

Religiosity As The Main Pillar of Character Education In Islamic Boarding School: A Study In Langkat District

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation model of character education based on the pillars of Islamic religiosity (Faith, Islam, and Ihsan) in Islamic boarding schools as a response to the moral and character crisis of adolescents in the modern era. This study focused on two locations, namely Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School, with a multi-site qualitative approach. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and field notes, and analyzed using data reduction, presentation, and verification of findings techniques. The results of the study showed that both Islamic boarding schools instilled core character values such as faith, piety, noble morals, responsibility, discipline, simplicity, and social concern, which were integrated into daily activities and learning curriculum. The methods used included role models, habituation, discussion, self-reflection, and spiritual guidance. The difference between the two Islamic boarding schools lies in the specific approach: Jabal Rahmah emphasizes more on curriculum integration and entrepreneurship programs, while Al-Habib focuses on self-development and partnerships with parents. In conclusion, character education based on the pillars of religiosity in Islamic boarding schools has proven effective in forming the personality of students who are noble and religious. However, its success is influenced by environmental support, leadership patterns, learning methods, and the involvement of families and the surrounding community. Sustainable synergy between educational actors is the key to strengthening the internalization of character values as a whole.

Keywords: Religiosity, Character Education, Islamic Boarding School, Langkat

A. INTRODUCTION

The world of education is facing so many complex problems. Both problems in the world of education itself and problems outside the world of education. The decline in morals and character of students such as drunkenness, brawls, drug abuse, free association and sex, hedonistic lifestyles are problems that are in the spotlight of all groups (Fahdini et al., 2021). Juvenile and student delinquency and other deviant behaviors are homework for all groups. The violence that appears in society is increasingly familiar to Indonesian society. Everywhere we hear of acts of violence, behavioral deviations, immoral acts, and other things that are not in accordance with the norms and manners of the nation and religion are rampant at various levels and levels of social status in society, the world of education, and government (Scerenko, 1997). All phenomena of violent acts at various levels require the contribution of the world of education in solving them. Violence cannot be resolved with just one approach (Huitt, 2004).

The Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women in its press release stated that there was a case of sexual violence against 13 female students at an Islamic boarding school in Bandung with the perpetrator HW, a teacher at the Islamic boarding school, which has been in the public spotlight since the case was broadcast on various mass media in the country in 2021. The case of sexual violence against 13 female students is part of the tip of the iceberg phenomenon related to sexual violence in religious and boarding-based educational institutions. The case itself has been going on since 2016 and was only revealed in 2021. Nine babies were born as a result of the sexual violence.

Observing the data above, it is truly sad that this happened in an educational institution environment, especially in Islamic boarding schools, and we hope that in the future the cases will stop and stop there, there will be no more cases like this. As an effort that can be taken to take preventive action, in this case the researcher sees that it can be done through character education based on upholding the pillars of Islamic religiosity (Fihris, 2010; Masruroh et al., 2021).

Furthermore, if we look closely, the curriculum used in educational institutions currently in Indonesia is the independent curriculum. In this independent curriculum, character education is the main concern, this is explained by Rambe et al (2023) that the independent learning policy is implemented to accelerate the achievement of national education goals, namely increasing the quality of Indonesian human resources who have advantages and competitiveness compared to other countries (Halimah, 2021; Minarti, 2013). The quality of superior and competitive human resources is realized by students who have noble character and have high-level reasoning, especially in literacy and numeracy. In addition, through the

implementation of the independent curriculum, it has an impact on students, namely having critical thinking skills, creativity, communication skills, collaboration skills and building the identity of students with character. Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that character education is the process of providing guidance to students to become whole human beings with character in the dimensions of heart, mind, body, as well as feelings and intentions. (Samani and Hariyanto, 2012). Character education can be interpreted as value education, character education, moral education, character education, which aims to develop students' abilities to make good and bad decisions, maintain what is good, and realize that goodness in everyday life (Samani and Hariyanto, 2012).

One of the main characteristics of Islamic boarding school education is the integration of knowledge and character. Students are not only taught to master religious knowledge, but also how this knowledge should be practiced in everyday life with a good character (Japar, 2017). Education in Islamic boarding schools emphasizes to students that knowledge without character is useless, and knowledge must be practiced to achieve Allah's pleasure. In this case, Islamic boarding schools face the challenge of maintaining traditional Islamic values amidst the currents of modernization and globalization.

