

**IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN THE
FORMATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' MORALS: A
STUDY AT AL-MUNAWWAR ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
MANDAILING NATAL**

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of school religious culture in shaping student morals at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Mandailing Natal. This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive approach. The research subjects included the principal, homeroom teachers, and students. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, using source and technique triangulation to ensure data validity. The results indicate that the implementation of school religious culture is carried out through several activities, namely gate duty, routine religious activities, the habit of congregational prayer, and extracurricular activities. Gate duty plays a role in fostering politeness, respect for teachers, and discipline in students. Routine religious activities accustom students to practicing religious values in their daily lives. The habit of congregational prayer fosters discipline, responsibility, and etiquette in worship. Meanwhile, extracurricular activities serve as a means of strengthening moral values through direct practice, such as cooperation, responsibility, and compliance with rules. The conclusion of this study indicates that the planned and consistent implementation of a school religious culture can shape students' morals gradually and sustainably. School religious culture serves as an effective strategy in character education to shape students with noble morals and religious attitudes.

Keywords: School Religious Culture, Moral Formation, Character Education, Elementary School

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of behavioral change, increasing knowledge and life experience so that students become more mature in thought and attitude. This aligns with Article 3 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the Education System, which states that national education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified

nation in order to educate the nation. National education also aims to develop the potential of students to become people who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens (Sujak & Aqib, 2022).

Character formation through education is crucial, especially at the elementary school level. At this level, students are at a developmental stage that determines their future personalities. According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, education is implemented through the Tri Pusat Pendidikan concept, involving the family, school, and community environments in shaping superior, intelligent, and virtuous individuals (Ikhwan et al., 2018). Character education shares the same essence and meaning as moral education and ethical education. This concept demonstrates that education plays a crucial role in shaping students' character and morals through an environment that optimally supports the process of personality development.

Holistic moral formation encompasses a reflection of deeply inherent traits, consisting of innate traits (*fitrah*) and the results of efforts through spontaneous, unconscious habituation (*muktasab*). Long-term thought and deliberation transform into habits and personalities that are actualized in daily life (Idharudin & Nurhasanah, 2025). Elementary school-aged children have a strong tendency to imitate the moral behavior of influential figures, both at school and in society. According to Bandura's social learning theory, this process of observation and imitation is the primary mechanism in the formation of moral behavior. Therefore, teachers and parents must demonstrate consistency between words and actions, as a mismatch between the two can lead to moral confusion in children. Schools play a role in creating an environment that supports the development of students' morals through various positive and educational activities. A strategy that can be used to shape students' morals is through the implementation of religious culture within the school environment. A school's religious culture embodies religious values as a tradition in behavior and culture followed by the entire school community. By making religion a tradition within the school, consciously or unconsciously, when the school community follows these ingrained traditions, they are actually practicing religious teachings. The implementation of religious culture can be achieved through various practices such as prayer, religious observance, politeness, and mutual respect. Therefore, a school's religious culture plays a crucial role in gradually and sustainably shaping students' morals.

Previous research by Shoimah & Fatoni (2023) showed that implementing religious culture through various routine religious activities within the school environment can foster religious attitudes, discipline, and positive behavior in students. Consistently implemented religious culture can create an environment that supports the development of students' morals through the instilling of traditional religious values in daily life. Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School is one of the Islamic elementary schools that implements religious culture in the daily activities of students. This religious culture is seen through various habituation activities, such as welcoming students by teachers with a smile through the gate duty every morning, the implementation of routine religious activities such as *muraja'ah*, *sholawatan*, and reading of *Asmaul Husna* and their meanings, reading the Qur'an in the morning after the morning assembly on Saturdays, as well as the habit of performing congregational *dhua* prayers in class before learning which is directly monitored by the

homeroom teacher. In addition, students are also accustomed to participating in religious activities regularly as part of the formation of morals. The implementation of religious activities shows the school's efforts to consistently form the morals of students. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the school's religious culture in the formation of morals of students at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School Mandailing Natal.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This study employed a qualitative, descriptive approach. This approach was used to gain a deeper understanding of the implementation of the school's religious culture in shaping students' morals. The study was conducted at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Mandailing Natal over a 30-day period. Subjects included the principal, homeroom teachers, and students. Data sources included primary and secondary data.

Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to directly observe the implementation of religious activities at the school, such as gate duty, muraja'ah (religious gatherings), congregational prayers, and other religious activities. Interviews were conducted with school officials to obtain information regarding the purpose and implementation of religious culture in shaping students' morals. Documentation was used to supplement the data, including activity schedules, photos, and other supporting documents.

