



## IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS LITERACY ACTIVITIES IN THE FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF STUDENTS OF MIFTAHUL ULUM ISLAMIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the implementation of religious literacy activities in the formation of students' religious character at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School. This religious literacy program aims to develop students' religious character through routine activities such as reading Surah Al-Waqi'ah, Asmaul Husna, dhuha prayer, and dzuhur prayer in congregation. These activities are designed to help students understand and apply religious principles in their daily lives, while improving religious understanding and better worship habits. This study uses a qualitative approach with a field research method, involving interviews with the principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, and students, as well as analysis of related documents. The results of the study indicate that religious literacy activities play an important role in improving student discipline, strengthening their relationship with God, and developing their religious character. Supporting factors for the implementation of this program include student motivation, as well as collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors include bad habits of students, less attentive parenting patterns, and the influence of the external environment. This study contributes to the development of more effective educational strategies in forming religious character through religious literacy in schools.*

**Keywords:** *Religious Literacy, Religious Character, Character Formation, Islamic Religious Education, Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The percentage of Indonesian people who are interested in reading is indeed low. Factors causing the low interest in reading literacy in Indonesian people include the absence of instilling reading habits from an early age, lack of access to reading facilities, lack of book production, economic factors, and the existence of cell phones that make students prefer playing to reading (Sabrina et al., 2024).

Even though reading is a basic human ability needed to communicate and gather information, it is important for education to continue to encourage reading interest among students. A person's religious character is highly correlated with reading interest and understanding of religious values. Character is also the values of human behavior related to God Almighty, oneself, fellow human beings, and the surrounding environment. For example, a student who is diligent in reading from an early age tends to have a strong religious character because they are used to consuming religious values through reading. Conversely, students who prefer to play rather than read may have a character that does not reflect religious values due to minimal exposure to religious teachings through literature. Therefore, it is important for education to encourage students to enjoy reading in order to form a strong religious character and understand religious values better. Thus, students can have a better relationship with God, themselves, fellow human beings, and the surrounding environment. (Choli, 2019)

The foundation of religious teachings in the lives of individuals, society, and the Indonesian nation is religious character, which is an important moral foundation in living everyday life. Efforts to re-grow this character education can be done by implementing character education through religious activities, such as habituation activities. This is one effort to foster students' religious character because habituation is a method that is considered effective in instilling religious character in students. Habituation Religious literacy activities carried out by Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School are a form of instilling Religious Character in Students gradually and slowly. Habituation can also be interpreted as a form of education whose process is carried out gradually, systematically and repeatedly to make someone do good habits that are embedded in a person. (Nabila et al., 2025)

Religious character is not only related to *ubudiyah* relationships, but also concerns relationships between fellow human beings. Habits that are carried out routinely, such as praying before and after lessons, reading the letter *al-Waqi'ah*, reading *Asmaul Husna*, praying *dhuha* and *duhur* in congregation, maintaining cleanliness and tidiness, and so on, are the first methods that can be carried out in religious character education through habituation methods. The implementation of religious character formation at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School emphasizes the habituation of religious activities in addition to learning activities carried out by the school both inside and outside the classroom. The community considers this school very interesting because this school encourages character formation through daily routine activities, as evidenced by the great interest of local residents in entrusting their children's education to this school. In addition, parents also really hope that their children's behavior and morals will change thanks to the process at school. (Jannah, 2023) A person's religious nature is closely related to their level of religious literacy. (Siti & Khoiriyah, 2024) Thus, increasing student religiosity will be influenced by religious literacy initiatives. Therefore, it is important for schools to pay attention to the aspect of religious

literacy in developing student character. This can be done by increasing understanding of religious teachings and religious practices as in religious literacy activities carried out at SMP Islam Miftahul Ulum.

Many educational institutions have implemented literacy programs, but each has its own unique approach in its implementation. For example, SMP Islam Ulum has implemented a religious literacy program through the study of Surah Al-Waqiah, Asmaul Husna, and congregational prayers dhuha and dzuhur every day. The implementation of the religious literacy program which aims to develop the religious character of students at SMP Islam Miftahul Ulum, as well as the factors that support and hinder the process of implementing religious literacy activities in developing students' religious character, are the main reasons why the author is interested in using this school as a research location. (Lisa & Asrorul, 2023).

The purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of the Religious Literacy program in identifying factors that support and hinder the implementation of the program in identifying the religious characteristics of students at SMP Islam Miftahul Ulum. In addition, this study at SMP Islam Miftahul Ulum can show how religious literacy affects student performance. As a result, this study will not only provide a comprehensive understanding of the state of literacy in these schools but also contribute to the creation of efficient educational strategies to foster religious character in adolescents. (Siti & Khoiriyah, 2024)

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a field research method. (Field Research) Qualitative research is conducted with certain settings that exist in real life (natural) with the intention of investigating and understanding phenomena: what happens, why it happens, and how it happens and field research is used by researchers to actively participate and directly participate in observing and participating in the phenomena being studied. (Isnaini & Ratnasari, 2023)

The research was obtained using a number of methods, including document analysis, interviews, and field observations. The purpose of the observation was to learn more about the implementation of literacy related to religion in improving religious character at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School. Information about planning, implementation, inhibiting factors, and supporting factors in the religious literacy activity program was obtained. However, the goal is to validate data from relevant information, as well as study these documents. To strengthen the research results, so that the research results presented in this study are absolute. Interviews were conducted with 3 informants, namely: the principal to obtain information regarding the role of the school in supporting religious literacy activities, then the Islamic Religious Education teacher to obtain data related to student activities in implementing religious literacy that supports Islamic religious

teaching materials and students to collect data on religious literacy activities implemented in schools and their level of implementation.

The method used in this study was a structured interview using previously prepared interview guidelines. Each informant provided valuable responses related to their respective roles in religious literacy activities in schools. And the data obtained from the interviews also provided a clear picture of the level of implementation of religious literacy activities in the school. Thus, this study can make a significant contribution to the development of religious literacy in the educational environment.

In addition, documentation was collected in the form of student attitude assessment results, assessment of learning outcomes in Islamic Religious Education lessons, the process of religious literacy activities, and works relevant to the research object. Data validity was tested through triangulation of sources, researchers, and methods. Meanwhile, data analysis was carried out in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

### 3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

#### **Implementation of Religious Literacy Activities in the Formation of Students' Religious Character at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School**

##### *Planning a religious literacy activity program*

The purpose of this literacy education program at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School is to develop and provide guidance for students' character, especially their religious character, as well as an effort to provide attention to students. Through the study of the letter al-waqi'ah and asmaul husna, dhuha prayer, and dzuhur prayer in congregation, this program aims to help students understand and apply religious principles in their daily lives. It also emphasizes the importance of religious literacy. Given that the majority of the population in the area where this school is located has a strong religious affiliation with Islam, it is important for us to instill religious values from an early age so that students can grow into individuals who are not only well-mannered but also knowledgeable. This program, Religious Literacy, is a daily routine activity that is carried out.

Thirty days before the start of the Teaching and Learning program, all students at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School participate in this program, which begins with a lesson from a knowledgeable teacher. After studying the Al-Waqi'ah letter, followed by Asma'ul Husna and, after that, praying Dhuha in congregation, continued with the Teaching and Learning program according to a predetermined schedule. Later, at the time of Dhuhur prayer, they continue their work. In addition, this literacy activity is explained in detail in the school's mission. The purpose of this religious activity through 30 minutes of reading Al-Waqi'ah is to teach students about the Names of Allah (Asmaul Husna), Dhuha prayer, Dhuhur prayer in congregation, and other Islamic principles. It also aims to integrate students'

spiritual and emotional development with their intellectual development. The process of this religious literacy activity involves various stakeholders, including Islamic education teachers, teacher classes, the general public, and other individuals. This is done carefully so that the activity can run smoothly and provide positive feedback to students. (Siti & Wati, 2021).

#### *Implementation of religious literacy activities*

Religious literacy activities in this program are carried out methodically and evaluatively with the aim of helping students carry out their religious obligations methodically and focused. Asmau lhusna, Al-Waqi'ah letter, and congregational dhuha and dzuhur prayers are used to introduce this activity. The Islamic Religious Education teacher also supervises and leads this activity, using lecture and memorization methods to inspire students. The purpose of this daily religious literacy activity is to improve worship routines, teach students to become leaders through the teachings of the imam, enforce discipline, and strengthen the habit of praying and remembering. This activity aims to help develop the religious character of students so that they can integrate spiritual principles into their daily lives. Through this activity, it is hoped that students will not only understand the basics of worship but will also be able to create a sense of clarity and steadfastness from Allah SWT. (MUHAMAD et al., 2024)

Religious literacy habits in forming religious character emerge as an effort to instill religious values in everyday life. The main purpose of this study is to encourage people to have independent actions that are in accordance with religious beliefs. The process of habituation in scientific religious activities is very important, especially to foster good writing and behavior. By routinely engaging in religious activities such as praying, reading the Qur'an, or even just asmaul husna, people will be able to live their lives according to religious principles. Ultimately, a person will have more integrity and have good religious qualities and morals. Because of the need to get used to it, religion is considered the center point in everyday life. In addition, the purpose of these religious activities is to encourage good deeds and be a good example for others. (Aep et al., n.d, 2025) The impact of religious literacy activities on student performance and behavior is quite positive. Students who have a strong understanding of religion at school tend to be more disciplined, wiser, and more aware of the rules and responsible. Outside of school, they encourage people to be more empathetic, disciplined, and worship others. (Siti & Khoiriyah, 2024)

