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EMBEDDING AHLUSSUNNAH WAL JAMAAH IN MADRASAH MAARIF: INSIGHTS FROM A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACTS

Purpose: This study explores how the principles of Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah (Aswaja) are embedded as core values within the educational framework of Madrasah Ma'arif. Aswaja, representing the mainstream Sunni tradition, serves as a foundational ideology in many traditional Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. **Method:** Through a qualitative case study approach using a naturalistic research method, this research investigates the strategies used by educators, the integration of Aswaja values in the curriculum, and the influence of institutional culture in promoting religious moderation, tolerance, and balanced Islamic thought. Data were collected through interviews with teachers in one private madrasah in Malang, classroom observations, and document analysis. **Result:** The findings reveal that Madrasah Ma'arif instills Aswaja principles not only through formal religious instruction but also via character education, extracurricular activities, and school governance. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that embedding Aswaja values strengthens students' religious identity while promoting a peaceful and inclusive interpretation of Islam, aligning with the broader goals of national education and social harmony.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Character education in Indonesia, particularly within the madrasah environment, faces significant challenges in shaping values that align with the principles of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah* (Aswaja). In the modern era, technological advancement and the influence of global culture often obscure traditional values that should be instilled in the younger generation. This is evident in the behavior of elementary school (SD/MI) students, who are increasingly distanced from the values of politeness, tolerance, and ethics—core elements of the Aswaja teachings.

According to data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI, 2025), there has been a rise in juvenile delinquency cases, including bullying and intolerance, indicating that character education has not been fully effective. In this context, it is crucial to reformulate Aswaja values as core values within the curriculum of Madrasah Ma'arif to address these challenges. These values function not only as moral guidelines but also as a source of identity for students in understanding and living a harmonious social life.

The urgency of addressing character education issues and strengthening Aswaja values among SD/MI students is considerable. Strengthening character education based on Aswaja in madrasahs not only contributes to developing good personal character but also helps address broader social issues such as intolerance and radicalization. By instilling values such as *tawasuth* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice), students will be better prepared to face contemporary challenges and contribute positively to society.

According to UNICEF (unicef, 2025) data, 41% of 14-year-old students have experienced bullying, highlighting the need for more robust character education. Additionally, the radicalism potential index shows that 11.9% of females and 12.3% of Generation Z are influenced by radical ideologies, indicating the urgent need to reinforce Aswaja values among students.

Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah, as a school of thought in Islam that emphasizes moderation, balance, and tolerance, offers a strong foundation for shaping students' character. The values of *tawasuth* (moderation), *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *i'tidal* (uprightness) are essential elements that can be applied in educational settings. By internalizing these principles, students are not only taught religious knowledge but also how to interact and behave appropriately in society—an essential aspect of character formation (Amrullah, et.al, 2025).

The development of a learning environment based on the character values of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* requires a well-planned and strategic approach. Through this approach, students are expected to internalize and apply these values in their daily lives. Therefore, a conducive and supportive learning environment is essential to ensure that students can develop the positive character traits that define morally upright individuals. This aligns with the core concept of Islamic education, which is rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. It is understood that all actions deemed correct in Islamic tradition are those grounded in these two primary sources of law, serving as normative guidelines within society.

Thus, an effective learning process that reflects Islamic values must incorporate appropriate teaching methods, capable of creating a dynamic and meaningful educational environment. This, in turn, shapes student character in accordance with what the Qur'an and Hadith teach (Mulyasa, 2022).

Moreover, to achieve educational objectives and produce students who align with national education goals, effective instructional methods are crucial. One such method is habit formation, which can serve as a reference and be applied in Islamic educational contexts. The habit-forming method involves repeated and continuous actions that eventually become routine behavior and ingrained habits. For instance, encouraging children to regularly observe voluntary fasting (*puasa sunnah*) can train them to control their desires and develop self-discipline.

