

Implementation of PAI Teachers' Strategies in Developing Students' Religious Character at State Junior High School 7 Kebumen

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to analyze the implementation of PAI teachers' learning methods in developing the religious character of SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen students. This research method uses a qualitative approach of phenomenological type. The data collection techniques used were interviews, observations, and documentation. The data analysis technique uses the Miles, Huberman, and Sardana model which consists of three stages of data condensation, data presentation, and data verification. The results of the study show that the development of religious character is carried out by strategy, collaboration with parents, teachers of other subjects, and habituation. These efforts are able to foster students' religious attitudes, such as discipline in worship, noble character, and familiarizing themselves with Islamic teachings in daily life. This research emphasizes that, not only through learning activities in the classroom to cultivate students' religious character but also by involving parents and the school environment collaboratively. Thus, PAI learning has proven to be effective in instilling sustainable religious values in students.

Keywords: Implementation, Learning Methods, Islamic Religious Education, and Religious Character.

Introduction

Every party involved in the implementation of education ranging from policy makers, managers, to teachers at various levels is guided by the goals of national education as stated in Article 3 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Based on the law, in the context of the formation of religious character, it aims to develop the potential of students to become individuals who believe and fear God Almighty, have good morals, knowledge, capability, creativity, independence, and become democratic and responsible citizens. The goal of national education is the basis for all educational activities in Indonesia. All educational directions and policies are basically oriented towards these goals. In other words, the future of the Indonesian nation can be seen from how the goals of national education are

formulated and applied in daily educational practices. (Tajuddin Noor, 2018).

Character education is the process of instilling moral values in students. This process includes elements of knowledge, self-awareness, willingness, and real actions in applying these values, both to God Almighty and to fellow humans. According to Thomas Lickona, character education is an attempt to shape a person's personality through the learning of ethics, the results of which are seen in daily behavior, such as honesty, responsibility, respect for others, and hard work. Meanwhile, religious character education can be understood as a conscious effort to instill religious values in students, both in the form of knowledge, attitudes, and actions. Through this education, it is hoped that individuals will be born who are honest, responsible, have good morals, and are able to carry out their obligations and respect the rights of others. In the context of formal education, character

education means accustoming students to behave well so that positive values are embedded in them, while helping to prevent them from bad traits and behaviors. (Mukhlis Fahrudin, 2023).

Religious character education is very important in facing the challenges of an era full of moral degradation. Some of the current moral crises include the increase in promiscuous behavior, violence against children and adolescents, crimes against friends, theft, fraud, drug abuse, pornography and the exploitation of other people's property. Until now, the moral crisis has not been completely overcome. It is increasingly realized how important character education is. Intellectual intelligence alone is not enough if it is not balanced with religious character or morals. Character or character is something very basic and complementary. (Mutia Sari et al., 2023).

The implementation of the formation of religious character in schools/madrasas can be carried out using methods of moral instilling, habituation, example and law enforcement. In providing reinforcement to the implementation of religious character formation, school principals/madrasas have a significant role to integrate the vision and mission of the school with the learning process. Teachers as the main model in providing examples and habituation of every policy that is enforced.

Furthermore, strengthening character formation also involves parents as a control when students are in the family environment. The cooperation between the elders and the madrasah provides awareness to parents that the education of students in the formation of religious character is a shared responsibility. Thus, the synergy between schools, teachers, and parents is a key factor in realizing students with religious character in a complete and sustainable manner. (Benny Prasetya et al, 2021).

Based on the results of interviews with PAI teachers at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen, it has grown the religious character of students using habituation strategies. The habits carried out such as princesses, memorization, deepening the book and 5S (Smile, Greeting, Greeting, Politeness, and Manners). These activities are carried out regularly so that religious values can be firmly embedded in students and become part of their daily behavior.

Many studies have examined the formation of religious character. Azharotunnafi emphasized that

the cultivation of religious character in the Social Sciences subject at SMA PGRI 1 Kasihan Bantul, can be done through various methods, such as praying before and after learning activities, as well as habituating religious values in daily life. In this way, students not only learn about academic material, but also about the importance of morality and ethics in their social interactions. (Ipan Hidayatulloh et al., 2024).

