



STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS CHARACTER THROUGH RELIGIOUS EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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Abstract:

This study aims to identify the strengthening of students' religious character through religious extracurricular activities at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso. Religious character plays a crucial role in shaping students' personalities, which can be reinforced through religious activities outside formal lessons. This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through observation, interviews with guidance teachers and students, and documentation related to the religious extracurricular programs at the school. The results show that religious extracurricular activities such as religious study sessions, book studies, Quran memorization training, and joint worship have a significant role in shaping students' religious character. These activities help students understand and internalize religious values, which lead to improvements in discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect among peers. Furthermore, the strengthening of religious character is also influenced by the active role of teachers who guide and motivate students. Parental support is also an important factor in reinforcing the religious values taught at school. This study concludes that the religious extracurricular activities at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari are effective in cultivating students' religious character. Therefore, the development and improvement of the quality of religious extracurricular activities are highly recommended to achieve more optimal results in shaping students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess noble character and religious values.

Keywords: *Character Strengthening, Religiosity, Religious Extracurricular Activities, Sma Al-Fattah*

INTRODUCTION

Character education is an essential component in shaping a young generation with noble morals and strong personal integrity. One of the most crucial aspects of character formation is **religious character**, which refers to the understanding and practice of religious values in daily life (Ilma, 2015). In Indonesia, strengthening religious character has become one of the primary focuses of the education system, including at the senior high school level. One effective way to enhance students' religious character is through religious extracurricular activities, which can have a positive impact on shaping students'

personalities (Gunawan, 2023).

SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso, as an educational institution, recognizes the importance of religious character education in shaping students' personalities. Therefore, the school integrates religious extracurricular activities as an effort to strengthen students' religious character. These activities include religious study sessions (*pengajian*), classical Islamic text studies (*kitab* studies), Qur'an memorization training, and collective worship activities. All of these programs are designed to develop students who are not only academically competent but also possess discipline, responsibility, and social awareness grounded in religious values (Dewi, 2022).

The practical phenomena related to strengthening religious character through extracurricular religious activities at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso include challenges in student motivation, differences in understanding religious values, and difficulties in maintaining consistency in religious practices outside of school. Some students are less motivated to participate in religious activities because they perceive them as irrelevant or as an additional burden. In addition

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design, which aims to explore in depth the role of religious extracurricular activities in strengthening students' religious character at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso. The research was conducted by collecting data through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out over a period of three weeks to assess students' participation in religious extracurricular activities, as well as to analyze the impact of these activities on students' religious character. The data obtained from these observations provide an overview of student involvement and the practical impact of the activities they engage in (Sujarweni, 2014).

The primary data sources in this study include students who are actively involved in religious extracurricular activities, Islamic education teachers, and the school principal. In-depth interviews were conducted with teachers and students to obtain further information regarding their experiences in participating in these activities, their perceptions of the influence of such activities on the development of religious character, and the extent to which religious extracurricular activities contribute to shaping students' religious behavior. The data collected were analyzed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how religious extracurricular activities can strengthen students' religious character in this school (Rozak, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Religious extracurricular activities play a significant role in shaping students' religious character and noble morals. At SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso, various religious programs are organized with the aim of strengthening students' spiritual and moral values. Based on direct observations and interviews with school stakeholders, these activities not only provide theoretical religious learning but also foster religious habits in students' daily lives.

Developed Religious Character Values

Islamic study sessions (*kajian keislaman*) are one of the flagship programs

at SMA Al-Fattah. These activities are held weekly by inviting speakers from among religious teachers and competent local *ustaz*. The materials presented include discussions on *aqidah* (Islamic creed), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *akhlak* (morality), as well as contemporary Islamic issues. During the observation, students' enthusiasm in participating in these sessions was clearly evident. In one session attended by more than 120 students, the speaker raised the theme "*The Importance of Maintaining Islamic Values in the Digital Era*." The session concluded with an interactive question-and-answer segment, reflecting students' active and critical engagement in understanding the material presented.

Routine *Dhuha* prayer and collective *dhikr* activities are conducted every morning before the teaching and learning process begins. Observations indicate that these activities are attended by all students and teachers with a high level of solemnity. The implementation of the *Dhuha* prayer is led by religious teachers on a rotating basis, followed by collective *dhikr* and prayers for the smooth running of the learning process. Based on data obtained from the school, approximately 95% of students regularly participate in this activity. The principal stated that this program

Strengthening Religious Character

The strengthening of religious character at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso is not only focused on ceremonial religious activities but also emphasizes the internalization of religious values in students' daily lives. The religious character values developed include honesty, discipline, empathy, and responsibility (I. P. Sari & Syamsi, 2015). This effort aims to shape students into individuals who are not only intellectually competent but also possess noble character in accordance with Islamic teachings (Sujarwo, 2024).

Theoretically, the strengthening of religious character in schools can be associated with the concept of character education proposed by Thomas Lickona. Lickona states that character formation involves three main elements: *moral knowing* (understanding of moral values), *moral feeling* (emotional engagement with moral values), and *moral action* (the practice of moral values). These three elements serve as the foundation for developing students' religious character within the school environment (Farmawaty, 2021).

The implementation of religious values at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso includes various programs and activities. One of the efforts is requiring students to perform congregational prayers at school. This activity not only enhances students' discipline in worship but also strengthens their sense of togetherness and solidarity. In addition, the school promotes the habit of reading the Qur'an every morning before lessons begin as a means of improving students' spirituality.

Another activity that supports the strengthening of religious character is the religious mentoring program conducted by supervising teachers (Solihat & Wahyudi, 2023). In this program, students are guided to understand religious values

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that religious extracurricular activities at SMA Al-Fattah Sukosari, Bondowoso play a highly significant role in shaping students' religious character. Programs such as Islamic study sessions, *Dhuha* prayer and collective *dhikr*, as well as Qur'an recitation

and memorization guidance not only provide in-depth religious learning but also foster positive religious habits among students. The continuity of these activities reflects the school's commitment to instilling religious and moral values that are integrated into students' daily lives.

These religious extracurricular activities also contribute substantially to strengthening students' religious character. Their impact can be seen in the improvement of students' discipline, honesty, and politeness, as well as their academic achievement. A religious and благоприятная (conducive) school atmosphere supports students in their learning process, making the school an environment that is highly supportive of positive character development. Furthermore, through these activities, students gain a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings and are able to implement them in their daily behavior, shaping individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also morally grounded.

However, there are challenges related to students' motivation to participate in religious extracurricular activities. To address this issue, creative approaches such as integrating technology into religious learning and providing rewards for active participation can enhance student engagement. Overall, the success of these religious extracurricular activities underscores the importance of synergy between academic education and character development in creating a generation that excels not only in achievement but also in moral integrity, in accordance with Islamic teachings.

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