

Implementation of Character Education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwarna Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Elementary School Adiwarna. Character education is a crucial aspect in shaping students' personality and moral values from an early age. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The research subjects include school principals, teachers, students, and parents. The findings reveal that the implementation of character education in both institutions is carried out through three main pathways: intraclass activities, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs. The character values developed include religiosity, discipline, responsibility, honesty, care, and cooperation. At MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi, an integrative approach is applied by internalizing character values within Integrated Islamic-based learning. Meanwhile, at Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Elementary School Adiwarna, the approach focuses on strengthening school culture and flagship programs rooted in Muhammadiyah values. Supporting factors in implementation include the schools' vision and mission, educators' commitment, and parental involvement. Challenges encountered involve students' diverse backgrounds and limited time for implementing character programs. This study recommends the importance of continuous collaboration among schools, parents, and communities to strengthen holistic character education.

Keywords: *Character Education, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Elementary School, Implementation, Character Values*

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of character education at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwarna, analyze the implications of the implementation of character education from the perspective of curriculum, the role of teachers, and parental involvement in MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwarna and identify the obstacles faced and explore the strategies applied in overcoming these obstacles in the implementation character education at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwarna.

Character education is a fundamental aspect of the education system that aims to shape the personality of students through the cultivation of moral values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and empathy. These values are not only important for the development of individuals, but also play a major role in forming a harmonious and civilized society. Without strong character education, students are at risk of experiencing moral crises that can negatively impact their personal and social lives. Therefore, character education must be an integral part of the learning process at every level of education. This is in line with the Indonesian government's policy that has integrated character education into the National Curriculum as a response to various moral problems that arise in society.

In this context, the learning process is the main means in the implementation of character education. Based on Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, learning is a process of interaction between students and educators and learning resources in a learning environment. This process includes various components, such as curriculum, teaching materials, media, methods, objectives, and evaluation, which must be well organized to achieve optimal educational goals. Character education cannot be instilled instantly, but requires the involvement of all parties in creating a supportive learning atmosphere. In addition, factors outside the school environment also affect the formation of students' character. The environment is one of the important references in determining the direction of their moral development (Wahyuni & Husna, 2020, p. 12). Thus, character education needs to be carried out holistically, both through formal activities at school and through the influence of the social and cultural environment outside the school.

In Indonesia, the implementation of basic education is carried out through two main channels, namely Elementary Schools (SD) and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI). Elementary schools are under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture, while Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is under the coordination of the Ministry of Religion (Kemenag). Although they have different management institutions, both have an equal position in the national education system, as stipulated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System.

In 2024, the Ministry of Religion will issue Decree of the Minister of Religion (KMA) Number 450 of 2024 which serves as a guideline for the implementation of the Curriculum at Raudhatul Athfal (RA), Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), Madrasah Aliyah (MA), and Madrasah Aliyah Vocational (MAK). This KMA is a strategic step in aligning the madrasah curriculum with the development of science and technology (IPTEK), religious values, and local wisdom that lives in Indonesian society. KMA Number 450 of 2024 emphasizes the importance of a curriculum that is integrative, holistic, and responsive to changing times, without leaving the roots of Islamic character values that are characteristic of madrasah education.

The madrasah curriculum in the KMA not only focuses on mastering academic competencies, but also strengthens character education through the integration of Islamic values into all subjects, as well as intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. This is in line with efforts to form students who have noble character, knowledge, independence, and social responsibility.

On the other hand, Permendikbudristek Number 12 of 2024 also strengthens the direction of basic education policy by providing a framework for strengthening the operational curriculum of educational units (KOSP) that is oriented towards developing the character and profile of Pancasila students. This Permendikbudristek provides guidance to schools in developing a curriculum that is contextual, participatory, and relevant to the needs of students and local and global environmental challenges.

The two regulations, both KMA Number 450 of 2024 and Permendikbudristek Number 12 of 2024, emphasize the importance of curriculum decentralization, where educational units are given space to develop a curriculum that is flexible, adaptive, and based on the potential and needs of students. This approach is also an opportunity for basic education institutions, both elementary and MI, to strengthen the implementation of character education through a learning process that is meaningful, contextual, and integrated with life values.

The curriculum at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Muhammadiyah Elementary School (SD) is designed to integrate character education into the entire learning process. The implementation of character education through the curriculum requires careful planning, infrastructure support, and the commitment of all stakeholders so that character values are truly internalized in students (Budiyanto et.al, 2024).

KMA 450 of 2024 is a refinement of KMA 347 of 2022, with more comprehensive adjustments to the development of science, technology, and local wisdom. KMA 450 of 2024 is an official reference for madrasah education units in implementing the Independent Curriculum starting from the 2024/2025 Academic Year.