This Habit Formation Method is a practical and impactful strategy in character building. By applying this method consistently, it is expected that the goals of education—particularly the development of character aligned with national ideals and Islamic principles—can be effectively realized.

Meanwhile, the discourse on character education has emerged in response to a significant decline in individual character quality (Putri & Siregar, 2021), as reflected in increasingly concerning behavior and morality. This phenomenon is evident in the growing number of young people who fail to demonstrate proper respect and courtesy, especially when interacting with older individuals. Politeness and respectful behavior are often neglected, influenced by the rapid development of culture and technology, as well as a lack of intentional character formation in each individual.

Even more alarming is the rise in juvenile delinquency, including cases of bullying, intolerance, radicalism, and discrimination (Widiarni, et.al., 2024)—all of which are increasingly prevalent among the younger generation. In terms of radicalism, the Radicalism Potential Index reveals that 11.9% of females, 11.6% of millennials, and 12.3% of Gen Z are susceptible to radical and intolerant ideologies. Meanwhile, in bullying cases, data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) in 2023 recorded over 3,800 juvenile delinquency cases, including sexual violence, bullying, and even murder (Elanie, 2024).

These troubling trends reflect a serious lack of character education—particularly in fostering the value of *i'tidal* (uprightness or moral integrity). By emphasizing the value of *i'tidal*, education can guide students to develop strong principles and uphold good ethics in everyday life. The integration of *i'tidal* into educational practices helps nurture students who are firm in their values, fair in their actions, and ethical in their social interactions.

Based on the data presented above, the author concludes that character education is highly relevant and essential to be internalized in elementary school-aged children (SD/MI), particularly in light of the observable decline in moral character within society. At this age, children are in a critical developmental phase for shaping values and attitudes, making the teaching of manners and responsibility especially important. Furthermore, in an era where cultural shifts and technological advancements continue to influence behavior, character education helps children choose positive actions and manage negative influences.

Character education also serves as a preventive measure against juvenile delinquency, such as bullying and intolerance, by instilling values of empathy and justice (Anggarini, 2022). In addition, it fosters essential social skills for healthy interaction, thereby reducing the risk of radicalism and discrimination. The role of teachers and parents is vital in this process; their collaboration can create an environment that supports the learning of positive values and helps children become individuals with strong character in the future.

Therefore, the implementation of Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah-based character education is crucial—not only in schools but also in tutoring institutions. To date, formal education has tended to focus more on intellectual and cognitive development, while abstract aspects such as morality and behavior—core elements of character education rooted in Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah—have not received sufficient attention.

There is a prevailing view that the distinct identity and personality of the Indonesian nation should reflect a society and individuals with strong moral character, high cultural standards, ethical norms, and steadfast adherence to Eastern customs and religious values. From this perspective, it is understood that the Indonesian people should uphold rules and values that promote respectful behavior in social interactions so that they can live harmoniously in diversity.

Further, it seems necessary to explain more about diversity. Essentially, every human being is born with a pure and clean natural disposition (*fitrah*), like a blank sheet of paper without blemish. This *fitrah* allows individuals to remain inherently pure across various circumstances. Even if they commit mistakes, they can return to their original state of purity through sincere repentance. The existence of this *fitrah* gives humans a natural inclination toward doing good and acting rightly. When someone makes a mistake or displays negative behavior, it is often the result of external influences or circumstances affecting their actions. Nevertheless, the innate tendency toward goodness remains.

The Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet have made it clear that human beings possess various types of *fitrah*, including the *fitrah* of religion, morality, truthfulness, and compassion (Katsir, n.d).

Moreover, good behavior exists naturally within every human being, but external factors often lead individuals to act otherwise. Religion governs various aspects of life, including faith, moral norms, worship, social interaction, and Islamic law. Meanwhile, the concept of religiosity refers more to a person's internal perspective—what resides within the conscience. Thus, religiosity is closely related to a deep and internalized understanding of religious teachings.