One of the main approaches used by Islamic boarding schools in character formation is through the enforcement of the pillars of religiosity, namely Islam, Faith, and Ihsan. By instilling the values of Faith, Islam, and Ihsan in students, Islamic boarding schools strive to produce individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have characters based on religious teachings (Nasruddin, 2014). The Pillars of Faith play a role in forming the spiritual foundation of students. Strong faith is the main foundation in building morality and ethics (Lickona, 1991). Through teaching the creed, Islamic boarding schools instill strong beliefs in students, so that they have a clear orientation in life and adhere to the values of truth. Internalized faith encourages students to develop honest, trustworthy, and responsible attitudes in every aspect of life (Zulfida, 2020; Jalaluddin, 2016).

The initial data obtained by the researcher from the results of an interview with one of the ustads of the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School obtained a picture that in fact in the formation of Islamic character of students has been done through good habits, for example students have been warmly welcomed by teachers at the school gate to shake hands, followed by praying before the lesson begins. There are also habits in the realm of worship, including orderly ablution activities, dhuha prayer activities, congregational Zhuhur prayers, memorization of the Qur'an, hadith and daily prayers. Although the practical realm is daily worship, the essence of these activities is very important in forming Islamic character, including

orderly ablution can foster an attitude of cleanliness and discipline. Dhuha prayer can foster an attitude of *habluminalloh* and *habluminannas*. Furthermore, related to the bad character found among students, but it is not a serious violation. In this case, it is still found based on initial observations in the field, namely at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habab Modern Islamic Boarding School, the following were found: (1) there are still students who are not disciplined and violate the rules such as being late to class, (2) there are still students who try to smoke, and (3) there are still students who seem trivial about the provision of rules of order, especially rules that are light punishments such as not cleaning or tidying up the bed.

Character education in Islamic boarding schools has great potential in forming a generation with noble morals, but there are various challenges that need to be overcome so that this process is more effective and in accordance with the needs of the times. Facing these various problems requires synergy between Islamic boarding school managers, teachers, students, and the external environment so that character education can be truly internalized and function as a guide to life for students outside the Islamic boarding school.

B. METHODS

The research method used is qualitative, in this case Yin (2012) stated that qualitative research is research based on efforts to build the views of those being studied in detail, formed with words and holistic images. This definition looks more at the emic perspective in research, namely looking at something as an effort to build a detailed view of the research subject formed with words and holistic images. In line with the opinion above, Miles, Huberman & Saldana, (2014) stated that qualitative research focuses on social phenomena and on giving voice to the feelings and perceptions of participants. The qualitative approach used by researchers in this study is multi-site, Multi-site research is trying to describe a particular setting, object, or event in detail and in depth. The main characteristic of a multi-site study is when researchers study two or more subjects, settings or data storage places. The use of multi-site studies in this study is in accordance with the characteristics of research sites that have similarities. The phenomenon studied in this research site is character education through the enforcement of religious pillars in Islamic boarding schools, namely the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School. In this study, data obtained and collected directly from informants through observation, interviews, documentation and field notes. While secondary data is data collected, processed and presented by other parties which are usually presented in the form of publications or journals. In this study, the secondary data

referred to is data that has been processed in the form of written manuscripts or documents. The main data source in this study comes from the words and actions of people who are observed or who will be interviewed by taking notes or recording and taking pictures, videos and others. In determining the subject, there are several things that the author considers, including the respondent's experience, his/her role in the Islamic boarding school, position in the Islamic boarding school and educational background

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Character Values Based on the Pillars of Islamic Religiousness.

Findings from site 1 at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School regarding character values based on the pillars of religiousness given to students: (1) faith and piety, (2) noble morals, (3) social concern and Islamic brotherhood, (4) discipline and responsibility, (5) seeking and practicing knowledge, (6) simplicity and humility, (7) sincerity in worship, and (8) good deeds and forbidding evil, cooperation and leadership. Findings from site 2 at the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School regarding character values based on the pillars of religiousness given to students: (1) faith in Allah, (2) noble morals, (3) discipline and responsibility, (4) enthusiasm for seeking knowledge, (5) togetherness and social concern, (6) simplicity and asceticism, and (7) emotional and self-control.