Data analysis consisted of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions to determine the validity of the data. This involved triangulating observations, interviews, and documentation to provide a clear picture of the implementation of the school's religious culture in shaping students' morals.

RESEARCH RESULTS

A. Moral Development through Gate Duty as a School Religious Culture

Based on observations conducted during the research at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Mandailing Natal, gate duty is a form of school religious culture that is routinely carried out every morning before learning begins. Teachers take turns on duty by welcoming students at the school gate. During this activity, teachers greet, smile, and greet students upon arrival.

Observations indicate that students are accustomed to greeting teachers, kissing their hands, and displaying polite and orderly behavior upon entering the school grounds. This activity also encourages students to arrive on time, as tardiness is immediately apparent during gate duty.

Based on interviews with the principal and homeroom teachers, gate duty aims to instill moral values from the moment students arrive at school. The school stated that through this activity, students are trained to respect teachers, cultivate polite behavior, and foster discipline and responsibility in their daily lives at school.

Documentation in the form of teacher duty schedules and activity photos demonstrates that gate duty is carried out in a planned and ongoing manner. Observations and informant accounts indicate changes in student behavior, such as increased habituation to greetings,

friendliness toward teachers and peers, and more polite behavior while at school.

B. Moral Development through Routine Religious Activities as a School Religious Culture

Based on observations at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Mandailing Natal, routine religious activities are part of the school's religious culture, carried out on a scheduled and continuous basis. These religious activities include muraja'ah (recitation of the Quran), sholawatan (prayer), recitation of the Asmaul Husana (the Names of Allah) and their meanings, and reading the Quran together before the start of lessons.

Observations indicate that students participate in these routine religious activities in an orderly and enthusiastic manner. Students are accustomed to reciting prayers and dhikr together, and reciting Quranic verses in turn according to the teacher's instructions. These activities are carried out in class and on the school grounds according to a predetermined schedule.

Based on interviews with homeroom teachers and teachers, these routine religious activities aim to familiarize students with practicing religious values in their daily lives. Teachers stated that through these activities, students are trained to be calm, disciplined, and respectful of the process of communal worship. Furthermore, this activity also fosters a habit in students of beginning activities with prayer and dhikr (remembrance of God).

Documentation in the form of a religious activity schedule, activity guidebook, and photographs of the activities demonstrate that routine religious activities have become part of the school's daily routine. Observations and interviews with informants indicate that students are beginning to demonstrate religious attitudes, such as practicing prayer, being more orderly during activities, and displaying more polite behavior in daily interactions within the school environment.

C. Building Morals through the Habit of Congregational Prayer as a School Religious Culture

Based on observations conducted during the research at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Mandailing Natal, the habit of congregational prayer is a key form of the school's religious culture, implemented routinely and on schedule. Congregational prayer activities are held in the classroom before the start of learning activities, particularly the Dhuha prayer, which is attended by all students under the direct supervision of their respective homeroom teachers.

Observations indicate that prior to congregational prayer, students are directed to perform ablution in an orderly manner and take turns. Teachers guide students in maintaining order, cleanliness, and politeness during the preparation process. Students then perform congregational prayer in neat rows, following the imam's recitation, and maintaining reverence throughout.

Based on interviews with homeroom teachers, the practice of congregational prayer aims to train students to practice worship together and instill the values of discipline and responsibility. The teacher also explained that through this activity, students are taught proper manners in worship, such as maintaining silence, respecting their peers, and obeying the teacher's instructions during the activity.

Documentation in the form of daily activity schedules, homeroom teacher notes, and photographs of congregational prayer demonstrates that this activity is carried out consistently and monitored. Observations and informant accounts indicate that students exhibit behavioral changes, such as being more orderly during worship, practicing good personal hygiene before prayer, and displaying a calmer and more polite demeanor during learning activities after congregational prayer.

Furthermore, the teacher stated that students, who initially needed to be reminded to participate in congregational prayer, gradually began to demonstrate independence in their worship. Students were also seen reminding each other to prepare for congregational prayer according to the school's established schedule.

D. Moral Development through Extracurricular Activities as a School Religious Culture

Based on observations at Al-Munawwar Integrated Islamic Elementary School in Mandailing Natal, extracurricular activities are part of the school's religious culture and play a role in shaping students' morals. Extracurricular activities at the school include religious activities and other supporting activities that contain religious and moral values. These activities are held outside of class hours and are attended by students according to a schedule determined by the school.

Observations indicate that during extracurricular activities, students are accustomed to practicing discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. The extracurricular teacher provides guidance and support to students throughout the activities. Students are encouraged to comply with activity rules, respect the teacher, and maintain polite behavior when interacting with other students.