Religious traits are not always easy to identify, as they are spiritual in nature and not outwardly visible. According to (Muhaimin, 2004), within every individual there inherently exist several religious attributes, which include honest, justice, useful for others, humble, efficient, futuristic, discipline, and balance. In addition, there is religious activity that promotes the religious attributes such as in the school. In the context of religious culture within schools, the mindset and behavior of its members are based on religious norms. In Islam, being religious means carrying out the commands of the faith wholeheartedly and to the best of one's ability. This is also reflected in the Qur'an, specifically in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 208.

Based on this verse, we understand that the command to carry out the teachings of Islam is an obligation for every believer. According to Muhaimin, there are five dimensions of religiosity such as The Dimension of Belief: This dimension involves the demands directed toward the teachings of a particular religion; The Dimension of Religious Practice: This includes acts of worship, obedience, and behaviors that reflect one's duties toward religion; The Dimension of Experience: This dimension describes the realities and hopes inherent in each religion; The Dimension of Religious Knowledge: This centers on the need for adherents to acquire understanding and insight about the religion they follow; The Dimension of Implementation or

Consequences: This represents the effects experienced by individuals as a result of their beliefs and faith in a particular religion (Muhaimin, 2004).

Meanwhile, culture and the practice of Islamic teachings are closely interconnected, so the interaction between the social environment and religion creates a mutually beneficial relationship that must be maintained. Religious culture in schools can be identified through norms such as a spirit of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), teamwork, solidarity, and other positive attitudes. In practice, this religious culture is manifested in activities such as congregational prayers, reading the Qur'an, giving charity (*infaq*), and studying with earnest dedication.

Thus, religious culture in schools represents the embodiment of religious teachings practiced as habits in daily activities, embraced by all members of the school community. This indirectly shows that all school members have implemented the religious teachings they believe in. In fostering a religious culture within the school, various elements play important roles, including the principal's decisions, planning of teaching and learning activities, extracurricular programs, and habituation of good behavior. All these efforts aim to create a sustainable "religious culture" within the school environment.

The diversity of students in schools, such as differences in religious beliefs, poses a challenge in instilling religious values. Therefore, the religious education system must prioritize the following principles: learning to live in differences; building mutual trust; mutual understanding; mutual respect; open-minded; appreciate each other and solve the conflict (Sahlan, 2010).

As Zubaedi, (2011) has stated that character is a fundamental attitude that every individual should possess, closely related to the prevailing social norms. Character is similar to personality, serving as a distinguishing factor between one person and another. Individuals with positive personalities, both personally and socially, exhibit good morals, behavior, ethics, and conduct. Another characteristic that indicates a person has character is the alignment of their soul, traits, and behavior with social rules or ethics. Many people consider character to be a subjective judgment of moral and mental qualities, while some others argue that character relates only to mental qualities. Consequently, efforts to shape character are often associated primarily with stimulating intellectual abilities (Wardati, 2019).

Regarding the definition of education, other sources state that education is more specifically related to the efforts of teaching and nurturing. Education is understood as the activity of transferring values or norms and instilling the necessary character. Meanwhile, learning involves the systematic transfer of knowledge, not only aiming to transfer norms and shape personality but also to develop expertise in specific fields.

This definition highlights the distinction between education and teaching. The main difference lies in education's focus on understanding rather than mere knowledge acquisition. Education is a conscious effort to develop learners' abilities in order to form good personalities. Through education, individuals are shaped to become intelligent, innovative, well-characterized, morally upright, and highly competent, thus becoming beneficial to religion, nation, and state (Azra, 1999).

Aunillah, (2019) has asserted that individuals who frequently lie, act arrogantly, or behave haughtily are categorized as having poor personalities, while those who behave politely, honestly, and humbly are considered to have good personalities. According to the Language Center of the Ministry of National Education (Pusat Bahasa

Depdiknas), character encompasses innate disposition (*fitrah*), spirituality, individuality, behavior, and nature. Meanwhile, the term “characterful” refers to personal traits, ethics, and habits.