Based on the cross-site results on character values based on religious pillars given to students at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School are: (1) the pillar of Faith, namely faith and piety to Allah, self-control, and relationship with Allah, (2) the pillar of Islam, namely obedience to Islamic law, and (3) the pillar of ihsan, namely noble morals, honesty, trustworthiness, politeness, humility and compassion, emphasizing discipline, responsibility and carrying out tasks with full trust, enthusiasm for seeking knowledge, creative thinking, and studying diligently, Islamic brotherhood, mutual cooperation, and helping others as a form of social concern, instilling the values of zuhud (simple living), humility, and emphasizing the importance of emotional and self-control.

The character values instilled by the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School above are in line with Mulyasa's explanation (2011:3) that character can be interpreted by marking and focusing on how to apply good values in everyday behavior. The values of goodness are categorized as good/noble characters, while the values of badness are categorized as bad characters. Including good characters such as; behaving well, being honest, and being helpful are said to be people who have good or noble

characters. While bad characters" such as; lying, cheating, not trustworthy and so on.

The main character values based on the pillars of Islamic religiosity that are instilled in students are piety to Allah. Piety is the main value in Islam that teaches students to always feel close to Allah, maintain a relationship with Him, and live their lives according to His teachings. In Islamic boarding schools, the value of piety is instilled through learning about worship, such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and hajj, as well as the importance of keeping the heart and intention clean from the nature of *riya'* and *ujub*. Students are always taught to always be pious in every aspect of life, both personal, social, and professional, so that every step taken is based on a strong belief in Allah and the teachings of Islam, making faith the moral foundation in every action. Students are taught to have strong faith in Allah and practice religious teachings with full piety. This includes carrying out worship, such as prayer, fasting, and zakat, as well as understanding the importance of a spiritual relationship with God.

Amanah in Islam means holding trust well and not abusing what is entrusted to us. In Islamic boarding schools, amanah does not only refer to holding responsibility for tasks or work, but also for every mandate given in any form, whether related to material, time, or even social relationships between people. Exemplary Stories from the Prophet and Companions: Islamic boarding schools teach examples of amanah given to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, such as when he was trusted by the Quraysh with the title "Al-Amin" (the trusted one), even though he did not share their views. Islamic boarding schools also teach stories of companions who guarded amanah, such as Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and Umar bin Khattab, who always held fast to the trust given to them. Practices carried out in Islamic boarding schools: Guidance and Supervision: The caretakers of the Islamic boarding school will always monitor and evaluate how the students carry out the amanah given to them. If the students show dishonesty or negligence in carrying out the amanah, they will be given advice and guidance to improve it. The character of patience is also highly emphasized to the students. Patience is one of the noble qualities that is highly valued in Islam. Students are taught to be patient in facing life's trials, both in studying and in facing the challenges of everyday life. This patience is also related to restraining oneself from anger and bad desires, and remaining steadfast in obedience to Allah.

Islamic boarding schools teach monotheism intensively in the religious education curriculum, both in the study of faith and in practical learning, and the development of the monotheism faith is often associated with the daily behavior of students, such as maintaining cleanliness, maintaining prayer, and avoiding actions that are forbidden by Allah, which are

forms of manifestation of steadfastness in monotheism.

Worship in Islam includes all forms of devotion and obedience to Allah, both ritual (such as prayer, fasting, zakat, hajj) and non-ritual (such as working with good intentions, doing good to others). Worship is the essence of a Muslim's life because every act done with sincere intentions and in accordance with Islamic teachings is considered worship.

Worship is not only taught as a ritual obligation, but also as a means to form positive character. Prayer, dhikr, and prayer are forms of worship that not only bring us closer to Allah, but also form habits of discipline, perseverance, and consistency in carrying out daily routines. Worship teaches students to do everything with a sincere intention only to seek Allah's pleasure, which in turn will form a personality that not only pursues worldly things but also aims to achieve happiness in the afterlife. Worship also teaches students to maintain their intentions so as not to get caught up in *riyaa* which is a big test in character formation. In worship, students are taught to maintain the purity of their hearts and intentions so as not to do something just to be seen or praised by others.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of previous studies conducted by: (1) Husaeni et al. (2024) on: "Application of the Three Pillars of Islamic Dimensions in Islamic Religious Education Learning". The findings of the study show that the application of the dimensions of Islam, faith and *ihsan* in this modern digital era in Islamic Religious Education aims to integrate the three pillars so that they not only understand the theory, but can realize or practice and apply the theory in everyday life, and (2) Wadi and Hendri (2020) on: "The Importance of Character Education in Indonesia in Building National Morals from the Perspective of the Qur'an". Research findings show that instilling faith is the main foundation for character formation, because in principle humans will always love everything that is worldly and everything that is in it.