In the application of a phenomenological approach in understanding the experience of teachers and students in instilling religious values through learning PPKn. This research can be seen from real experience in building tolerance as a form of religious character in a tolerant Muhammadiyah Islamic school environment. It is different from previous research that tends to emphasize the value of morality and ethics. In addition, the phenomenological approach provides depth of meaning to the internalization of religious values and tolerance, while affirming the role of PPKn teachers as agents of shaping students' spiritual and social character through reflective and contextual learning. (Inggis Mialiawati, 2023). There has not been much research on the Implementation of PAI Teacher Strategies in Junior High School in Developing Students' Religious Character. So we researched the Implementation of PAI Teacher Strategy in SMP 7 Kebumen in Developing Students' Religious Character which is different from previous research

The purpose of this research is to describe and understand in depth the implementation of the strategy of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in fostering the religious character of students at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen. Through a phenomenological approach, this research aims to uncover the meaning of teachers' experiences in applying religious values through learning activities and habituation in schools, as well as understand how students internalize these values in their daily lives. In addition, this study also aims to analyze the factors that support and hinder the implementation of PAI teachers' strategies in shaping students' religious character, so that the essence or deep meaning of the process of forming religious character that takes place in the school environment can be found.

Problem Formulation

1. How is the PAI learning plan in developing the religious character of students at Kebumen State Junior High School?
2. What are the methods used by PAI teachers in developing students' religious character?
3. How is the implementation and evaluation of PAI learning in shaping the religious character of students?
4. What are the most dominant religious character values that appear in PAI learning?
5. What are the obstacles faced by PAI teachers in developing students' religious character?

Materials and Methods

Phenomenological is a type of qualitative research, where researchers collect data by observing participants to find out the essential phenomena of participants in their life experiences. Phenomenological research focuses on understanding the meaning and nature of a person's life experience of a certain event or phenomenon. The researcher does not judge or interpret from his own point of view, but listens and understands how the participant (participants) experience and interpret the experience. (Sugiyono. 2020). The location of this research was conducted at SMP N 7 KEBUMEN class 8B. The informants in this study included PAI teachers and 8th grade students. The data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation.

Triangulation is a way to eliminate doubts, although not a few still do not know the true meaning and what the purpose of triangulation is in a research. Miles and Huberman (1984), stated that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and take place continuously until complete, so that the data is saturated. Activities in data analysis, namely data condensation, data presentation, and data verification. (Wiyanda Vera Nurfajriani, 2024). Data condensation means summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the things that are important, looking for themes and patterns. Thus condense the data that will give a more detailed picture, and look for it when

necessary. After data condensation, the next step is to present the data. In qualitative research, data presentation can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts and the like. The third step in qualitative data analysis according to Miles and Huberman is the drawing of conclusions and verification. The initial conclusions presented are still temporary, and will change if strong supporting evidence is not found at the next stage of data collection. However, if the conclusions presented at the initial stage are supported by valid and consistent evidence when the researcher returns to the field to collect data, then the conclusions presented are credible. (Sugiyono, 2020).

Results and Discussion

Result

This study aims to find out the strategies of PAI teachers in learning Islamic Religious Education to develop students' religious character. The purpose of this study is to find out how the strategies of PAI teachers in developing the religious character of students at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen. This research also aims to describe various forms of strategies used by teachers in the learning process. In addition, this study aims to find out the factors that support the implementation of the strategy. Through this research, it is hoped that it can provide an understanding of the extent of the role of PAI teachers in shaping students' religious character.

Based on the results of an interview with one of the PAI teachers at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen, it was stated that:

"Islamic Religious Education Learning has developed religious character by collaborating with parents, other maple teachers, the school environment, strengthened by the school's vision and mission".

1. Islamic Religious Education Learning in collaboration with parents

According to Mrs. Azida, a PAI teacher at SMPN 7 Kebumen, "The implementation of the PAI teacher's strategy in developing the religious character of students in collaboration with parents is carried out through continuous cooperation between the school

and the family. PAI teachers not only teach religious values in the classroom, but also involve parents to reinforce these habits at home. For example, teachers ask parents to help supervise memorization, get children used to praying on time, and instill a polite and honest attitude in daily life."

