



## Implementation of Religious Character Education at State Islamic Elementary School 2 Bengkulu City

Fhinda Alphadila<sup>1</sup>, Diva Selfi. N<sup>2</sup>, Azizah Aryati<sup>3</sup>, Fera Zasrianifa<sup>4</sup>, Dalima Septiria<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>UIN Fatmawati Sukarno, Indonesia

<sup>5</sup>STIESNU Bengkulu, Indonesia

Corresponding Author ✉ fhindhaalfhadillah@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

The abstract is written in one paragraph containing at least the objectives, methods, and results of the study. This study aims to describe the implementation of religious character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2 Bengkulu City and the factors that influence it. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research subjects consisted of the madrasah principal, teachers, and students who were selected purposively based on their involvement in religious activities. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The validity of the data was tested using triangulation of sources and techniques. The results of the study indicate that religious character education is implemented through various habituation activities such as dhuha prayer, congregational prayer, reciting prayers before and after studying, as well as the habituation of discipline and politeness in the madrasah environment. Teachers play an important role as role models in the formation of students' religious character, supported by a religious madrasah environment. However, several obstacles were still found, such as a lack of student discipline, a lack of respect for teachers, and inconsistent implementation of the habituation. This shows that the implementation of religious character education has been running but is not yet optimal and still requires strengthening cooperation between teachers, parents, and the environment..

**Keywords:** *Religious Character Education, Habituation, Teacher Role Model*

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## INTRODUCTION

Character education as the goal of National education is stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 in chapter 1 article 1 paragraph 1 concerning the national education system which states that: "education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have spiritual religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and the skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state (Law Number 20 of 2003)

Religious character education is moral education that includes aspects of knowledge (cognitive), feelings (feelings), and actions (actions) which are all connected to values and norms. Three different ways can be used to promote character education: (1) incorporating character values into subject matter, local content, and self-development activities; (2) increasing interaction between schools or madrasas, parents of students, and the community in cultivating or familiarizing character values in the school environment; and (3) increasing cooperation between schools or madrasas, parents of students, and the community.

Schools, as formal educational institutions, play a strategic role in shaping students' character. A conducive school environment can support character development through the learning process, teacher role models, and the instilling of religious practices (Azmi et al., 2023; Puspitasari et al., 2023). However, in reality, religious character formation in schools has not

been optimal. Some students still lack discipline, honesty, and politeness, influenced by environmental factors, facilities, and a lack of cooperation between teachers and parents (Nur & Jariah, 2023).

Schools play a significant role in shaping children's personalities and morals, particularly through the instilling of religious values to create religious individuals. The importance of character education in children, starting early, aims to ensure they become the next generation with noble morals. Therefore, an educational process is needed that integrates educational aspects from the school, family, and surrounding environment.

Efforts to form a religious character can be done through the habituation of worship, religious activities, and the reinforcement of values in the learning process (Rindiani et al., 2024). This research is in line with the research of Rindiani et al. (2024) entitled Formation of Religious Character in Kindergarten through the Habit of Religious Activities, which shows that the habituation of religious activities has an important role in forming the religious character of students.

Despite various efforts, initial observations at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2 in Bengkulu City revealed several issues related to students' religious character. These issues include a lack of discipline and respect for teachers. This indicates that the implementation of religious character education still requires further attention and strengthening.

However, based on initial observations at State Elementary School 2, Bengkulu City, several problems were still found related to students' religious character, such as a lack of discipline and respect for teachers.

Based on this, this study aims to determine the description of religious character education at State Elementary School 2, Bengkulu City and the factors that influence it.

## METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type that aims to describe the implementation of religious character education at State Elementary School 2, Bengkulu City.

The research subjects included school principals, teachers, and students involved in religious character-building activities. Subjects were selected purposively, based on their direct involvement in religious activities at school. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. The data obtained were then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was tested using source and technique triangulation.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2, Bengkulu City, with the aim of describing the implementation of religious character education and the factors influencing it. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. The research subjects consisted of the madrasah principal, teachers, and students who were purposively selected based on their involvement in religious character-building activities at the madrasah.