Implementation of Character Education Through Upholding the Pillars of Islamic Religiousness

The findings of site 1 at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School regarding the implementation of character values based on the pillars of religiousness:

1. Islamic boarding schools play a role in instilling the values of honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, and obedience to the rules, and these noble moral values are emphasized in daily life at the Islamic boarding school,
2. The methods of instilling character values that are carried out are: (a) direct learning method by prioritizing direct practice in daily life, (b) exemplary method, teachers

and caretakers of the Islamic boarding school become role models in attitudes and behavior, (c) discussion and dialogue method, namely facilitating deep understanding and critical thinking about Islamic values, (d) habituation method, namely forming the habits of students in carrying out Islamic worship and morals, (e) lecture method, namely providing religious knowledge through sermons and advice, (f) contemplation method (self-reflection) namely encouraging students to evaluate themselves and deepen the meaning of worship and (g) supervision and coaching method, namely ensuring the implementation of religious values through monitoring and mentoring.

3. Strategies for integrating religious values into the curriculum: (a) integration into subjects, namely values of faith, worship, and morals are taught in various lessons, (b) practice-based learning, (c) daily habits, (d) role models from teachers and caregivers, (e) integration of classroom learning with dormitory life.
4. Special programs for strengthening the Islamic character of students: (a) yellow book study program, (b) tadarus al-Qur'an and tahfidz, (c) social activities and community service, (d) religious competitions, and (e) entrepreneurship.
5. The role of teachers: (a) integrating character education into learning, (b) being a role model in attitudes and behavior, (c) evaluating the character of students in class.
6. The role of caregivers: (a) ensuring that students carry out activities in accordance with Islamic values, (b) being a place to confide and provide moral guidance, and (c) monitoring student interactions outside of study hours.
7. The role of the head of the boarding school: (a) designing a character-based curriculum, (b) providing supporting facilities for character education, and (c) coordinating the activities of teachers and caregivers.
8. Collaboration mechanisms (a) regular coordination meetings, teachers, caregivers and leaders of the Islamic boarding school discuss the development of the students' character, (b) joint program planning, and (c) joint activities, teachers, caregivers and leaders of the Islamic boarding school participate in congregational worship and deliver moral material in various forms of learning.

The findings of site 2 at the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School regarding the implementation of character values based on religious pillars are:

1. Islamic boarding schools play a role in instilling the values of honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, discipline, and obedience to rules.

2. The methods of instilling character values that are carried out are: (a) studying the Qur'an and hadith, (b) learning the stories of the prophets and companions, (c) role models from teachers and caregivers, (d) daily activities such as congregational prayer and cleanliness of the dormitory, (e) character development activities such as individual guidance and group discussions, (f) theoretical and practical religious learning, (g) spiritual development and self-development, (h) teaching ethics and manners in daily life, (i) personal guidance to strengthen religious values, (j) creating an Islamic environment and social service.
3. Strategies for integrating character values into the curriculum: (a) using learning methods that are in accordance with the objectives of religious education, (b) holding programmed activities, (c) holding extracurricular activities. which supports the development of the character of students.
4. Special programs for strengthening Islamic character values: (a) dormitory management, namely by organizing the lives of students to be in accordance with Islamic values, (b) learning activities that implement character education through Islamic-based learning methods, (c) self-development, namely encouraging students to become independent and responsible individuals, (d) cooperation with parents in developing the character of students.
5. The role of teachers: (a) instilling the character and morals of students with moderate and inclusive Islamic education, and (b) spreading preaching that emphasizes tolerance, peace, and justice.
6. The role of caregivers: being role models in practicing Islamic values, (b) providing constructive feedback on the development of students, and (c) being good listeners and providing solutions to students' problems.
7. The role of the head of the Islamic boarding school: (a) designing a character-based curriculum, (b) providing supporting facilities for character education, and (c) coordinating the activities of teachers and caregivers.
8. Collaboration in character education of students: (a) partnership with parents through regular meetings to discuss the development of students (b) partnership with external parties, namely cooperation with universities and other Islamic boarding schools.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for the Implementation of Character Education

