

## **Fostering Students' Religious Character Through Faith Based Activities at Kelayan Dalam 5 Elementary School, Banjarmasin Selatan**

**Nur Halijah**

Universitas Islam Antasari (UIN), Banjarmasin, Kalimantan Selatan, Indonesia  
[lizahaliza995@gmail.com](mailto:lizahaliza995@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Education serves as a crucial medium for nurturing students, and the humanistic achievements of education subsequently become a foundation for development. Therefore, it is expected that educators refrain from making educational errors while fulfilling their responsibilities. Character education, in this context, is the type of education that fosters the social, emotional, and moral growth of students. Consequently, character education is vital for shaping students' personalities and is anticipated to serve as a primary foundation for developing religious individuals who are prepared to compete in the future. This research aims to illustrate the construction of students' religious character through religious activities at the State Elementary School of Kelayan Dalam 5 in Banjarmasin City. The focus of this study includes: the concepts, implementation, and impacts of religious activities on students' religious character. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques that encompass observation, interviews, and documentation. The subjects of the study consist of the school principal, Islamic education teachers, and students. The findings indicate that the formation of religious character is integrated into the school's vision and mission, as well as in the learning programs and routine activities such as congregational prayers, recitation of short surahs, and extracurricular activities with a religious theme. The implications of this implementation are evident in the enhancement of students' religious morals, understanding of worship, and the development of discipline and courtesy.

**Keywords:** Construction of religious character, Religious activities, Elementary school.

### **Abstrak**

Pendidikan merupakan wahana penting untuk membina peserta didik, dan prestasi humanistik Pendidikan pada gilirannya menjadi sumber untuk pembangunan. Oleh karena itu, diharapkan para pendidik tidak melakukan kesalahan Pendidikan dalam melaksanakan tugasnya. Adapun Pendidikan karakter adalah Pendidikan yang mendukung perkembangan social, emosional, dan moral peserta didik. Sehingga Pendidikan karakter sangat penting untuk pembentukan kepribadian peserta didik dan diharapkan dapat menjadi landasan utama untuk mengembangkan manusia yang religius yang siap bersaing di masa depan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan konstruksi karakter religius siswa melalui kegiatan keagamaan di

Sekolah Dasar Negeri Kelayan Dalam 5 Kota Banjarmasin. Fokus dari penelitian ini mencakup: konsep, implementasi, dan dampak kegiatan keagamaan terhadap karakter religius siswa. Penelitian ini menerapkan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data yang meliputi observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari kepala sekolah, guru pendidikan agama Islam, dan siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembentukan karakter religius diintegrasikan dalam visi dan misi sekolah, serta dalam program kegiatan rutin seperti sholat berjamaah, pembacaan surah pendek, dan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler yang bernuansa religius. Implikasi dari pelaksanaan ini terlihat dalam peningkatan moral keagamaan siswa, pemahaman ibadah, serta pembentukan sikap disiplin dan sopan santun.

**Kata Kunci:** Konstruksi Karakter religius, Kegiatan Keagamaan, Sekolah dasar.

## A. introduction

Character education is an educational effort that supports the social, emotional, and moral development of students.<sup>1</sup> The Directorate of Higher Education states that moral education can be understood as value education, character education, moral education, and personality education. Its purpose is to cultivate the ability of students to make decisions between good and bad and to promote moral behavior in daily life wholeheartedly.<sup>2</sup> . Therefore, character education can foster behavior aligned with Islamic teachings, whether at school, at home, or in society.