The research subjects consisted of madrasah principals, teachers, and students, selected purposively, based on their direct involvement in religious character-building activities at the madrasah. This selection of subjects is expected to provide relevant and in-depth information regarding the implementation of religious character education within the school environment.

Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. The data obtained were then analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity was tested using source triangulation and techniques.

The data obtained was then analyzed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by sorting and simplifying the data obtained to better focus on the research objectives. The data was then presented in descriptive form for easy understanding. The final stage was drawing conclusions based on the findings obtained in the field.

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation techniques, including both source and technical triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from various sources, while technical triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. Thus, the resulting data is expected to have a high level of reliability.

1. Implementation of Religious Character Education

Based on research conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2 in Bengkulu City, religious character education has been implemented through various habit-building activities conducted routinely in daily school life. These activities include the Dhuha prayer, congregational prayer, recitation of prayers before and after lessons, and the instilling of discipline and good manners.

These activities are not merely a formality, but have become an ongoing part of the school culture. Students are encouraged to participate in activities in an orderly manner, gradually forming habits that become ingrained in them. In this process, students not only engage in religious activities but also learn to understand the values they embody, such as discipline, responsibility, and respect.

Through repeated practice, students begin to exhibit behavioral changes for the better. This is evident in their habit of praying before class, participating in religious activities more orderly, and demonstrating more polite behavior in their interactions within the school environment. Thus, practice is an effective way to instill religious character in students.

The process of character building through habituation demonstrates that consistent activities can reinforce student behavior. Habits that were initially developed due to rules gradually transform into needs arising from students' self-awareness. This indicates that religious values are beginning to be internalized within students, enabling them to not only carry out activities but also understand their importance in their daily lives. The involvement of the entire school community in religious activities contributes to the success of religious character formation. Support from teachers, the principal, and a conducive school environment creates an atmosphere that encourages students to continue practicing these good habits. With this synergy, the character building process takes place not only individually but is also reinforced through a supportive and sustainable social environment.

The implementation of religious character education through habituation demonstrates the link between theory and practice. Repeated habituation not only shapes students' behavior but also strengthens their understanding of the meaning of each religious activity. Thus, the process of character formation is not merely routine but also contains profound educational value.

This demonstrates that religious character education implemented in madrasas has led to holistic character formation, encompassing knowledge, attitudes, and actions. These three aspects are interrelated and play a role in shaping students' holistic personalities, ensuring that religious values are not only understood but also internalized and practiced in daily life.

2. The Role of Teachers in Building Religious Character

In implementing religious character education, teachers play a crucial role. Teachers not only serve as transmitters of learning materials, but also as guides and role models for students in their daily behavior. Teachers' attitudes and actions demonstrated in the school environment serve as examples that are directly observed and imitated by students.

Based on research findings, teachers at madrasas have strived to set good examples, such as making it a habit to greet students, pray before and after activities, and demonstrate discipline in carrying out their duties. This exemplary behavior is one factor that helps students understand and emulate behavior consistent with religious values.

Changes in student behavior are also evident in their increased awareness of carrying out activities without constant teacher direction. Some students are beginning to demonstrate their own initiative, such as preparing themselves before religious activities and reminding their friends to participate. This demonstrates that the values instilled through habituation are beginning to take hold within the students.

Teachers also play a role in guiding and reminding students to consistently practice established habits. In this process, teachers not only provide direction but also engage personally with students who are still having difficulty adjusting to existing rules. This demonstrates that the teacher's role extends beyond teaching to directly shaping students' character.

The role of teachers in developing religious character is also evident in their ability to create a religious-infused learning environment and support the development of students' attitudes. Teachers not only convey material cognitively but also integrate religious values into every learning activity. Thus, students gain not only knowledge but also direct experience in applying these values in their daily lives.

### 3. The Madrasah Environment as a Supporting Factor

The madrasah environment is a crucial factor in supporting the successful implementation of religious character education. A conducive and religious school atmosphere positively influences students' behavior in their daily lives.

Furthermore, the consistent implementation of rules in madrasas helps students understand the boundaries and responsibilities they must fulfill. Clear rules provide direction for student behavior, making it easier for them to distinguish between what is right and wrong. In this context, the madrasa environment serves as a learning environment that is not only academic but also shapes students' overall character.