#### *Evaluation of the Al-Quran Literacy Program*

As part of the religious literacy program at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School, students can study the Qur'an, whether they are able to do so or not. Those who have studied it can do it more slowly and effectively. In addition, it is hoped that this literacy program can help students develop their religious character. The

purpose of this study was to assess how well some students understand and apply the religious principles taught to them in their academic and extracurricular lives. Evaluation is carried out as a way to improve and raise the quality of religious material in a more effective way. Fortunately, this evaluation can show where there are shortcomings and help develop students' religious character. The assessment procedure also explains and connects them with elements that support or hinder the process of developing religious character through religious literacy. (Ahsanulhaq, 2019)

### **Supporting and Inhibiting**

#### *Internal supporting factors*

Student inspiration, The lack of motivation in the hearts of students who have been involved in religious literacy activities indicates that there are goals that cannot be achieved. Thus, this is a habit that is inherent to students. One of the motivations that students have for themselves is so that they can study the Qur'an and have a fluent, good, and deep understanding of it while attending Education at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School.

#### *External supporting factors*

Teachers, Parents, and the general public can improve the effectiveness of literacy teaching in developing students' character. Collaboration between teachers, students, and the general public is essential to improving the effectiveness of literacy activities in developing students' character. This study highlights the importance of collaboration in education, as teachers and students work together to instill moral values and positive character traits in students. By implementing a literacy curriculum that emphasizes character development, schools can significantly influence students' writing, personality, and behavior, resulting in more positive and high-quality personality development. Therefore, collaborative efforts involving teachers, students, and the general public are essential in helping to identify individuals who have deep religious knowledge through these literary activities.

#### *Inhibiting factors*

Lack of self-awareness among students is actually a separate obstacle. The cause of the rampant violations that occur in schools is due to students' self-awareness which may be caused by bad habits of students. Lack of awareness in practicing obligatory and sunnah worship, lack of knowledge of discipline in school activities, and loss of moral awareness among friends and teachers. For students whose self-awareness is still lacking, it takes a lot of effort for teachers to shape their character, lack of interest in reading... And also the family environment conditions that hinder character formation are habits at home in excessive use of cellphones, poor worship habits, parenting patterns that lack affection and

attention from parents, behavior that is still not good so that it requires more effort to change the habits of these students. (Karmila & Muhammad, 2017) It can be concluded that the supporting and inhibiting factors of school religious programs are the high level of student enthusiasm and the school administration's understanding of the program. However, this program is also influenced by external factors. For example, social media and the surrounding environment can have a negative impact on children by exposing them to content that does not suit their needs. Therefore, it is very important for people to maintain their religious beliefs to keep children consistent and to prevent children from using social media. (Mhd et al., n.d.)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study reflects the critical importance of religious literacy as a medium for cultivating religious character within formal educational settings, specifically at Miftahul Ulum Islamic Middle School. Through routine programs such as the recitation of Surah Al-Waqi'ah, Asmaul Husna, and the performance of Dhuha and Dhuhr prayers in congregation, the school has established a spiritual environment that nurtures not only cognitive development but also students' affective and spiritual dimensions. The findings suggest that the development of religious character requires more than theoretical instruction; it must be supported by consistent habituation and active participation from all elements of the educational ecosystem, including teachers, parents, and the community.

The primary contribution of this research lies in presenting an effective model for implementing religious literacy activities to shape students' character. It demonstrates that integrating religious practices into daily school life can improve student discipline, strengthen their spiritual connection with God, and foster religious attitudes reflected in daily behavior. Furthermore, the study underscores the significance of collaboration between schools and external environments to ensure the program's success. By identifying supporting factors such as student motivation and teacher-parent synergy, as well as challenges like poor habits and insufficient parental involvement, this research offers a roadmap for educational institutions in designing value-based character education strategies.

The impact of the program is evident both internally within the school and externally in the broader community. Students show increased awareness of worship, enhanced discipline, and greater social empathy. The religious literacy program also contributes to creating a more religious and inclusive school culture. In the long term, these activities shape a young generation that is not only knowledgeable but also morally grounded and capable of becoming positive agents of change in society. Therefore, the findings of this study are highly relevant as a reference for developing religious character-based curricula and strengthening value education in both Islamic and general schools.

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