In Islam, character education is rooted in two primary sources: the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet. Hence, moral standards in Islam are not based on general societal thinking or human standards but on divine revelation. Consequently, character education must be oriented toward Islamic ethics and noble behavior.<sup>3</sup> There are eighteen core values of character education that teachers should instill in students, namely: religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, nationalism, love for the homeland, appreciation of achievement, friendliness/communication, peace-loving, love of reading, environmental care, social care, and responsibility.<sup>4</sup>

Character education plays a vital role in shaping students' personalities and serves as a foundation for nurturing a generation of religious Indonesians who are ready to compete in the future. When these values are integrated into school life, students will naturally practice them in broader society. In today's social reality, many children exhibit behaviors that deviate from societal norms. Therefore, instilling religious character is an urgent task.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> PALA, Aynur. The need for character education. *International journal of social sciences and humanity studies*, 2011, Vol.3 No.2: h, 23-32.

<sup>2</sup> Purandina, I. Putu Yoga; Winaya, I. Made Azstra. Pendidikan karakter di lingkungan keluarga selama pembelajaran jarak jauh pada masa pandemi COVID-19. *Cetta: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 2020, Vol.3 No.2, h, 270-290.

<sup>3</sup> Moh Ahsanulhaq, *Membentuk Karakter Religius Peserta didik melalui Metode Pembiasaan*, Prakarsa Paedagogia, Vol.1 No.2, 2019 h, 21-33

<sup>4</sup> Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional. *Pengembangan Pendidikan Budaya dan Karakter Bangsa: Pedoman Sekolah*. Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan, 2010

<sup>5</sup> Maria Hildegardis Hieng, *Pola Pembentukan Karakter Anak di Sekolah Menengah Pertama PGRI I Wagir kabupaten Malang*, Jurnal penelitian pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan, Vol.1 No.1, 2021, h, 77-79

The formation of a religious character in children is aimed at nurturing attitudes and behaviors in accordance with religious teachings. A religious individual is someone who adheres to their faith, is tolerant of others' religious practices, and lives in harmony with people of different beliefs. This character is crucial to develop from an early age, especially considering the increasing cases of moral violations among students. These violations suggest a lack of proper moral grounding and religious consciousness.<sup>6</sup>

In the Qur'an, Surah Adh-Dhariyat (51:56), Allah SWT says::

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.”

This verse reminds us that humans are created to worship Allah and to stay away from His prohibitions. Therefore, engaging in education is part of worship and should be done sincerely to attain His pleasure.

Religiosity, in general, refers to religious traits, functions, and dimensions. It provides a foundation for belief and moral behavior.<sup>7</sup> The formation of religious character involves having faith in God, practicing religious teachings, respecting differences in belief, and coexisting peacefully with others.

Religious values are among the character traits cultivated in schools. Gunawan describes religious character as values related to one's relationship with God, including thoughts, words, and actions that reflect religious teachings and divine principles. Religious character is vital for students, especially in an era of moral decline. Students must be able to distinguish between right and wrong based on religious rules.<sup>8</sup>

Religious character is the internalization of religious values held firmly by an individual, reflected in daily attitudes and behaviors. It distinguishes one's character from others. Religious education and character education are inherently interconnected. In Indonesia, character values are derived from four sources: religion, Pancasila, culture, and national education goals.<sup>9</sup> One of the strategies for building religious character is through continuous training, guidance, and the cultivation of good habits. These habits, once internalized, form a person's character. Strong character is formed through appreciation, consistent experiences, and practice.<sup>10</sup>

From the Islamic perspective, noble character (akhlaq) is the fruit of applying sharia (both acts of worship and social conduct) rooted in strong faith (aqidah). Like

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<sup>6</sup>FAHMI, Eri Nurul; MUJAHIDIN, Endin; RAHMAN, Imas Kania. Development of religious tolerance of high school levels. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 2023, vol.10 No.01, hal 163-196. Lihat Annur, A., Kurnianto, R., & Rohmadi, R. (2018). Penerapan Karakter Religius pada Peserta Didik di MTs Muhammadiyah 3 Yanggong Ponorogo. *TARBAWI: Journal on Islamic Education*, Vol.2 No.2, 2011, h, 40-44

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Lickona, *Pendidikan Karakter: Panduan Lengkap untuk Mendidik Siswa Menjadi Pintar dan Baik*. (Bandung: Nusa Media, 2012), h, 80.