Horby and Parnwel, as cited by Abdul Majid, define character as spiritual values, behavior, identity, and reputation. In other sources, character is explained to cover three aspects: goodness, compassion, and the application of goodness (Majid & Andayani, 2011).

Character education based on Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah plays a vital role in shaping Indonesia’s youth into well-rounded individuals—those who possess good morals and character, intelligence, innovation, diligence, confidence, humility, as well as just and responsible leadership qualities. Furthermore, this education aims to create individuals with strong mental resilience, capable of withstanding social competition and avoiding behaviors that deviate from Islamic teachings (Megawati, 2009).

In addition, Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah character education aligns with the function of national education. According to the Master Plan for Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah Character Education by the Ministry of National Education (2010), this form of character education serves to enhance intelligence and intellect while simultaneously shaping a religious, resilient, competitive, and dedicated national cultural character, thereby improving the intellectual quality of the younger generation.

Juwariyah, (2006) has stated that the process of character formation should be based on the religion one adheres to, in this case, Islam, which emphasizes faith in Allah as the Creator and Lord. In Islam, obedience and respect toward parents are highly emphasized, with such obedience following after obedience and faith in Allah SWT. However, this obedience must also be based on truth that brings blessings and strengthens faith. If parents teach wrongdoing or instruct their children to associate partners with Allah (shirk), such obedience should not be followed, as it leads away from faith and is considered a major sin. Nevertheless, it remains important to maintain kindness, obedience, and politeness toward parents, as these are core teachings in Islam.

According to (Abdul Malik, et.al., 2023) there are three stages that need to be considered in the formation of a person’s character, namely moral belief, moral action, and moral responsibility. These three stages are very important because, to produce a high-quality individual who possesses moral awareness, it is not sufficient to have knowledge alone. The individual must also have a strong personality and character as a reflection of the knowledge they possess.

Moreover, The term *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama’ah* emerged as an alternative to resolve disputes among various theological schools, such as Qadiriyyah, Jabariyyah, and others. In the Indonesian context, this doctrine refers to a group of people who consistently follow the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions in all areas of life, including creed (tawhid) and moral-ethical practices (tasawuf) (Hamzah, 2017). The values of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama’ah* encompass moderation, justice, tolerance, as well as a reformist and dynamic approach (Hasan, 2021).

Ahlussunnah Wal Jama’ah upholds a set of values that must be considered in the integration of civic values within the learning process. The goal is to shape a generation that not only possesses a sense of moderation and multicultural awareness but is also capable of applying these attitudes in daily life. Various elements of the educational process must be carefully designed to support the achievement of this vision. In this

context, primary attention should be given to the curriculum, educators, and instructional strategies employed. Emphasizing these three aspects does not mean neglecting other factors, but rather highlights their importance as priorities in achieving the desired educational outcomes.

Beyond this, (Chamidi, 2019) asserted that the character education fundamentally aims to nurture learners with noble character in accordance with Islamic teachings, so that these values become ingrained as habits in everyday activities. In line with the principles of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah*, as mentioned above, there is the concept of Mabādi' Khayra Ummah, a specific classification of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* values, which includes *As-Sidqu*, *Al-Amanah wal Wafa bil 'ahdi*, *Al-Adalah*, *At-Ta'awun*, and *Al-Istiqomah*.

B. METHOD

This study aims to explore the implementation of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* character education in schools, with the hope of enhancing students' religious behavior. To achieve this goal, the researcher employed a qualitative approach using a naturalistic research method, meaning the study was conducted in a natural setting. The type of research used is a case study, which was carried out at MI Al-Ma'arif 02 Singosari. Data were collected directly on-site, allowing the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of how *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* character education is implemented in the context of improving students' religious conduct.