The madrasah environment also encourages positive social interactions among students. Through collaborative activities, students learn to cooperate, respect each other, and maintain positive relationships with their peers. This interaction is crucial for developing religious character, as the values learned are applied not only individually but also in the social life of the school community.

Based on observations, the madrasah environment supports religious activities through clear rules and shared habits. The well-established interaction between teachers and students also creates a comfortable atmosphere and supports character building. Routine activities involving the entire school community also strengthen these habits. Students learn not only individually but also socially through interactions with peers. Thus, the madrasah environment serves not only as a place of learning but also as a place for ongoing character building.

The religious environment of a madrasah also plays a role in forming positive habits that are consistently practiced by students. These habits emerge not only because of the rules, but also because of the influence of the surrounding environment, which encourages students to behave in accordance with prevailing values. In this case, the environment becomes a factor that strengthens the habituation process, allowing religious values to be more deeply embedded in students.

A comfortable and conducive atmosphere in the madrasah environment provides students with a sense of security in carrying out religious activities. When students feel comfortable, they tend to be more receptive to and carry out the activities assigned. This results in increased student participation in various religious activities, allowing the process of religious character formation to proceed more optimally.

Support from the entire school community, both teachers and students, is also a crucial factor in creating a religious environment. The collaboration among the school community makes religious activities not merely an obligation but a shared need. Thus, the madrasah environment serves not only as a venue for educational activities but also as a space that actively shapes and strengthens the religious character of students.

### 4. Inhibiting Factors

The implementation of religious character education in madrasas still faces several obstacles. One apparent obstacle is the continued lack of discipline among students in participating in religious activities established by the school. Furthermore, some students do not fully demonstrate respect for their teachers, for example, by not paying attention during the learning process.

This situation indicates that not all students are able to consistently implement the established habits. This is influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Internally, some students still have a low level of awareness of the importance of religious activities. Meanwhile, externally, a lack of supervision and familiarization within the family environment also influences student behavior at school.

This situation indicates that the process of forming religious character is not only influenced by activities taking place at school, but is also related to other factors outside the madrasa environment.

In addition to the factors already mentioned, obstacles to implementing religious character education can also be influenced by differences in student background. Each student comes from a family environment with different habits and values, so not everyone is equally prepared to accept and engage in religious activities at school. This diversity presents a challenge for madrasas in establishing uniform habits and developing the desired character.

The influence of the social environment outside of school is also a factor that cannot be ignored. Students who grow up in a social environment that does not support religious values may have difficulty maintaining the good habits they have developed at school. This situation indicates that character formation occurs not only within the madrasah environment but is also influenced by student interactions outside of school.

Furthermore, time constraints in implementing religious activities at school also pose a challenge. Activities held within a specific timeframe are sometimes insufficient to form strong habits in students. Therefore, continuity between school activities and home habits is necessary to maximize the process of religious character formation.

#### 5. Efforts to Overcome Obstacles

To overcome these various obstacles, the madrasah and teachers have undertaken a number of efforts to ensure optimal implementation of religious character education. One such step is providing ongoing guidance and direction to students to foster greater discipline in participating in religious activities.

In addition, teachers also increase student supervision and reprimand students who fail to demonstrate behavior consistent with religious values. The approach used is not only firm but also educational, so students can understand their mistakes and strive to improve their behavior.

In addition to the role of teachers, madrasahs also strive to collaborate with parents so that the habits developed at school can be continued at home. Through this collaboration, it is hoped that the development of students' religious character can be more consistent.

These efforts are expected to be able to reduce the obstacles that arise so that the process of forming religious character can run better.

Furthermore, the madrasah is strengthening the existing habituation program by increasing the consistency of its implementation. Routine religious activities are maintained and monitored to ensure they run smoothly. This consistency is crucial because ongoing habituation will help students form habits that will become ingrained in their daily lives.

Madrasahs also strive to create a more conducive and religious environment so that students feel comfortable engaging in religious activities. A supportive environment can positively influence student behavior, making them more motivated to participate in designated activities. A positive atmosphere allows for more effective instilling of religious values.