<sup>8</sup> Fajardiokta, Prima, et al. Nilai Pendidikan Karakter dalam Mitos Gunung Tumpang Pitu dan Pemanfaatannya sebagai Alternatif Materi Ajar Sastra di SMA.

<sup>9</sup> CHOWDHURY, Mohammad. Emphasizing morals, values, ethics, and character education in science education and science teaching. *MOJES: Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 2018, Vol4.No.2: h,1-16.

<sup>10</sup> Darmawan I. Putu Ariyasa. Peningkatan Mutu Implementasi Dasa Dharma Pramuka Melalui Cerita Itihasa. *PINTU: Jurnal Penjaminan Mutu*, Vol.1 No.2. 2020, h, 23-25

a building, character is the completion of a structure that already has a firm foundation and framework. A person cannot develop noble character without sound faith and sharia. A Muslim who possesses true faith will naturally demonstrate good conduct in daily life.<sup>11</sup>

A person's faith is deemed complete when it is reflected in good character. Hence, good character is a sign of perfect faith. Moral education, when built on a solid worldview, appropriate methodology, and integrative practice, will shape the student's character effectively especially in the school environment.<sup>12</sup>

To provide moral guidance, the Prophet Muhammad SAW said:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

“Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character.”

This hadith reflects the Prophet's exemplary character, including his honesty, trustworthiness, justice, and truthfulness.<sup>13</sup>

Schools are ideal places for children to develop their full potential not only academically, but also morally, emotionally, and socially, particularly in their interactions with peers. When religious values are instilled in school settings, they gradually shape students' character and lead them to become more morally grounded individuals.<sup>14</sup>

In general, children are more prone to deviant behavior in school and public environments than at home. This is reasonable, as they spend more time in school and community settings. Therefore, when a teacher or community member reports that a student has misbehaved, parents are sometimes in disbelief. Common violations committed by students in schools include vandalism, stealing from peers, truancy, and damaging school property.<sup>15</sup>

Several factors contribute to deviant behavior in the school environment: **First**, Personality Factors: Adolescence is a period of identity crisis marked by emotional instability, making students vulnerable to deviant behavior if not properly guided. **Second**, Parental Education: The family is the first educational environment. Parenting mistakes, such as overindulgence or lack of religious instruction, can negatively impact a child's character development. **Third**, School Environment: Social interactions with peers greatly influence students' behavior. Negative peer influence can lead to imitation of deviant behavior.<sup>16</sup>

Considering these challenges, character education must be instilled from an early age because building character is a long-term process. If neglected during

<sup>11</sup> Sutrana, Nana. Pendidikan Karakter Siswa Sekolah Dasar dalam Perspektif Islam, Jakarta, In: *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Inovasi Pendidikan*. 2016.

<sup>12</sup> JANNAH, Miftahul. Metode Dan Strategi Pembentukan Karakter Religius yang di Terapkan Di SDTQ-T AN Najah Pondok Pesantren Cindai Alus Martapura. *Al-Madrasah: Jurnal Pendidikan Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, Vol.4, No.1, 2019

<sup>13</sup> Abdul Majid Khon, *Hadis Tarbawi (Hadis-hadis Pendidikan)*, Jakarta, 2014, Kencana,

<sup>14</sup> Fitriana, Ajeng. Efektivitas Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Homeschooling sebagai Pendidikan Alternatif dalam Mengembangkan Potensi Anak di Homeschooling kak Seto Jakarta Selatan. *Jurnal Eksistensi Pendidikan Luar Sekolah (E-Plus)*, Vol.1 No.1, 2016, h, 50-55

<sup>15</sup> AZIZ, Mukhlis. Perilaku sosial anak remaja korban broken home dalam berbagai perspektif (Suatu penelitian di SMPN 18 kota Banda Aceh). *Jurnal Al-Ijtima'iyyah*, Vol.1 No.1, 2015, h, 45-50

<sup>16</sup> PRASASTI, Suci. Kenakalan remaja dan faktor penyebabnya. In: *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bimbingan dan Konseling*. Jakarta, 2017, h, 28-45.

childhood, it will negatively affect personality in adulthood.<sup>17</sup> Schools play a vital role in developing students' potential and instilling attitudes, behavior, and character to prepare them as quality citizens. Teachers also serve as models in implementing religious character education, as schools become the primary environment for moral education after the family.