The focus of this research is on the cultivation of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* character education through several habituation programs, such as collective Dhuha prayer and group Qur'an recitation, which are identified as expressions of religious behavior. To achieve this objective, the researcher conducted direct observations to gather the necessary data.

According to (Mudjia Rahardjo, 2010) there are eight types of qualitative research: ethnography, case study, document study, naturalistic observation, focused interviews, phenomenology, grounded theory, and historical study. The type of research employed in this study is a case study, which aims to explore in depth the implementation of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* character education through activities such as collective Dhuha prayer and group Qur'an recitation. These activities are expected to enhance students' religious behavior and influence their daily lives.

Mudjia Rahardjo explains that a case study is an in-depth investigation of an individual, group, organization, or program within a specific time period. This type of research seeks to gather highly detailed data, descriptions, and information about a particular group, which is then analyzed to generate new findings.

There is procedure in this paper starts from background study, arranging research instrument, deep observing, and research process. Qualitative research data sources are categorized into four groups: informants, events, settings, and documents. In this context, data sources are divided into two types: primary data, which refers to original data that serves as the main reference in the research, and secondary data, which functions as supporting information (Suprayogo & Tabroni, 2001). The primary data in this study were obtained through oral interviews with informants to understand the integration of *Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah* character education in efforts to enhance students' religious character at MI Mathla'ul Huda Poncokusumo and MI Al-Ma'arif 02

Singosari. Meanwhile, secondary data may include photographs, administrative documents, report card assessments, and other relevant records (Muchtar, 2013).

Meanwhile, In qualitative research, there are several commonly used methods for data collection. These include participation, which involves direct engagement with the research subjects; observation, which entails systematically recording events, behaviors, and objects relevant to the research focus; and interviews, which consist of interactions with data sources through question-and-answer sessions that often resemble ordinary conversations. Each of these methods plays a crucial role in gathering comprehensive and in-depth information to support the research objectives (Sarwono, 2006).

In this study, the data analysis process was carried out simultaneously with data collection, as is typical in qualitative research. The analysis began with the collection of data through observation, interviews, and documentation, and continued through to the preparation of the final research report (Arikunto, 2002). Data analysis is a systematic process of examining and organizing the data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. It involves categorizing the data, breaking it down into smaller units, synthesizing information, identifying patterns, and selecting key points that are essential for understanding and drawing conclusions—both for the researcher and for others. To ensure effective analysis of the research findings, three minimum requirements must be met: objectivity, a systematic approach, and generalizability (Muhadjir, 1998).

In this subsection, to verify the validity of the obtained data, the researcher applies triangulation methods, which include data source triangulation, investigator triangulation, and method triangulation. In this triangulation process, the researcher undertakes several steps: first, comparing the results of observations with the results of interviews conducted with informants, which is part of method triangulation; second, comparing data, information, and statements obtained from various informants such as the principal, teachers, students, and parents, which falls under data source triangulation; and so forth. By doing so, the researcher can ensure that the data obtained are valid, reliable, and support the research conclusions accurately.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Akhlak Building (Character Development) in MI Al Maarif 02 Singosari

MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari was established in 1923 amid the fervor of fighting against Dutch colonialism and the spirit to educate the nation's children. One of its main founders was a national hero and former Minister of Religious Affairs, KH. Masjkur. Initially, this madrasah was named Madrasah Misbahul Wathan, which was later changed to Nahdlatul Wathon with the permission of KH. Moh. Thohir. After the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama, in 1930 the madrasah's name was changed again to Sekolah Rakyat Nahdlatul Ulama' (SRNO). Then, in 1959, SRNO became Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nahdlatul Ulama' 1 (MINU 1), and finally was renamed MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari in 1978.