In addition, the madrasah also conducts regular evaluations of the implementation of religious character education. These evaluations aim to determine the success of the program and identify any remaining challenges. The results are then used as a basis for program improvements and development to ensure optimal and sustainable implementation of religious character education.

The research results show that the implementation of religious character education at MIN 2 Bengkulu City has been carried out through various habituation activities, such as dhuha prayer and congregational prayer, reciting prayers before and after class, routine religious activities, and fostering discipline and good manners within the madrasah environment. These activities serve as the primary means of instilling religious values in students.

Furthermore, teachers play a crucial role as role models in shaping students' religious character through consistent attitudes, behaviors, and habits. A religious madrasah environment also supports the internalization of religious values in students.

However, based on observations and interviews, several obstacles were still identified in the implementation of religious character education, such as students lacking discipline, showing little respect for teachers, and inconsistent adherence to established habits. This indicates that the process of religious character formation is not yet fully optimal.

These findings align with the opinions of Hidayat and Abdillah (2020) and Purwaningsih and Syamsudin (2022), who stated that a conducive school environment, teacher role models, and the habituation of religious activities play a crucial role in shaping students' character. Furthermore, Ningsih (2019) emphasized that the success of religious character formation is also influenced by school culture and a supportive learning environment. Furthermore, Setiawan (2022) explained that collaboration between schools and parents is crucial for the success of students' religious character education.

Efforts to develop religious character in madrasahs are also strengthened by activities that promote worship and reinforce religious values in learning, as explained by Rindiani et al. (2024). This demonstrates that internalizing religious values occurs not only within the school environment but also requires support from the family and social environment.

It was concluded that the implementation of religious character education at MIN 2 Bengkulu City had been running well through various habituation programs, but still needed strengthening in terms of consistency of student behavior and synergy between teachers, parents, and the environment.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2, Bengkulu City, has been carried out through various religious habituation activities, teacher role models, and the support of a conducive madrasah environment. Habituation activities such as dhuha prayer, congregational prayer, reciting prayers, and the implementation of discipline and politeness are the main means of instilling religious values in students. Furthermore, the role of teachers as role models and mentors also makes a significant contribution to shaping students' character through the attitudes and behaviors demonstrated in daily life at school.

A religious-themed madrasah environment has also been shown to positively influence student character development. A supportive atmosphere, along with shared rules and practices, helps students develop sustainable good habits. Positive social interactions between students and teachers further strengthen the internalization of religious values in daily life.

However, the implementation of religious character education has not been fully optimal. Several obstacles remain, such as a lack of student discipline, low awareness of religious activities, and the influence of the family environment and social circles outside of school that are not fully supportive. Furthermore, differences in student backgrounds and limited time for implementing activities also pose challenges to maximizing religious character development.

Efforts made by the madrasah and teachers, such as providing guidance, increasing supervision, and collaborating with parents, demonstrate a commitment to overcoming these various obstacles. Collaboration between schools and families is crucial for ensuring that habits developed at school can be continued at home, allowing for consistent religious character development.

Thus, it can be confirmed that religious character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Negeri 2, Bengkulu City, has been running well, but still requires strengthening in terms of consistency and sustainability. Therefore, stronger synergy is needed between the school, teachers, parents, and the community to achieve the goal of religious character formation optimally and sustainably.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the process of developing religious character is an ongoing process and cannot be achieved instantly. Continuity is needed between the program design and the practices implemented in the field so that the instilled values can truly be internalized by the students. Consistency in implementation is key to maintaining the sustainability of the habits that have been developed.

The role of the family is an integral factor in supporting the success of religious character education. The home environment has a significant influence on the formation of children's attitudes and behaviors, so the values learned at the madrasah need to be reinforced through familiarization within the family environment. Integrating education at school and at home will strengthen the internalization of values and shape students' character more holistically.

The implications of this research emphasize the importance of strengthening integrated and sustainable religious character education strategies. Synergy between madrasahs, parents, and the community is the primary foundation for developing students who not only understand religious values but are also able to practice them in their daily lives. With a consistent and collaborative approach, the goals of religious character education can be more optimally achieved.

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