From a sociological perspective, activities are defined as organized behaviors or actions performed by individuals. Faith-based activities are patterns of behavior grounded in religious values distinguishing between right and wrong based on one's beliefs. In this sense, a person's lifestyle is shaped by their religious perspective.<sup>18</sup> As religion deals with value systems, all human actions are inherently tied to these values.

Thus, faith-based activities can be understood as conscious efforts to express or practice one's faith through daily behavior. In educational institutions, teachers must not only focus on classroom instruction but also guide students in practicing religion. This includes celebrating religious holidays and participating in faith-based school programs.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the implementation of activities such as these, particularly in schools, can support students in developing their character education, which can, to some extent, reduce the prevalence of juvenile delinquency that is currently rampant, especially in the city of Banjarmasin.

Such programs, when implemented in schools, support the cultivation of students' character and help reduce juvenile delinquency. In Banjarmasin, for example, the Head of South Banjarmasin Police (Kombes Pol Sabana Atmoji) has reported a rise in cases involving school-aged children engaging in brawls and underage alcohol abuse (locally known as *melemfox*).<sup>20</sup> These behaviors pose a serious threat to the future of young people and must be addressed urgently.

Based on initial observations at SDN Kelayan Dalam 5, it was found that there is a practice of fostering students' religious character through active and consistent religious activities. Unlike most elementary schools that treat religious education merely as a component of the formal curriculum, this school integrates religious values into the daily activities of students. This research aims to thoroughly examine the strategies employed by teachers in shaping the religious character of students and to analyze the implementation of these values within the school environment. The objectives of this study are expected to contribute new insights into addressing deviant behavior among students through the internalization of religious values.

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<sup>17</sup> Gultom, E., Munir, M., & Ariani, D. (2019). *Pendidikan karakter dalam perspektif pendidikan Islam*. Jakarta: Kencana.

<sup>18</sup> Muhayat, Imam; NAAMY, Nazar. Implementation of Tasamuh Concept in a Sociological Perspective in Multicultural Society. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 2023, Vol.7 NO.1, hal, 141-151. Lihat Turiza, Maysyurah, and Saifullah Maysa. "Peran Pemerintah Gampong dalam Meningkatkan Kegiatan Keagamaan di Gampong Doy, Banda Aceh." *Jurnal Riset dan Pengabdian Masyarakat*, Vol.1 No.2, 2021, h, 20-25

<sup>19</sup> DI PLACIDO, Matteo. "Scholar-Practitioners", Reflexivity and the Illusio of the Field: Ethnography, Yoga Studies and the Social Scientific Study of Religion. *Societies*, 2023, Vol.13 NO.8, h, 195.

<sup>20</sup> Sumber dari: [Kapolresta Banjarmasin Beri Attensi Kasus Kenakalan Remaja](#)

## B. Literature Review

The theoretical framework in this study comprises four fundamental bases. First, social construction is a sociology of knowledge, which implies that it must delve into the knowledge present within society as well as the processes that establish each body of knowledge as a reality. The sociology of knowledge must focus on what is regarded as knowledge within the community.<sup>21</sup>

According to Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, social reality is constructed through a continuous process of interaction and internalization of values.<sup>22</sup> In this context, the religious character of students is shaped through habituation, social interactions within the school environment, and the role of actors (teachers) as value agents.