2. Islamic Religious Education Learning in collaboration with Other Mapel Teachers

The results of an interview with Mrs. Azida, a PAI teacher at SMP N 7 Kebumen (September 29, 2025) stated that "PAI teachers collaborate with other mapel teachers, one of which is the Counseling Guidance teacher to instill religious values, such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility in every learning activity. For example, PAI teachers emphasize the value of honesty during exams. In addition, other mapel teachers can also relate religious values in their learning, such as fostering gratitude and cooperation in group tasks."

3. Islamic Religious Education Learning in collaboration with the School Environment

According to Mrs. Azida (group interview, September 29, 2025) "Developing students' religious character with collaboration in the school environment is carried out through cooperation between teachers, principals, staff, and all school residents. PAI teachers instill religious values not only in the classroom, but also through school activities such as congregational prayers, morning tadarus, and commemoration of Islamic holidays. The school environment is also supportive by creating a religious atmosphere, for example with posters of Islamic advice and joint worship schedules. In addition, teachers and schools work together in accustoming students to be polite, disciplined, and respectful of each other."

The strategy in developing the religious character of students at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is to make habits such as daughtership, book deepening, and literacy. *First* Daughtership, is a routine activity that is carried out every Friday in conjunction with Friday prayer times for male students. This activity must be attended by all students and is carried out in turns between batches, namely grades 7, 8, and 9. In women's activities, the students received guidance on women's jurisprudence, such as discussions about menstruation, how to purify, how to calculate the holy period, the obligation of qadha worship, and

the manners of interacting with the opposite sex, including how to shake hands with male teachers. In addition, it was also discussed about how to dress modestly and in accordance with sharia, for example during sports lessons to maintain the aurah correctly.

Second Book Deepening, Book deepening activities at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen are carried out to broaden students' understanding of Islamic teachings through the study of books such as fiqh, morals, and hadith. This activity is usually carried out regularly on a certain day with the guidance of PAI teachers. In this activity, the teacher explained the contents of the book in easy-to-understand language so that students can understand the basic laws of Islam, manners of behavior, and examples of good morals in daily life.

Third literacy, literacy in PAI learning at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is not only reading and writing activities, but also developed through the memorization deposit program. This activity is carried out every Tuesday to Thursday in turn, where students memorize short letters, hadiths, and daily prayers according to their grade level. Each student has a memorized deposit card to record their achievements, so teachers can monitor students' progress. Through this activity, students are not only able to read and understand the content of the Qur'an, but also get used to memorizing and practicing its teachings in daily life. This program helps foster students' love for the Qur'an while strengthening their religious character.

Based on the results of the implementation interview "The strategy of forming religious character at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is carried out guided by the school's vision and mission, which is to produce a generation with good morals. In its implementation, character formation is not only the responsibility of PAI teachers, but is the result of cooperation with other teachers, especially Pancasila Education teachers who also play an important role in instilling moral and religious values. PAI teachers understand that their job is not only to teach, but also to educate and set an example through daily attitudes and behaviors. Character formation is carried out not only in the classroom through PAI materials such as the Qur'an Hadith, Akidah Akhlak, Fiqh, and Date, but also outside the classroom through real examples such as greeting

and salim to the teacher". This shows that the formation of religious character in schools is carried out in an integrated manner between teaching, habituation, and example so that moral values can be embedded in students.

Based on the results of the interview "Islamic Religious Education Learning at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is arranged in accordance with the school's vision, namely the realization of students who are pious, disciplined, polite, accomplished, and environmentally insightful. Through PAI learning, the values of faith and piety are instilled with activities such as congregational prayers, recitals of the Qur'an, and habituation, as well as greetings in daily life. In addition, PAI teachers guide students to have good manners, discipline, and responsibility according to the school's mission, by instilling honest behavior, obedience to teachers, and caring for the environment as part of faith. Learning is also directed to foster the spirit of achievement through religious activities. Thus, PAI learning becomes a means of forming religious character, which not only emphasizes religious knowledge but also the practice of Islamic values in attitudes, behaviors, and concern for others and the environment".