In general, the purpose of the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in madrasas is to improve the quality of education, prepare competent graduates with Pancasila character, and provide flexibility to madrasas in curriculum management. This curriculum is designed to cultivate students who are not only academically intelligent, but also have faith, fear God Almighty, and have noble character.

The implementation of the Independent Madrasah Curriculum is based on four main principles. First, flexibility, which provides flexibility for madrasas to develop the curriculum according to their needs and contexts. Second, focus on character development, which emphasizes values such as noble morals, leadership, and life skills. Third, student-centered, by placing students as active subjects in a creative and participatory learning process. Fourth, a holistic approach, which is integrating various subjects and comprehensive competency development to support the growth of students as a whole.

Teachers in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary Schools (SD) have an important role in shaping the character of students. These roles include role models in attitudes and behaviors, inspirers and motivations, mentors in internalizing character values, and creating a conducive classroom atmosphere. In addition, teachers also play the role of supervisors who enforce discipline in an educational manner and evaluate the development of students' character.

The relevance of the role of teachers is very high because they not only deliver academic material, but also directly shape the personality and character of students through daily interactions, habituation, and example. Teachers are the spearhead in implementing character education in schools.

Parents have a central role as the first and main educator in shaping children's character before entering the school environment. At the MI and elementary levels, these roles include setting an example through daily behavior, motivating and guiding children to behave positively, providing an environment that supports character development, and establishing communication and supervision of children's behavior at home and the surrounding environment.

The role of parents is also very large because effective character education requires continuity between the home and school environment. Collaboration between parents and teachers and schools strengthens the internalization of character values in children, so that the character formed becomes stronger and more consistent. The role of teachers and parents is very relevant and complementary in character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and Elementary Schools. Teachers are the main implementers in schools, while parents are the main educators at home. The synergy between the two greatly determines the success of the formation of students' characters.

Islamic education has a very strong relationship with the formation of human character, where the two cannot be separated. KH. Hasyim Ash'ari in the book *Adabul 'Alim wal Muta'allim* explains the interrelated spiritual hierarchy: monotheism requires faith, faith requires sharia, and sharia requires adab. Without manners, a person is considered to have no perfect sharia, faith, or monotheism.

Prof. Naquib al-Attas expanded the understanding of adab in Islamic education, stating that the concept of adab does not only apply to humans but covers the entire universe, both physical, spiritual, and intellectual. Adab is a behavior based on knowledge that must be applied not only in human relationships but also in all of God's creation.

Ki Hajar Dewantoro through his educational philosophy emphasizes the role of educators in three positions: as a role model in the front, a motivator in the middle, and a supporter in the back. Meanwhile, KH Ahmad Dahlan emphasized the importance of holistic Islamic education, including strengthening morals, mastery of religious and general knowledge, and readiness to contribute to the progress of society. To achieve this goal, Islamic education needs to integrate various disciplines, both religious and general.

Fundamentally, Islamic education aims at two main aspects: first, to bring man closer to the Creator; Second, developing individual potential according to their respective talents.

Islamic education aims to create individuals who understand their rights and obligations as part of a civilized global society.

Character education in Indonesia is the main concern in an effort to build a young generation with integrity, noble character, and able to face increasingly complex moral and social challenges. The phenomenon of moral decadence, deviant behavior among students, and weak internalization of the nation's noble values are the urgent reasons for the need to strengthen character education in elementary schools, including Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary Schools (SD). Implementation of Character Education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Rahmat Rifai Lubis & Miftahul Husni Nasution, 2017).

MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi as part of the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT) applies an integrative education model typical of Integrated Islamic Schools, where the learning approach unites general and religious education in a unified curriculum. This concept makes all subjects and school activities always related to Islamic values. This madrasah has six main objectives in the formation of students' character: (1) strengthening faith, piety and noble morals; (2) the development of inclusive, cultured and nationalist attitudes; (3) habituation of the values of *ukhuwah* and social concern; (4) the formation of mature personality; (5) development of intelligence, critical reasoning and digital literacy; and (6) increased creativity and practical skills.

As a madrasah under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi implements a curriculum that is partially allocated to Islamic religious education. Various excellent programs such as *tahfidz Al-Qur'an*, Islamic Personal Development (BPI), *sunnah* fasting, *mabit*, memorization of *Arba'in* hadith, habituation of congregational prayers, and daily *tadarus* are the hallmarks of learning at this madrasah. The *tarbiyah* approach applied aims to create an Islamic educational environment to form righteous, disciplined, and responsible students.