Secondly, religious character education is a process aimed at shaping students' attitudes and behaviors based on religious teachings, encompassing values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and tolerance. Religious character aids students in developing a balanced personality both spiritually and socially.<sup>23</sup> According to Foetster, as cited by Elmubarok, character is what defines an individual's quality.<sup>24</sup> Character becomes an identity that transcends random experiences that are constantly changing. It is from the maturity of character that an individual's quality is assessed.

Thirdly, the role of schools and teachers in character formation is significant. As formal institutions, schools play a crucial role in shaping students' character. Teachers serve as role models, facilitators, and guides in the process of value internalization.<sup>25</sup> According to Tilaar, teachers are not merely instructors but also educators who must instill life values through a holistic approach. School activities such as communal prayers, morning recitations, and celebrations of Islamic holidays serve as concrete means for fostering students' religious character.<sup>26</sup>

Fourthly, religious activities in elementary schools serve as a practical and contextual implementation of value education. These activities may include prayer readings, spiritual guidance, study circles, training in prayer, and more. Munir and Gultom explain that regular religious activities, directly supervised by teachers, can foster a religious school culture that supports character development.<sup>27</sup> Research conducted by Siti Nurjanah (2020) at SDIT Al-Falah indicates that regular religious activities have a positive impact on shaping students' religious habits, such as discipline in worship and politeness in communication.<sup>28</sup> In the research conducted by Siti Nurjannah, it is demonstrated that religious activities can nurture and develop the religious character of students. This aligns with Ibn Khaldun's assertion that education is not solely based on theory; rather, it is through

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<sup>21</sup> Ngainun Naim, *Character Building: Optimalisasi Peran Pendidikan dalam pengembangan ilmu dan pembentukan Karakter Bangsa*, 2012, Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media.

<sup>22</sup> Berger, Peter L., & Luckmann, Thomas. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books, 1967

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility* h, 41

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad Busro & Suwandi, *Pendidikan Karakter*, Yogyakarta 2017, media Akademi, h, 13

<sup>25</sup> Fitriana, Ajeng. *Efektivitas Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Homeschooling sebagai Pendidikan Alternatif dalam Mengembangkan Potensi Anak di Homeschooling...*

<sup>26</sup> H.A.R. Tilaar. *Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, dan Masyarakat Madani Indonesia...* h, 57.

<sup>27</sup> Munir, M., & Gultom, E. *Pendidikan Karakter dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam...* h, 90.

<sup>28</sup> Siti Nurjanah, . "Implementasi Kegiatan Keagamaan dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa." *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, (2020), No. 6, Vol. (2), h, 112–120.

continuous practice and habituation that a strong character is firmly established.<sup>29</sup> Ibnu Khaldun emphasizes that moral character does not arise instantaneously; rather, it is cultivated through regular practices such as prayer, fasting, remembrance of God, and other religious activities. When these practices are consistently performed, they become ingrained in the soul and shape a religious individual. Consequently, in contemporary Islamic education, this concept is implemented through the habituation of daily worship in schools, including congregational prayers, recitation of the Qur'an, morning and evening dhikr, as well as other religious activities. The aim is to develop students who not only understand religious teachings theoretically but also embody them as an integral part of their character.

### C. METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach utilizing case study techniques. The primary data sources are obtained through observations, in-depth interviews with teachers, school principals, and students, as well as documentation of religious activities at the school. Data analysis is conducted thematically, aligning with indicators of religious character. In this study, data analysis is performed thematically, which involves identifying patterns, categories, and significant themes from the data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The analysis process adheres to the stages outlined by Miles and Huberman, which include: (1) Data Reduction: Simplifying, selecting, and focusing raw data to ensure its relevance to the research objectives. (2) Data Presentation: Organizing data in the form of narratives or thematic matrices to facilitate understanding. (3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification: Identifying the significance of emerging patterns and ensuring that conclusions are substantiated by the data. Triangulation techniques are employed to validate the data by comparing results from various sources and methods.<sup>30</sup>

### D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research centers on the development of students' religious character through various religious activities at SDN Kelayan Dalam 5 in Banjarmasin Selatan. The school promotes the habituation of worship, religious Friday activities, and Islamic extracurricular programs as a means of fostering students' religious character from an early age.