Based on the results of the interview, "The PAI learning method is adjusted to the character of students in each different class. Teachers use a learning method that matches the abilities and interests of each student. For students who prefer to learn theory or academic lessons, teachers invite them to discuss and solve problems to better understand religious lessons. As for students who like sports or practical activities, teachers provide more active activities, such as worship exercises, group work, and social activities.

Based on the results of the PAI teacher's interview, "Managing the classroom by adjusting the teaching method to the characteristics of students in each class, because each class has different learning characteristics and needs. Teachers try to understand first the character of the students, whether the students are more active or calm, and then adjust the learning method to be more effective. For example, in grade 7 the teacher uses a gentler and more patient way, while in grade 8 or 9 the approach is more assertive so that students

remain disciplined. Teachers also do not only rely on lecture methods or oral explanations, but use activities that involve movement and hands-on practice for more active students. In this way, teachers can create a conducive learning atmosphere and make it easier for students to understand lessons according to their respective learning styles".

Based on the results of the interview, "The implementation of PAI learning in this school is carried out through various activities that support the development of students' religious character. Every morning students are accustomed to praying before studying, then from Tuesday to Thursday there are scripture deepening activities according to the new decree from the Regent which emphasizes literacy and memorization. Each student has a memorized deposit card with a different target in each class. On Friday, the female students participated in women's activities that discussed women's jurisprudence, such as menstruation, purification procedures, modest dressing, and the ethics of interacting with the opposite sex. This activity is carried out alternately per batch and at the same time as Friday prayers for male students. Through these activities, PAI learning is not only carried out in the classroom, but also through habituation and real activities that foster students' religious character in daily life

Based on the results of the interview, "The evaluation of PAI teachers in developing students' religious character is carried out with the understanding that the formation of the main character actually starts from the family. Teachers consider that education in schools focuses more on the teaching process, while the basis of character is formed through parenting and habituation at home. If students already have good character from home, then the school only needs to strengthen and guide them. However, for students who do not get enough attention in character formation at home, teachers try to help as much as they can through habituation and guidance at school. The role of PAI teachers is more as a supporter and reinforcement of the values

of religious character that have been instilled by parents in the family environment".

Based on the results of the interview, the PAI teacher emphasized "The development of students' religious character through habituation, manners, and honesty. In the learning contract, teachers always emphasize that academic grades are meaningless without good morals. Students are taught to respect teachers and friends, and are strictly forbidden to cheat, such as cheating during exams. Teachers even dare to give a zero score to students who violate these rules as a form of learning about responsibility and honesty. Even though they are firm in enforcing discipline, teachers still show a wise attitude and do not get angry because the goal is to shape the character of students to have good morals and be responsible for their actions".

Based on the results of the interview, "The most dominant religious character value in PAI learning is mutual respect. This attitude is seen when students respect the teacher while explaining and listening well without interrupting. In addition, students also learn to respect the opinions of their friends even if they are different or less precise, without mocking or laughing. The teacher emphasized that appreciation is an important basis in creating a harmonious learning atmosphere in the midst of differences. By fostering an attitude of mutual respect, students can live in harmony and avoid conflicts in the school environment".



Picture 2 : Interview with PAI teachers at SMP N 7 Kebumen



Picture 1 : PAI teachers' learning with discussion strategies



Picture 3: Students shaking hands with teachers when leaving for school as a form of respect and courtesy.



Picture 4: Students carry out congregational prayers as part of religious habituation activities.

Discussion

The results of the study show that the development of religious character is carried out by strategy, collaboration with parents, teachers of other subjects, and habituation. These efforts are able to foster students' religious attitudes, such as discipline in worship, noble character, and familiarizing themselves with Islamic teachings in daily life. This research emphasizes that, not only through learning activities in the classroom to cultivate students' religious character but also by involving parents and the school environment collaboratively. Thus, PAI learning has proven to be effective in instilling sustainable religion.