Based on interviews with the teacher and homeroom teacher, extracurricular activities are designed not only to develop students' interests and talents but also to instill moral values. The teacher explained that through these activities, students are trained to be honest, disciplined, respect each other, and take responsibility for the tasks assigned during the activities.

Documentation in the form of extracurricular activity schedules, student attendance lists, and photos of the activities demonstrate that extracurricular activities are implemented in a planned and sustainable manner. Observations and informant accounts indicate that students demonstrate greater self-confidence, are able to work collaboratively with their peers, and exhibit more orderly and polite behavior both during extracurricular activities and in daily school activities.

Furthermore, the teacher stated that student involvement in extracurricular activities helps develop positive habits, such as obeying rules, respecting time, and being responsible for their roles. This demonstrates that extracurricular activities serve as a means for the school to support the development of student morals through the comprehensive implementation of religious culture.

DISCUSSION

Based on research findings, the implementation of religious culture at Al-Munawwar Mandailing Natal Integrated Islamic Elementary School through gate duty, routine religious activities, the habit of congregational prayer, and extracurricular activities has been shown to play a role in shaping students' morals. These four activities complement each other and create a religious, conducive school environment that supports the ongoing development of positive student behavior. Gate duty, for example, serves as the initial interaction between teachers and students, instilling the values of politeness, respect for teachers, and discipline from the moment students enter the school environment. This habituation is effective because it is carried out consistently every day, thus forming lasting habits in students.

These findings align with research by Aziz and Ana (2020), which states that implementing a religious culture through simple habits such as greetings, smiling, and greetings can shape students' religious attitudes and positive behavior. A school environment that fosters religious values in a tangible way will facilitate students' internalization of moral values without coercion. This demonstrates that moral formation depends not only on learning materials but also on the daily practices experienced directly by students at school (Aziz & Ana, 2022).

In addition to gatekeeping, routine religious activities such as muraja'ah (recitation of the Koran), sholawatan (prayer), recitation of the Asmaul Husana (Asmaul Husana), and Quranic recitation contribute to developing students' religious attitudes and calm behavior. These activities train students to begin activities with prayer and dhikr (remembrance of God), thus creating a more orderly and conducive learning environment. Research by Indarwati (2020) shows that routine religious activities in elementary schools can improve students' religious attitudes, discipline, and compliance with school rules. Thus, habituating religious activities is an important foundation for developing students' overall moral character (Indarwati, 2020).

The practice of congregational prayer, particularly the Dhuha prayer, is also an important part of the school's religious culture. Research shows that this activity fosters discipline, cleanliness, orderliness, and good manners in worship. Students who are accustomed to performing congregational prayer demonstrate a calmer and more polite demeanor during learning activities. This finding aligns with research by Salmia (2024), which states that the habit of congregational prayer at school influences the development of religious character, responsibility, and discipline in students. Collective worship activities also strengthen a sense of togetherness and social awareness among students (Salmia et al., 2024).

Furthermore, extracurricular activities serve as a vehicle for strengthening moral values outside of formal learning. Through extracurricular activities, students are trained to work together, be responsible, obey rules, and respect others. Research by Arimbi (2022) indicates that well-managed extracurricular activities can shape students' character because they provide a space for direct practice of moral values in real-life situations. This aligns with the findings of this study, where students demonstrated positive attitudinal changes not only during extracurricular activities but also in their daily lives at school (Arimbi & Minsih, 2022).

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the implementation of a school's religious culture, carried out in a planned, consistent manner, and involving the entire school community, can gradually and sustainably shape students' morals. Religious culture not only

serves as a school identity but also as an effective character education strategy in shaping a generation with noble character.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious culture at Al-Munawwar Mandailing Natal Integrated Islamic Elementary School plays a crucial role in shaping students' morals. The religious culture, implemented through gate duty, routine religious activities, the practice of congregational prayer, and extracurricular activities, creates a school environment conducive to the gradual and continuous internalization of noble moral values.

Gate duty serves as an initial means of instilling politeness, respect for teachers, and discipline in students from the moment they enter the school environment. Routine religious activities familiarize students with beginning activities with prayer and dhikr, thereby fostering a religious attitude, calmness, and orderly behavior. The practice of congregational prayer fosters discipline, responsibility, and etiquette in worship, which impacts students' orderly and polite behavior during learning activities. Meanwhile, extracurricular activities serve as a vehicle for strengthening moral values through direct practice, such as cooperation, responsibility, and compliance with rules.

Overall, the implementation of a religious culture that is planned, consistent, and involves the entire school community has proven effective in shaping students' morals. A school's religious culture not only serves as an identity for the educational institution but also serves as a character education strategy capable of developing students with noble morals and religious attitudes in their daily lives.

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