This research was conducted at SDN Kelayan Dalam 5, located in the Kelayan area of Banjarmasin Selatan, a region characterized by diverse social dynamics. Based on interviews with teachers and field observations, it was found that although religious activities at the school have been actively and routinely implemented, there are challenges in internalizing religious values into the daily behaviors of students. Some students, particularly in the upper grades, exhibit a lack of awareness in participating earnestly in these activities and require intensive character guidance. Furthermore, broader issues in the surrounding environment of the school also underscore the urgency of this research. Based on social observations and reports from residents, in the Kelayan B area (which is in close

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<sup>29</sup> Ibnu Khaldun, *Al-Muqaddimah*, terjemahan oleh Franz Rosenthal 1967, diterbitkan oleh Princeton University Press,

<sup>30</sup> Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994, hlm. 10–12

proximity to the research site), there has been an increasing prevalence of deviant behaviors involving elementary school-aged children, such as:

- Fights between groups of elementary and junior high school students,
- Misuse of social media and online games featuring violent content,
- Insufficient moral supervision outside of school, particularly during the late afternoon to evening hours.

This phenomenon illustrates that the external environment of schools significantly influences the character development of students, with schools serving as the only formal space still capable of implementing structured value interventions. Therefore, school initiatives such as the planned and consistent execution of religious activities, linked to the cultivation of students' religious character, become critically important. This research not only assesses the internal programs of the school but also presents a strategic approach to address the real social issues present in the Kelayan area.

### **1. The Development of Religious Character Through Routine Activities in Schools**

The school offers several structured religious programs, which include:

- Friday Taqwa (recitation of Yasin, asmaul husna, poetry, maulid)
- Congregational Dhuha and Zuhur prayers
- Religious extracurricular activities (Maulid Habsyi, call to prayer, speeches, calligraphy)

Program This program is implemented to cultivate worship habits and strengthen the spiritual values within students.

*"For the Taqwa Friday, we begin by reciting Yasin, a short surah, and sending blessings. Following this, each class presents a sermon, speech, or the names of Allah. This is intended to encourage students to be confident in presenting and to understand religious values."*(Interview with the Principal, Mr. Subli)

*"The children are invited to perform Dhuha prayers on Friday mornings. We guide them so that they become accustomed to doing it independently at home."* (Interview with the PAI Teacher, Ms. Dahliana)

Nevertheless, it has been observed that students in higher grades tend to be less active compared to those in lower grades. This has become a concern for teachers:

*"The significant challenges are primarily observed in the upper classes. Students in these grades are increasingly reluctant to participate in activities. However, we persist in providing motivation, one method being to offer examples from their junior classmates."* (Interview with PAI Teacher, Mrs. Dahliana)

Based on the aforementioned interview, it can be concluded that habituation in religious activities can shape students' souls towards a religious character. Although there are challenges, they can be effectively managed, indicating that these obstacles

are not overly severe and can be addressed through appropriate policies at the school.

## 2. Exemplary Role of Teachers and Parental Support

Guru menjadi agen penting Teachers play a crucial role in instilling religious character, both through direct activities and by serving as role models.

*"Every morning, the children are greeted by the supervising teacher at the gate. They exchange greetings, high-fives, or hugs. We have established this as a culture to foster a warm relationship between students and teachers, promoting a positive attitude"* (Interview with the principal, Mr. Subli)

In addition to teachers, parental involvement has also been observed positively.

*"Thank God, parents are very supportive. Even when we hold congregational Dhuha prayers, sometimes parents join us in the back row."* (Interview with the Student Affairs Teacher)

Based on the interviews above, it can be concluded that the practices at SDN Kelayan Dalam 5 effectively guide and habituate students to develop a religious character from an early age, which will have a significant impact on their future.