Based on the results of an interview with one of the PAI teachers at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen, it was stated that the implementation of the PAI teacher's strategy in developing students' religious character with parental collaboration was carried out through continuous cooperation between the school and the family. This is corroborated by his research by Abdul Kholil (2023) who states that effective cooperation and communication with parents are indispensable in matters related to children's interests and development. Parents need to know the state of their child from the school element, and the benefits for teachers. There is communication with students' parents, including to understand children's behavior at home from the input of students' parents.

PAI teachers collaborate with other mapel teachers, one of which is the Counseling Guidance teacher to instill religious values, such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility in every learning activity. For example, PAI teachers emphasize the value of honesty during exams. In addition, other mapel teachers can also relate religious values in their learning, such as fostering gratitude and cooperation in group tasks. This is corroborated by his research by Khusni Nur Rohman (2024) who states that collaboration between PAI teachers and madrasah teachers can design holistic and sustainable coaching strategies, such as Islamic-based spiritual training, learning motivation guidance, character development based on moral values, to individual and group counseling services.

Developing students' religious character with collaboration in the school environment is carried

out through cooperation between teachers, principals, staff, and all school residents. PAI teachers instill religious values not only in the classroom, but also through school activities such as congregational prayers, morning tadarus, and commemoration of Islamic holidays. The school environment is also supportive by creating a religious atmosphere, for example with posters of Islamic advice and joint worship schedules. This is corroborated by his research by Abdur Razak (2023) who states that an environment that is conducive and integrated with religious values can provide a holistic and immersive learning experience for students.

The strategy in developing the religious character of students at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is to make habituation such as princesses. Daughterhood is a routine activity carried out by all students every Friday in turns between generations, namely grades 7, 8, and 9. This is corroborated by her research by Lilis Ariska Pebiyanti (2023) who states that the women's program is a place to increase students' insights, as well as a means of increasing understanding.

Book deepening activities at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen are carried out to broaden students' understanding of Islamic teachings through the study of books such as fiqh, morals, and hadith. This is corroborated by her research by Siti Nuraeni (2025) who states that the deepening of the yellow book is carried out in a planned and sustainable manner, so that it becomes part of the school culture. Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation, this program makes a great contribution to the formation of students' religious character, which is reflected in increasing awareness of worship, gratitude, discipline, responsibility, and confidence.

Literacy in PAI learning at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is not only reading and writing activities, but is also developed through a memorization deposit program. This activity is carried out every Tuesday to Thursday in turn, where students memorize short letters, hadiths, and daily prayers according to their grade level. Through this activity, students are not only able to read and understand the content of the Qur'an, but also get used to memorizing and practicing its teachings in daily

life. This is corroborated by her research by Siti Purwati (2018) who stated that the application of the pattern of memorizing short surahs, hadiths, and daily prayers is expected to be able to improve the ability to read and memorize the Qur'an and hadith for every student. At first it seems to force students, but as time goes on, this activity is expected to become a habit and a routine obligation for every student.

The implementation of the strategy for the formation of religious character at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is carried out guided by the school's vision and mission, namely to produce a generation with good morals. The formation of religious character in schools is carried out in an integrated manner between teaching, habituation, and example so that moral values can be embedded in students. This is corroborated by his research by Dukhri Muhamad (2020) who states that what is indispensable to address this problem is a clear vision, mission, and goals. Therefore, human resources are required to enrich their knowledge and knowledge through education and training, besides that they are required to have good character. For this reason, schools must prepare themselves, be able to produce children who have broad knowledge and noble character.

Islamic Religious Education Learning at SMP Negeri 7 Kebumen is arranged in accordance with the school's vision, namely *the realization of students who are pious, disciplined, polite, accomplished, and environmentally friendly*. Through PAI learning, the values of faith and piety are instilled with activities such as congregational prayers, recitals of the Qur'an, and habituation, as well as greetings in daily life. This is corroborated by his research by Intan Mayang Sahni Badry and Rini Rahman (2021) who stated that character-based education in collaboration with education that optimizes the development of all dimensions of students (cognitive, physical, social-emotional, creativity, spiritual) will be oriented towards the formation of student qualities that not only excel in cognitive aspects, but also character.