This madrasah was established to meet the community's educational needs. It operates under the leadership of the Al-Maarif Singosari foundation as a form of concern to address the worries of parents who want their children to study in an institution that balances education holistically. Another fundamental reason for founding MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari was to prepare graduates and young generations

who are intelligent, highly intellectual, and have Islamic character. To this day, MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari continues steadily to improve the quality of teaching and services. This is evident from the training programs attended by both administrative staff and teachers. By participating in these trainings, it is expected that the competence and skills of teachers in the academic field will improve. With this noble goal, MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari aims to produce high-quality graduates with strong intellectual abilities who can compete in general education and in the modern era of changing times. This intellectual intelligence is, of course, balanced with a foundation of religious character for the students as essential preparation for living in society and the social environment.

This is inline with Amrullah, (2025) who asserted that the development of a learning environment based on the character values of Ahlussunnah Wal Jama'ah requires a well-planned and strategic approach. Through this approach, students are expected to internalize and apply these values in their daily lives. Therefore, a conducive and supportive learning environment is essential to ensure that students can develop the positive character traits that define morally upright individuals. This aligns with the core concept of Islamic education, which is rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. It is understood that all actions deemed correct in Islamic tradition are those grounded in these two primary sources of law, serving as normative guidelines within society.

Moreover, MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari is under the auspices of the Al-Maarif Singosari Foundation. This school is located in Singosari, Malang Regency, with the address at Jl. Masjid Pagentan Singosari Malang. The boundaries of MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari are as follows: to the west, it borders a residential housing area.

The objectives of character education at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari include fostering Aqidah Salimah, which is a sound and correct faith; Aqliyyah Dzakiyyah, meaning a sharp and intelligent mind; Akhlaq Karimah, or noble and commendable behavior; Ibadah Sholihah, which refers to proper and righteous worship; and Amaliyah Shalihah, meaning good and righteous deeds. The vision of MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari is to develop a generation of accomplished Muslim individuals who possess noble character, creativity, independence, patriotism, and firmly uphold the teachings of Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah An-Nahdliyyah. To achieve this vision, the school has set several missions: implementing active and enjoyable learning centered on students, fostering a religious environment based on noble character and tolerance, developing creativity, independence, and critical thinking, encouraging innovation in line with contemporary developments, providing achievement guidance that aligns with students' interests and talents, cultivating a character that loves the environment and homeland, and ensuring child-friendly facilities and infrastructure that support effective learning.

Mulyasa, (2022) has stated that to achieve educational objectives and produce students who align with national education goals, effective instructional methods are crucial. One such method is habit formation, which can serve as a reference and be applied in Islamic educational contexts. The habit-forming method involves repeated and continuous actions that eventually become routine behavior and ingrained habits. For instance from this madrasah, *Tahlil, Istighotsah, Maulid and Ziarah Maqam*. This Habit Formation Method is a practical and impactful strategy in character building. By applying this method consistently, it is expected that the goals of education—

particularly the development of character aligned with national ideals and Islamic principles—can be effectively realized.

In addition, Aswaja (Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah) education is a doctrine that emphasizes a moderate and comprehensive understanding of Islam. This concept teaches the importance of following the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his companions, while stressing balanced principles of faith (aqidah). At MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari, Aswaja education is used as the foundation in every learning activity with the aim of shaping a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also possesses strong religious understanding and good character.

The cultivation of moral education at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari focuses on moral values derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the examples set by the scholars (ulama). Through an integrated curriculum, students are taught the importance of good morals such as honesty, discipline, and respect for parents. Extracurricular activities and classroom teaching are designed to reinforce these values so that students can apply them in their daily lives. Thus, moral education becomes an inseparable part of the learning process. Furthermore, MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari also prioritizes interactive and enjoyable learning methods. Using an experiential-based approach, students are encouraged to discuss and collaborate in understanding moral values, especially those exemplified by the ulama. As expressed by Mr. Ahmad Nur Syadzili, the Aswaja teacher for grade VI, this approach is very effective in building students' character and their understanding of Aswaja teachings.

At Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Al-Maarif 02 Singosari, the cultivation and education of morals are key components in developing students' character. The madrasah implements various programs designed to internalize moral values into the daily lives of students. In practice, the school applies Aswaja-based character education as the main foundation for shaping religious morals, which is one of the concepts of internalizing character education and moral values.

Furthermore, Al-Maarif 02 places great emphasis on parental involvement in the moral education process. The madrasah holds regular meetings with parents to discuss the development of their children's character and morals. This creates a synergy between the school and home, where parents are encouraged to reinforce the values taught at the madrasah. Through this approach, it is hoped that students can apply good morals not only at school but also within their family environment. This was expressed by Mr. Ahmad Nur Syadzili, who is also the homeroom teacher of grade 6 and the Aswaja subject teacher.

The character development program at MI Al-Maarif 02 also includes social activities that teach care and empathy. Through social service programs and fundraising for the community, students are taught to share and show concern for others. These activities not only reinforce moral values but also cultivate a strong sense of social responsibility in the students. This is related to Anggarini, (2022) that stated character education also serves as a preventive measure against juvenile delinquency, such as bullying and intolerance, by instilling values of empathy and justice. In addition, it fosters essential social skills for healthy interaction, thereby reducing the risk of radicalism and discrimination. The role of teachers and parents is vital in this process; their collaboration can create an environment that supports the learning of positive values and helps children become individuals with strong character in the future.

Therefore, the results of Aswaja education and moral cultivation at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari are expected to be evident in the students' daily behavior. They are hoped to become individuals who are not only academically proficient but also possess integrity, empathy, and the ability to contribute positively to society. In this way, MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari strives to produce a generation that is not only ready to face global challenges but also serves as a role model in strong religious and moral values.

Strengthening the Science and Aqidah of Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah

The Aswaja education at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari aims to build a strong understanding of Islamic aqidah in accordance with the true teachings. This concept emphasizes the importance of following the guidance of the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as upholding the traditions of the scholars who have developed a moderate understanding of Islam. Located in the center of Singosari district, Malang, this institution serves as a trusted reference for parents who entrust their children to receive quality education.

One of the educational goals at MI Al-Maarif 02 is the strengthening of knowledge and the instillation of core values of faith. This aspect of faith is identified as the belief held by each individual, with all students at the school being Muslim. Therefore, the concept of faith applied in the daily behavior of the students is an actualization of their iman (faith), which is rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith.

The Aswaja education at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari focuses not only on theoretical knowledge but also on habitual practical worship (amaliyah) in accordance with Islamic teachings. This concept emphasizes the importance of practicing religious values in daily life. By habituating students to perform good deeds, it is hoped that they will internalize Aswaja teachings thoroughly, becoming individuals with noble character who uphold the principles of moderate Islam.

As Muhaimin, (2004) proposed that religious traits are not always easy to identify, as they are spiritual in nature and not outwardly visible. According to (Muhaimin, 2004), within every individual there inherently exist several religious attributes, which include honest, justice, useful for others, humble, efficient, futuristic, discipline, and balance. In addition, there is religious activity that promotes the religious attributes such as in the school. In the context of religious culture within madrasah the mindset and behavior of its members are based on religious norms. In Islam, being religious means carrying out the commands of the faith wholeheartedly and to the best of one's ability.

For instance, the habituation of Aswaja amaliyah at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari is carried out through routine activities such as congregational prayers, tahlil (prayers for the deceased), istighotsah (supplications), sholawat (praises to the Prophet), maulid celebrations every Friday, and commemorations of major Islamic holidays. These activities are designed to build good habits from an early age, so students not only learn about Islam theoretically but also practice it in everyday life. Additionally, during each activity, teachers explain the meaning and purpose of every ritual, enabling students to understand the importance of performing worship correctly and consciously.