On the other hand, SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna which is under the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Muhammadiyah organization developed a character education model through the "6 Characters of Your Earth" program (Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah). The six pillars of character include: (1) obedience to Allah; (2) appreciative attitude; (3) responsibility; (4) honesty; (5) hygiene; and (6) discipline. The school allocates part of the learning time for religious education with an integrative approach, where Islamic values are internalized through all subjects.

These two educational institutions, although different in institutional structure and organizational affiliation, both emphasize the importance of character education based on Islamic values. MI Luqman Al Hakim emphasizes the *tarbiyah* approach with a large portion of religion, while SD Budi Mulia develops a rational and structured modern Muhammadiyah-style character education model in the 6 Characters of Your Earth program.

This difference in approach shows variations in the implementation of Islamic character education in Indonesia. A comparative study between these two educational models is important to identify best practices that can be a reference for the development of national character education policies, especially in the context of the dualism of the education system in Indonesia. Such research can make a valuable contribution to the development of effective and contextual character education models.

Both schools prioritize religious values in the education and learning process. Religious values are the main foundation in shaping students' character, both through religious lessons and in daily activities at school. A religious school environment with Islamic nuances is expected to be able to become a moral fortress for students to grow into a generation that is not only intelligent, but also noble. This effort reflects the importance of a balanced education between spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual aspects.

Although both are Islam-based, the approach to the implementation of character education at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna may be different. This is influenced by differences in institutional vision, religious ideological background, and methods and strategies used by each school.

Seeing the complexity of the approach used, it is necessary to conduct a comparative study between the two schools. This research aims to identify best practices that can be a reference for other educational institutions in implementing religious-based character education. By comparing the strategies, programs, and results achieved by MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna, it is hoped that an effective pattern can be found in instilling character values. This kind of study is very important as a scientific contribution in efforts to strengthen character education in Islamic-based schools.

Character education is very important in shaping the character and personality of students so that they become moral, responsible, and able to live in harmony with society. Thomas Lickona, an important figure in the field of character education, stated that a whole character includes three main dimensions, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior. The three are interrelated and cannot be separated in the process of character formation. Thus, character education is not enough to teach knowledge about good values, but also to foster feelings that support and encourage actions that are in accordance with those values.

In order for character education to be successful, moral values must be taught explicitly, habituated in daily life, and exemplified by all school residents. This process requires consistency and example, especially from teachers and educators. Learning in the classroom, extracurricular activities, and interactions in the school environment must reflect values such as honesty, hard work, discipline, and tolerance. When students see and experience these values in various aspects of school life, they will more easily internalize and apply them in their daily lives.

As a concrete effort in implementing character education, the Indonesian Ministry of National Education (Kemendiknas) has established 18 main values in character education. These values include religious, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, love for the homeland, respect for achievements, friendship/communicative, love of peace, love of reading, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility. These values are indicators that schools can use in designing programs, evaluating results, and strengthening the desired character culture.

Character education theory is very relevant to be applied in elementary schools, especially religious-based ones such as at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna. A religious school environment full of spiritual values provides a solid foundation for shaping children's character from an early age. It is at this elementary age that children are in the most sensitive stage of moral development, so character education needs to be provided in an intensive and integrated manner. The integration between religious values and modern character education can produce a generation that has not only intellectual intelligence, but also emotional and spiritual maturity.

Character education is not only developed through learning in the classroom, but also strengthened through various activities outside the classroom. These activities are designed to instill religious values, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and social concern. Examples of activities that are commonly applied in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and Islamic Elementary Schools include the following:

Religious Activities

It includes the implementation of Dhuha prayers and congregational Dzuhur prayers at school, the habit of reading the Qur'an and memorizing juz 'Amma (daily tahfidz), the commemoration of Islamic holidays (such as the Prophet's Birthday, Isra' Mi'raj, and 1 Muharram), the implementation of Ramadan Islamic boarding schools and joint worship activities during the month of Ramadan, as well as tasmi' memorizing the Qur'an openly as a form of motivation and evaluation.

Extracurricular Activities

Consisting of Islamic art activities such as hadrah, nasyid, recitation, and calligraphy; sports activities such as futsal, swimming, archery, and pencak silat; literacy and cultural

activities such as reading clubs, writing Islamic short stories, and public speaking; as well as technology and skill activities such as robotics, basic coding introduction, and crafts.

Daily Habituation and Character Activities

It includes a morning literacy program (reading for 15 minutes before learning starts), morning apples accompanied by the reading of the school's visions and missions and strengthening character values, the implementation of the "Daily Character" program (for example: Honest Day, Discipline Day, Clean Day), classroom and school environment cleaning activities in turn, and character strengthening through thematic programs such as "Seven Superior Characters" or "Six Basic Islamic Values".