The PAI learning method is adjusted to the character of the students in each different class. Teachers use a learning method that matches the abilities and interests of each student. This is corroborated by his research by Nevi Septianti and

Rara Afiani (2020) who stated that the role of teaching strategies is more important if teachers teach students who are different in terms of abilities, achievements, tendencies, and interests. Here, teachers must not only follow various teaching rules, but also integrate and compile rules to form the most effective teaching strategies in their teaching.

The method of managing the classroom is by adapting the teaching method to the characteristics of the students in each class, because each class has different learning characteristics and needs. Teachers try to understand first the character of the students, whether the students are more active or calm, and then adjust the learning method to be more effective. This is corroborated by his research by Minsih and Aninda Galih D (2018) which states that teachers must know that each student has his own nature and teachers who have creativity and enthusiasm will use the right method by observing the differences of each student, giving punishments and rewards at the right time can describe a fun learning process and a classroom atmosphere so joyful that the learning process becomes fun for student.

The implementation of PAI learning in this school is carried out through various activities that support the development of students' religious character. Every morning students are accustomed to praying before studying, then from Tuesday to Thursday there are scripture deepening activities according to the new decree from the Regent which emphasizes literacy and memorization. This is corroborated by his research by Alfira Nur Khairani and Muhib Rosyidi (2022) who stated that the cultivation of religious character can basically be developed through two models of character education, namely integrated in school subjects and culture.

The evaluation of PAI teachers in developing students' religious character is carried out with the understanding that the formation of the main character actually starts from the family. Teachers consider that education in schools focuses more on the teaching process, while the basis of character is formed through parenting and habituation at home. If students already have good character from home, then the school only needs to strengthen and guide them. This is corroborated by her research by Sri

Yulia Sari (2019) who states that everything that is habituated and built in the family will form a child in the future.

PAI teachers emphasize the development of students' religious character through habituation of manners and honesty. In the learning contract, teachers always emphasize that academic grades are meaningless without good morals. This is corroborated by his research by Muhammad Munif et al (2021) who stated that honesty is one of the characters or attitudes that must be instilled in 11 students, especially in the elementary school environment so that they can grow into trustworthy individuals in their words, deeds, actions towards themselves and others, both in the school environment and in the community.

Based on the results of the interviews, the most dominant religious character value in PAI learning is mutual respect. In addition, students also learn to respect the opinions of their friends even if they are different or less precise, without mocking or laughing. The teacher emphasized that appreciation is an important basis in creating a harmonious learning atmosphere in the midst of differences. This is corroborated by his research by Farina Trias Alwasi et al (2023) who stated that instilling the value of togetherness and mutual respect is an aspect of character education that must be held in schools.

Further research suggests that PAI teachers continue to adjust learning strategies to the characteristics of each class. Because each student has different learning styles and personalities, teachers need to apply a variety of approaches, such as lecture methods, discussions, field practices, and hands-on experiential activities. This adjustment is important so that the religious values taught can be accepted and understood well by all students. In addition, PAI learning should still be associated with the school's vision and mission so that the goal of religious character formation becomes more directed to the values upheld by educational institutions. PAI teachers are also expected to strengthen religious habituation activities in schools such as joint prayer, memorization of letters and short hadiths, as well as daughterhood activities for female students. These activities have proven to be effective in shaping students' religious character,

especially in terms of discipline, manners, and mutual respect.

Student character evaluation should not only focus on the student's thinking aspect, but also the attitude and daily behavior at school. Collaboration between teachers and parents is also very necessary so that the formation of religious character runs continuously between the school environment and the home. So that further research can deepen the analysis of the role of the family and community environment in supporting the formation of religious character in schools. Because character formation does not only depend on teachers, it is important to research cooperation strategies between schools, parents, and the surrounding environment in instilling religious values in students. Thus, the results of the next research are expected to be able to provide a more comprehensive picture of efforts to strengthen religious character through PAI education.

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