities. Supervision of the synergy of religious education and character education directly by teachers, and indirectly by their respective parents, giving examples, reprimands, weekly assessment notes, and additional study hours.

Keywords: *Education, Religion, Character, Morals.*

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INTRODUCTION

Religion and morality are two inseparable aspects in shaping the character of the younger generation, particularly in fostering a character with ethics that align with Islamic teachings. With spiritual values derived from the teachings of Islam, it is hoped that these can serve as a filter for children in avoiding immoral behavior. Through a solid understanding of religion, children are expected to grow into individuals whose personality aligns with Islamic principles, becoming individuals



who harmonize faith, knowledge, and good deeds—religious, virtuous, and moral (Rufaedah, 2020), (Somad, 2021). By providing an understanding of religious teachings, it is expected that every child will have a foundation of attitudes and actions that reflect the values of these teachings.

Several cases related to character or morality among school-aged children have occurred, such as: "3 Underage Children Arrested for Brawling That Killed a Teenager in Pademangan" (Ayu, 2024). In a Kompas newspaper article: "Teenage Delinquency Triggers High Rates of Early Marriage in Sukabumi" (Alamsyah, 2023). "South Sulawesi Police Arrest 847 People During Operation Pekat Lipu, Including 63 Underage Children" (Mashudi, 2024). These issues continue to occur in various regions. A lack of manners, brawls, bullying, pornography, truancy, and other immoral behaviors may be caused by a lack of religious understanding and character development.

Character education is "an effort to teach students how to absorb character principles, make sound judgments, and apply them in daily life so that they can do good for themselves, others, the environment, and their country" (Laila, 2022). According to Lickona (Rifah, 2020), noble character (good character) includes knowledge of goodness (moral knowing), which then leads to a commitment (intent) to goodness (moral feeling), and finally, the actual practice of goodness (moral behavior).

The synergy between character education and religious education can be understood as value education, moral education, or ethical education based on religious teachings. The goal is to develop students' ability to make decisions between good and bad and to implement these good behaviors in daily life, in line with national education goals and Islamic teachings. Akhlak refers to a person's behavior, character, and habits that are embedded in their soul and serve as the source of their actions, which reflect their personality. If their actions are good and praiseworthy, it is called *akhlak mahmudah*, and the opposite is true as well (Asari et al., 2020).

Sumarta (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022) stated that national education focuses on intellectual thinking, while overlooking emotional intelligence, moral intelligence, and spiritual intelligence. Similarly, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara (Hasanah et al., 2021), education is an effort to advance the growth of moral strength (character), intellect, and the body of students, so that they, as humans and as members of society, can achieve safety and happiness both physically and spiritually. The contents of the Qur'an, according to Daryanes (2022), encompass the beliefs of *tauhid*, noble morals, and regulations governing both vertical (worship) and horizontal (social interactions) relations, which must be instilled in daily education, both at school and at home.

Character education within the national education system is a value-based education founded on religion, Pancasila, social culture, law, and ethics. According to Nurdin (Bakti, 2020), the source of character education values includes several virtues such as: religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, independence, creativity, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, patriotism, appreciation of achievements, communication, peace-loving, reading habits, environmental awareness, social concern, and responsibility. Therefore, schools need to develop learning through the synergy of religious education and character education so that graduates possess a religious character.

Islamic Religious Education, as a field of study, is inseparable from other fields of study because, as a whole, it plays a role in character development to achieve the general objectives of national education (Choli, 2019). Essentially, the curriculum is a set of tools to achieve these goals, where one subject is interrelated and reinforces another.

Religious education for young children, such as in the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level, is crucial in providing the foundational teachings of religion and developing a character with noble morals. Teachers play a key role in education by offering protection, teaching, and guidance. They have a significant influence in modeling trustworthy behavior.

The urgency of religious education in character formation, according to several research findings, emphasizes that Islamic religious education must be optimized in shaping students' character. This is especially true since the desired concept of character essentially means *akhlakul karimah* (noble character). Without religion, it would be impossible for someone to be considered to have noble character (Kosim & others, 2020).