Outdoor Activities

Includes outing classes and educational visits to museums, historic sites, or small industrial centers; scout camp activities or Hizbul Wathan; outbound activities that instill the values of cooperation, courage, and leadership; as well as homestay activities or visits to assisted villages to foster empathy and independence of students.

Social Activities

Among them are daily infak and alms through classroom boxes, social service activities for the community around the school, sharing programs (such as the distribution of basic necessities, suitable clothes, and breaking the fast together), as well as the organization of bazaars or charity markets that aim to train the entrepreneurial spirit while fostering students' social awareness.

Based on the literature review and research results related to the implementation of character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary Schools (SD), there are several research gaps that can be the focus of special studies for the context of MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna:

The main gap research related to the implementation of character education at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna includes (1) adjustment of the character education model to the local context and school culture, (2) evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation model applied, (3) readiness and competency development of teachers in character education, (4) involvement and participation of parents and the surrounding community, (5) development of appropriate character education success evaluation methods, and (6) identification of specific obstacles and solutions for the implementation of character education in both schools. The research focus on these gaps can make a significant contribution to the development of more effective and contextual character education at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to understand in depth the process of implementing character education, including the strategies used, the obstacles faced, and the results achieved in a real and natural context. The case study allows the researcher to comprehensively explore and analyze the phenomenon of character education in two basic education units, namely Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna.

According to Aulia Ulfa (2021), the case study approach in qualitative research is very relevant for intensively examining a phenomenon in a real-life context, especially when the boundary between the phenomenon being studied and its context is not clearly visible. Therefore, this research is focused on an in-depth description of the implementation of character education in the two schools, so that it is expected to be able to produce accurate, contextual, and meaningful findings.

The subject of this research includes elements that are directly involved in the learning process and the cultivation of character values, namely teachers, who play the role of implementers of character education in the classroom, principals, who play the role of policy

makers and drivers of school culture, students, who are the main targets in character formation through learning and non-learning activities. The research object covers all activities related to the implementation of character education, including Character value-based learning planning, Strategies for implementing character education in the teaching-learning process, Daily habituation activities and strengthening school culture, Examples of teachers and other school residents, as well as Evaluation and assessment of the character development of students.

With this approach, it is hoped that the research will be able to produce a complete and in-depth picture of the real practice of character education carried out at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna, as well as contribute to the development of contextual and applicative character education models.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the implementation of character education at MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi and SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna is carried out through a curriculum that integrates Islamic values and character consistently in all subjects, extracurricular activities, and daily activities. Character education succeeds in forming students who are obedient in worship, courtesy, caring, responsible, creative, and innovative. Character education is integrated into the school curriculum and culture with a habituation and exemplary approach of teachers, as well as active parental involvement. Character education fosters students with noble character, discipline, and responsibility. The main supporting factors for success are the commitment of the leader, a curriculum that integrates character values, the role of teachers as role models and facilitators, and the active involvement of parents.

At MI Luqman Al Hakim Slawi, character education is thoroughly integrated into the curriculum of the Integrated Islamic School Network (JSIT), which incorporates Islamic values and noble characters such as religious, honesty, trust, responsibility, and tolerance into all subjects, extracurriculars, and daily activities. At SD Budi Mulia Muhammadiyah Adiwerna, the curriculum also integrates character values through excellent programs such as "6 Characters of SD Bumimu" which instills religious values, discipline, and responsibility holistically. Teachers in both schools act as role models and facilitators of character education, using active, project-based and collaborative learning methods that support student character development. Teachers also guide students in extracurricular activities and habituation of character values consistently. Parental involvement is very important and is carried out through intensive communication, regular meetings, parenting programs, and joint activities that strengthen the synergy between schools and families in instilling character values in students.

The main obstacles faced in the implementation of character education in both schools include: (a) Lack of teachers' understanding of character education, (b) Limited supporting facilities and infrastructure such as extracurricular spaces, libraries, and learning media (c) Strategies implemented to overcome these obstacles include (1) Strengthening cooperation with parents and the community through regular meetings, parenting programs, and active involvement in school activities. (c) Development of extracurricular activities that support character values, such as Scouting, PMR, and tahfidz Al-Qur'an.

CONCLUSIONS

Character education that is integrated into the curriculum and learning has a positive impact on the formation of students' attitudes and behaviors as a whole, so that students are not only academically intelligent but also have noble and socially responsible character. The role of teachers as models and facilitators greatly determines the success of character education, so that teacher capacity building is the main need. The involvement of parents and

the community as strategic partners strengthens the consistency of character education between schools and the family environment.

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