The findings of site 1 at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School related to the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of character education are as

follows: (1) supporting factors, namely: leadership of the caretakers and administrators of the Islamic boarding school, a supportive Islamic boarding school environment, holistic education methods, supervision and coaching, family involvement, exemplary behavior of ustad and caretakers, extracurricular activities, structured education programs, varied learning methods, integrated curriculum, community support, a strong vision and mission of the Islamic boarding school regarding character, and (2) obstacles encountered: limited resources and facilities, challenges of social and technological change, lack of student discipline, inconsistency in coordination between the madrasah and student care, challenges in disciplining students for obligatory worship, negative influences from the external environment, internal factors of students, lack of innovation in learning and lack of support from family and the environment.

The findings of site 2 at the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School related to supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of character education are as follows: (1) supporting factors, namely: students and education staff, the role of ustaz and caregivers, integrated curriculum, habituation methods, the Islamic boarding school environment, cooperation between teachers, caregivers and the Islamic boarding school, parental involvement, peer support, appreciation and recognition, learning through experience, routine religious activities, the role model of ustaz and caregivers, strict daily schedules, clear internal regulations, community service activities, and (2) obstacles encountered, namely: advances in science and technology and social media, peer pressure, coordination and infrastructure and disciplining students in worship and obligatory activities.

The results of the cross-site analysis show that there are similarities in supporting factors and obstacles in the implementation of character education at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School as follows: (1) similarities in supporting factors, namely: leadership/caregivers and ustaz, Islamic boarding school environment, integrated curriculum, exemplary behavior of ustaz and caregivers, parental/family involvement, learning and education methods, extracurricular and religious activities. Furthermore, the main differences in supporting factors are: Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School emphasizes more on aspects of supervision, community involvement, and more varied learning methods, while Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School emphasizes more on aspects of discipline with strict schedules and internal regulations, and peer support and appreciation, and (2) similarities in obstacles encountered: similarities in obstacles encountered are that both Islamic boarding schools face challenges in maintaining student discipline, especially in obligatory worship, facing the influence of technology and the social

environment, and internal coordination problems, while differences in obstacles encountered are that Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School faces more obstacles in resources, learning innovation, and family support, while Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School emphasizes more on peer pressure and infrastructure aspects.

D. CONCLUSION

The character values based on the pillars of religiosity given to students at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School are: (a) the pillar of faith, namely faith and devotion to Allah, self-control, and relationship with Allah, (b) the pillar of Islam, namely obedience to Islamic law, and (c) the pillar of ihsan, namely the noble morals of honesty, trustworthiness, politeness, humility and compassion, emphasizing discipline, responsibility and carrying out tasks with full trust, enthusiasm for seeking knowledge, creative thinking, and studying diligently, Islamic brotherhood, mutual cooperation, and helping others as a form of social concern, instilling the values of zuhud (simple living), humility, and emphasizing the importance of emotional and self-control. 2. The implementation of character values based on religious pillars at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School found similarities, namely: (1) instilling character values through daily life, (2) using exemplary and habituation methods, (3) integrating religious values into the curriculum through daily learning and practice, (4) having an Islamic study program and practice-based learning, (5) teachers being role models and instilling character education, and (6) caregivers at both Islamic boarding schools acting as moral guides and student monitors. The differences in the implementation of character values based on religious pillars at the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School and the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School are as follows: (1) related to the process of instilling character values, the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School emphasizes discussion and self-reflection, while the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School emphasizes Islamic studies and spiritual development, (2) related to the integration of character education, the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School is more systematic with integrated curriculum and dormitory life, while the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School relies on extracurricular activities and special programs, (3) related to special character education programs, the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School has entrepreneurship and religious competition programs, while the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School emphasizes self-development and parental involvement, (4) related to the role of teachers, the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School emphasizes Islamic moderation and tolerance, while the Jabal

Rahmah Islamic Boarding School focuses more on evaluating the character of students, (5) related to the role of caregivers, the Jabal Rahmah Islamic Boarding School emphasizes supervision of student interactions, while the Al-Habib Islamic Boarding School emphasizes supervision of student interactions, while the Al-Habib is more about providing feedback and problem solving.

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