Character is closely linked to *akhlak* (moral character), so character represents universal human behavioral values, covering all human activities related to God, oneself, others, and the environment. This is manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions (Mahfuzdoh et al., 2023).

Islamic values in the implementation of character education include values such as cleanliness and purity of the soul, piety, *akhlakul karimah* (noble character), and Quranic values. These four values are integral and serve as the foundation for madrasahs in carrying out character education (Aziz & Hasanah, 2022).

Based on the research findings above, it is evident how important religious education is in shaping character and providing a strong foundation for the development of students' character, fostering noble morals from an early age. Therefore, the focus of this research is to explore how Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom plans, implements, and controls religious education and character education

within the school environment, aiming to produce students with noble character in both attitude and behavior.

METHOD

The research on the synergy between religious education and character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom in Bandung City uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques include observation, where the researcher directly and systematically observes phenomena and objects related to the research, in line with the research focus on various factors and characteristics of the objects being studied. In-depth interviews were conducted with the head of the madrasah, the deputy head of the madrasah, and Islamic religious education teachers to gather information through face-to-face questioning, using a set of pre-prepared questions. Documentation, including physical notes and other documents, was also used to complement the findings from observations and interviews. The analysis of the research results was carried out through data reduction, data display, data triangulation, and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Planning

In education, planning is the process of setting goals and creating a framework for the school's future activities, which serves as a guide for the entire school community. The planning of religious education and character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom is formulated through the school's vision and mission. The vision of the madrasah is to produce graduates who possess noble character (*akhlakul karimah*), are Quran memorizers, and have a global perspective. The indicators for achieving this vision are Students with noble characters, who excel in knowledge and technology, possess faith and piety, and are competitive as *khalifah fil ardh* (stewards of the earth). Quran memorizers, who have skills in their field that will serve as life tools and enable them to compete in the global market. Having a global perspective, with the character to live independently without relying on others' plans. The mission of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom is: 1. To improve the professionalism and work ethic of teachers, making them role models for students and the community. 2. To develop students' enthusiasm and intelligence for learning. 3. To foster students as Quran memorizers and cultivate independence. 4. To broaden students' horizons. 5. To instill morality and character that can be implemented in daily life.

Planning in education is a process that prepares a set of alternative decisions for future activities, aimed at achieving goals with optimal efforts while considering existing realities (Albab, 2021). The vision and mission of the madrasah are closely related to the focus of this research, as the expected graduates are those who possess good morals and piety. Good character is reflected in how students act and interact

with their environment, and being pious means having awareness, particularly in fulfilling their religious duties such as performing obligatory prayers and reading the Quran. This vision and mission reflect the values the school hopes to instill in its students. Students should not only be disciplined with their learning time, actions, and speech in accordance with religious, legal, and social norms, but they should also have a foundational understanding of their faith and practice Islamic teachings. A vision outlines the future the school aims to achieve, and to determine this, it must consider future developments and challenges. The mission is the core task of an institution to achieve its vision or goals (Syukri & Hasibuan, 2024). To realize these goals, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom plans the learning process through habituation, starting from the time students enter school until the completion of teaching and learning activities. Each student is required to participate in extracurricular activities and join both religious and general competitions. Each grade level has different materials, from Grade I to Grade VI. Starting in Grade I, students are required to read and write the Quran and memorize short to long Surah sections by Grade VI. The memorization program is supported by a Quran teacher (*tahfidz*) and additional hours outside regular school time for students who have not yet met the targets.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom generally envisions graduates who have noble characters, can read and write the Quran, memorize the Quran, and possess general knowledge. The planning of the synergy between religious education and character education is reflected in the madrasah's vision, mission, and curriculum, which combines the mandatory national curriculum with local standards. This planning incorporates habituation for students in the school environment to behave and act well, alongside memorizing the Quran, with the support of competent teachers who provide good examples. Teachers not only deliver lessons but also serve as guides and supervisors for their students in each class, acting as role models for the students' attitudes and behavior.