In this habituation concept, MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari offers several daily Islamic programs like congregational prayers and Dhuha prayer, as well as characteristic Aswaja An-Nahdliyah practices such as Tahlil recitations, Istighotsah, Maulid, and cemetery

visits for its students weekly. These activities aim to internalize and form Islamic character based on Aswaja teachings among the students. Moreover, the Madrasah also implements the SKU (Syarat Kecakapan Ubudiyah), which contains materials ranging from daily prayers, short Quranic chapters, to summaries of practical amaliyah. Students are required to memorize and submit these to their homeroom teacher as a prerequisite to take the final exam in the sixth grade. This habituation is important because, at the Madrasah, the students' role models are their teachers. Therefore, when activities such as congregational prayers, tahlil recitations, istighotsah, and maulid are conducted with the participation of both students and all the teaching staff, it sets a good example for the students. This encourages them to carry out worship practices properly not only at school but also at home and within their social environment. This present study highlighted that Habit Formation Method is a practical and impactful strategy in character building specifically in strengthening the core values of Aswaja. By applying this method consistently, it is expected that the goals of education—particularly the development of character aligned with national ideals and Islamic principles (aswaja)—can be effectively realized.

Results of the Internalization of Aswaja Character Values

Character building is an ongoing process that allows its results to become clearly visible over time. At MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari, the implementation of Aswaja values has been carried out optimally and can be consistently repeated. This demonstrates that the internalization of Aswaja values at the madrasa runs effectively through a well-planned habituation system. This process not only emphasizes ritual activities but also focuses on developing students' attitudes and behaviors in daily life.

The concept of internalizing Aswaja character education values at this school includes instilling good morals, strengthening understanding of faith (aqidah), and habituating Aswaja practices (amaliyah). These three elements are integrated into a series of habituation activities designed to nurture a religious character based on the teachings of Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah. With this approach, students are taught not only to understand the theory but also to apply these values in real actions.

Activities such as congregational prayers, Quran recitation, Aswaja An-Nahdliyyah's characteristic amaliyah, and the commemoration of Islamic holidays are important parts of this process. Through these activities, students are not only physically involved but also experience the meaning of each activity performed. This helps them internalize religious values more deeply, resulting in a strong personality grounded in the principles of Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah.

According to Sahlan, (2011) the diversity of students in schools, such as differences in religious beliefs, poses a challenge in instilling religious values. Therefore, the religious education system must prioritize the following principles: learning to life in differences; building mutual trust; mutual understanding; mutual respect; open-minded; appreciate each other and solve the conflict. Suprisingly, this school has evaluated themselves to always develop the teaching method which instilling good morals, strengthening understanding of faith (aqidah), and habituating Aswaja practices (amaliyah).

Moreover, this habituation serves to create a conducive environment for character development. With support from teachers and peers, students feel inspired to encourage one another in carrying out religious activities. This positive environment

greatly influences the formation of good habits that will continue to be carried into adulthood.

Overall, the efforts to build character through the values of Aswaja at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari demonstrate the school's commitment to creating a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also possesses good character. With a holistic approach, it is hoped that students will grow into individuals with noble morals and be able to contribute positively to society.

Based on the analysis of the presented data, it can be concluded that if religious habituation activities are carried out consistently within the school environment, they have significant potential to enhance students' religious behavior. This continuous process not only helps students develop positive habits but also encourages them to internalize religious values in their daily lives. With regular routines, students can cultivate discipline and spiritual awareness, which in turn creates an atmosphere that supports the growth of strong religious character.

CONCLUSION

The integration of Aswaja-based character education at MI Al-Maarif 02 Singosari proves to be a meaningful and transformative approach. By consistently embedding religious values through daily practices and a supportive environment, the madrasah fosters not only intellectual growth but also deep spiritual and moral development. This holistic model serves as a powerful foundation for shaping a generation that is ethically grounded, socially responsible, and firmly rooted in the teachings of Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah.

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