## 3. Implications of Habituation on Student Behavior

The results of interviews with students indicate that they are beginning to understand the significance of worship and moral values, as well as experiencing changes in their attitudes both at school and at home.

*"We have become accustomed to praying and memorizing prayers. When we face problems, our teachers advise us to be patient and pray."* (Interview with VI A student, Muhammad Alfi Qhusairi)

Furthermore, VI A student Muhammad Rama Al-Fareza added his comments as follows:

*"Speech and lecture activities make us more confident. We also come to understand the morals of the Prophet and how to behave at school"* (Interview with VI B student)

In addition, religious activities also foster a sense of sympathy and social empathy:

*"Stories of the Prophet and religious lectures make me aware of the need to care for friends who are in trouble."* (Interview with VI A student, Muhammad Ridhoni Mausli)

Regarding the above statements, it can be concluded that the influence of religious activities implemented in Kelayan Dalam 5 Elementary School has a very positive impact as it can cultivate moral values and behaviors in children, making them individuals with noble character, as well as sympathetic and empathetic.

The research findings indicate that the development of students' religious character at SDN Kelayan Dalam 5 in Banjarmasin Selatan is achieved through structured religious activities, such as congregational prayers, Friday Taqwa, and various Islamic extracurricular programs. This practice aligns with the concept that effective character education is not solely conveyed through instructional materials, but rather through the cultivation of values and exemplary behavior in daily life.<sup>31</sup>

This habituation demonstrates that schools, as formal educational institutions, play a central role in the process of internalizing religious values. The approach employed by these schools aligns with Lickona's assertion that character education encompasses three components: moral knowing (knowledge), moral feeling (emotion), and moral action (behavior), all of which must be executed simultaneously.<sup>32</sup> In this context, the involvement of teachers as role models and facilitators is crucial for the successful implementation of character values within the school environment. Nevertheless, there are tangible challenges in practice, such as reliance on specific teachers, a lack of consistent engagement from all students, and varying levels of enthusiasm between lower and upper classes. These findings serve as an important reflection that religious character cannot be instilled merely through routine; rather, it requires a profound and consistent process of value internalization.

The paradigm of progressive character education aims at the development of a society that is not only intellectually intelligent but also morally and spiritually mature. As emphasized by Tilaar, education should serve as a tool for social transformation that cultivates cultured and moral individuals as part of the nation's civilization.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the reinforcement of religious character at the elementary level, as exemplified by SDN Kelayan Dalam 5, represents a long-term investment in shaping a generation that is religious, tolerant, and possesses a high level of social awareness. The implications of this finding indicate that religious practices in schools can serve as a model for value-based character education that is both applicable and contextual. If adopted widely and consistently, this approach could significantly contribute to the development of a religious and progressive Indonesian society.

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<sup>31</sup> Zubaedi, *Desain Pendidikan Karakter: Konsepsi dan Aplikasinya dalam Lembaga Pendidikan*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2011), hlm. 45

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Lickona, *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1991), hlm. 51

<sup>33</sup> H.A.R. Tilaar, *Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, dan Masyarakat Madani Indonesia*, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2002), hlm. 56.

## **Conclusion**

This research concludes that the development of students' religious character at SDN Kelayan Dalam 5 Banjarmasin Selatan is achieved through structured and continuous religious activities, such as congregational prayers, Friday Taqwa, and Islamic extracurricular programs. These activities not only instill religious values but also cultivate students' discipline, empathy, and responsibility. Although some challenges were identified, such as varying levels of participation among classes and reliance on specific teachers, the school has managed to address these issues through habituation, teacher role modeling, and parental support. The findings suggest that a character education program based on real activities in elementary schools can serve as an effective strategy to mitigate deviant behavior and foster a morally upright religious generation.

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