Implementation

The implementation of education refers to the process of learning activities. At Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom, the synergy between religious education and character education is carried out by requiring all students to participate in both curricular and extracurricular activities. These include activities such as *Tahfidz Al-Quran*, BTQ (Baca Tulis Qur'an), congregational prayers, punctuality in school arrival, making du'a (prayers), and greeting teachers. According to the grand design developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2010), the psychological and socio-cultural formation of character in an individual is the function of all human potentials (cognitive, affective, conative, and psychomotor) in the context of social-

cultural interactions (within the family, school, and community) and continue throughout life (Gunawan, 2022).

The learning process at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom incorporates religious education and character development through habituation. At 06:30 AM, as students enter the class, they are accustomed to praying and memorizing the Quran according to the curriculum, such as reading Surah Asmaul Husna, performing the Dhuha prayer, attending the congregational Dhuhr prayer at the school mosque, and participating in a brief *majelis ta'lim* (study group). Students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom have achieved success in religious fields, such as winning *Tahfidz Al-Quran* competitions, calligraphy, MTQ (Quran reading competition), and Arabic speech competitions, with numerous awards in the form of trophies at both the district and provincial levels. The formation of character and religious education is integrated into students' daily routine, starting with greetings, handshakes, and kissing the teacher's hand upon entering the school gate. They also pray before lessons begin, memorize Quranic verses, perform the Dhuha prayer, participate in congregational prayers, attend the *majelis ta'lim* sessions, and recite their Quranic memorization. Memorization of the Quran starts as follows: In Grade I, students begin memorizing Surah An-Naba, In Grade II, students start memorizing Surah Al-Ghashiyah, In Grade III, students begin with Surah Al-Mulk, In Grade IV, students memorize Surah Al-Jinn, In Grade V, students start memorizing Surah Al-Baqarah, In Grade VI, students continue memorizing Surah Al-Baqarah. The memorization method used is the *Talaqi* method, where the teacher and students engage in direct oral transmission of the Quran.

The implementation of religious education and character education, including noble morals, discipline, responsibility, and others, at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom can be assessed from different scopes, which include the tasks, organizational environment, and the broader macro environment of the school.

The task environment refers to the primary roles and functions of both educators and students, where educators guide and teach, while students learn and follow guidance. Habits such as greeting with *salam*, shaking hands upon entering school, reading and memorizing the Quran, performing both obligatory and voluntary prayers in congregation, and reciting memorized Quranic verses are part of the character-building process through religious character development. These activities strengthen religious faith, knowledge, and practice. These daily practices at school reflect character education, good manners, and moral behavior based on religious teachings. Other daily habits taught by the teachers include etiquette such as drinking with the right hand, eating while sitting, disposing of waste in the proper place, and speaking politely to teachers and peers. Religious education as an

extracurricular activity is one of the key aspects that highlights character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom.

The organizational environment relates to the management of school activities. The head of the madrasah serves as the administrator, while teachers play a role in school management, helping to create a conducive learning environment. The synergy between Islamic Religious Education and character education aligns with the responsibilities and duties of each party. Students are responsible for attending lessons and completing assignments, while teachers are tasked with guiding, directing, and serving as role models for students, especially in demonstrating noble characters.

The macro environment encompasses social relationships and broader community interactions. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom engages in social activities such as distributing basic food packages (sembako) to local residents, donating to victims of natural disasters, and cleaning the school's surrounding area by collecting waste. Distributing donations to the community serves as a form of character education for students, particularly in the aspect of practicing good deeds and showing social responsibility.

Religious education and character education not only provide knowledge but also require motivation to inspire both students and teachers to fulfill their respective duties, thereby improving the performance of the school. "Motivation is expected to enhance the religious character of students in aspects such as faith, worship, appreciation, practice, and knowledge" (Bakti, 2020). Motivation is a crucial element in improving work productivity, as each participant in the learning process needs a clear understanding of how motivation relates to satisfaction and reward systems. Motivation is also essential for both students and all school staff.

At Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom, motivation for students is aimed at boosting their enthusiasm for learning, while motivation for teachers focuses on encouraging them to teach enthusiastically, sincerely, and to create an enjoyable learning environment for students. Student motivation includes rewards such as scholarships for those who excel or for orphaned children who have memorized the Quran. These scholarships are awarded in full, 50%, or other forms based on achievements. For teachers and staff, motivation is provided through rewards for good performance, appreciation in the form of recognition, and regular teacher meetings. Additionally, an annual camping activity for teachers and staff is held, and awards are given to outstanding teachers, role model teachers, disciplined teachers, and productive teachers who help students win competitions, among others. Motivation for students also includes events such as annual Parenting programs, involving them in social activities to foster a sense of solidarity with others and the environment.

The implementation of the synergy between religious education and character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom is reflected in the daily habits of both students and teachers. These habits include greetings, punctuality, completing tasks, shaking hands, praying, reading and memorizing the Quran, performing both obligatory and voluntary congregational prayers, participating in *majelis ta'lim* sessions, and reciting memorized Quranic verses. Furthermore, motivation is given to students to encourage diligent learning, and teachers are motivated to improve their teaching performance. Social activities are carried out to instill a sense of social responsibility and care for the environment among students.

Supervision

Supervision in education is the process of directing and controlling school activities in accordance with procedures and achievement of objectives. According to Siagian (Meriza, 2018), supervision (controlling) is the process of observing or monitoring organizational activities to ensure that all tasks are being carried out according to the pre-established plans. In education, supervision is a key management function that must be performed by the school principal as the leader of the institution. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom has set annual targets as part of its program, which are linked to specific time frames and measurable activities. Supervision to control the speech and behavior of students is carried out directly, such as ensuring that students exhibit disciplined behavior when entering the class, greeting their teachers with *salam*, and praying before starting lessons. Teachers also reprimand students who fail to greet, are late, or do not complete their assignments. During congregational prayers and *ta'lim* activities, teachers organize and ensure that all students are present before leading the prayers or *ta'lim* sessions. For memorization activities, the school provides additional time for students who have not reached the target for their class level, and this is overseen directly by the *hafidz* teachers.

Indirect supervision is carried out by students' parents to monitor the completion of assignments and memorization progress. Supervision and control are also conducted through communication based on technology, as well as teachers' assessment records regarding students' behavior and memorization activities. In addition to report cards, weekly assessments are provided to both students and parents to track progress in attitudes, behavior, and alignment with school programs for each grade level. Each student has a *mutabah* book, which is read in class and serves as a foundation for report card grades and the individual development of each student.

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom performs direct supervision of students' attitudes and behavior every day at school, from the start of lessons until after school hours. The supervision focuses on ensuring the implementation of a culture

of good conduct and adherence to school rules, such as entering class promptly when the bell rings, greeting teachers, praying before lessons, participating in congregational prayers, and submitting memorized Quran verses consistently. These religious activities and habits show that the school/madrasah has built synergy between Islamic Religious Education and character education, covering several aspects: practice, belief, appreciation, and habituation. The results of this supervision and control can also be seen in the number of awards received by students for their achievements in Quran memorization competitions, calligraphy, Quran recitation competitions (Musabaqoh Tilawatil Quran), Arabic speech, and Islamic preaching. These accomplishments are evidenced by numerous awards received for the students' achievements.

CONCLUSION

The synergy between religious education and character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Kirom Bandung is reflected through habitual activities in speech and actions, as well as social and religious activities. The planning of religious and character education is carried out by establishing a vision and mission aimed at shaping students who are of good character, Quran memorizers, and have a global perspective. The implementation of religious and character education is seen through the habitual discipline of students with regard to school hours, regularly praying, greeting teachers, and kissing their teachers' hands, weekly memorization assignments, congregational prayers, *ta'lim* sessions, and competitions. Supervision of religious and character education is carried out directly by teachers and indirectly by students' parents. Teachers guide students through role modeling and reprimands, weekly assessment records, and by providing additional time outside of school hours for students who have not reached their memorization targets.

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