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Internalizing Character Values Through Islamic Religious Extracurricular Activities In Indonesian Primary Schools

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Abstract

This study examined the implementation, values, internalization processes, enabling conditions, and reported outcomes of Islamic Religious Education extracurricular activities at SDN Talagasari I and SDN Pasirtalaga II in Karawang Regency, Indonesia. A descriptive qualitative study used a multisite design and purposively selected principals, Islamic Religious Education teachers, activity supervisors, students, and parents. Data were collected through interviews, participant observation, and the review of work programs, schedules, and evaluation reports. Analysis proceeded within each site and across the two sites, using data condensation, display, and conclusion verification. Talagasari I emphasized recurring worship, Qur'anic learning, and brief religious talks. Pasirtalaga II combined religious practice with Islamic arts, speech practice, and preparation for competitions. The reported character values included religious commitment, discipline, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and social concern. Teacher example, repeated practice, appreciation, and corrective guidance connected the activities with expectations about conduct. Leadership commitment and teacher involvement supported implementation, while space, facilities, and uneven guidance at home constrained continuity. The study offers a comparative account of how different activity formats provide opportunities to practice character values. The findings support claims about reported practices and opportunities for internalization, while sustained changes in students' personal commitments require further evidence

Keywords: character education, value internalization, Islamic Religious Education, extracurricular activities, primary schools

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INTRODUCTION

Primary schools give children recurring opportunities to learn how to act with others, take responsibility for shared tasks, and respond to expectations about conduct. Character education brings these experiences into an intentional educational program. Althof and Berkowitz (2006) examine the relationship between moral and character education, while Berkowitz and Bier (2004) identify features of character education supported by research. In the Indonesian context, Kistoro et al. (2023) document a growing body of scholarship on Islamic character education. This interest raises questions about how values become part of children's experiences in particular school settings.

Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2017 places character education across classroom, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities and emphasizes the involvement of families and communities. Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, hereafter PAI) extracurricular activities provide one setting for putting this direction into practice. Activities such as congregational prayer, Qur'anic memorization, short religious talks, and Islamic arts can connect religious instruction with opportunities for participation. Lickona's (1991) account of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action directs attention to how understanding, concern, and conduct relate within character education.

The internalization of values is the central focus of this study. Deci et al. (1994) distinguish taking in an externally communicated expectation from integrating its value into one's own reasons for acting. This distinction is relevant when children participate in activities organized and supervised by adults. In this study, Muhaimin et al.'s (1996) framework guides interpretation through three aspects: communicating a value, practicing it through interaction, and making it part of personal conduct. These are referred to as value transformation, value transaction, and transinternalization, respectively.

Research on extracurricular activities provides reasons to examine what children experience during participation. Durlak et al. (2010) found that programs designed to develop personal and social skills could improve a range of outcomes, particularly when they used recommended practices. Eccles et al. (2003) and Fredricks and Eccles (2006) reported relationships between extracurricular participation and development during adolescence. Their findings concern older students and different activities, but they help identify questions for primary education about the role of regular participation, relationships, and opportunities to practice skills.

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The organization and quality of participation also matter. Bohnert et al. (2010) distinguish dimensions such as the intensity, duration, breadth, and engagement of young people's activity involvement. Mahoney et al. (2003) examined relationships among extracurricular participation, interpersonal competence, and educational success. In a broader school context, Durlak et al. (2011) found that implementation features were relevant to outcomes in social and emotional learning programs. Together, these studies suggest examining what an activity asks children to do and how adults guide their participation.

School culture provides another part of this context. Lestari and Ain (2022) examined the role of school culture in character formation among primary school students, and Thapa et al. (2013) identify relationships and the institutional environment as important dimensions of school climate. Sanderse (2013) explains that role modeling can support moral learning when students recognize and understand the qualities demonstrated by adults. These perspectives direct attention to what teachers do during extracurricular activities and how school expectations are reinforced through daily interactions.

At SDN Talagasari I and SDN Pasirtalaga II in Karawang Regency, PAI extracurricular programs give these questions a concrete setting. Talagasari I emphasizes recurring worship and Qur'anic activities, while Pasirtalaga II combines worship with Islamic arts and speech practice. The school context described in the research includes limited space during large activities and uneven support for religious practice at home. These conditions make it necessary to examine how the activities are organized, which values are practiced, and what students encounter across school and home settings.

The research gap concerns how the forms of PAI extracurricular participation connect with the processes through which values are introduced, practiced, and taken up by students. The literature reviewed above addresses character education, school culture, and activity participation. This study contributes a comparison of two primary schools in which religious routines and arts activities offer different opportunities for practicing values. Its originality lies in connecting program arrangements, teacher example, student participation, and reported conduct within a single comparative analysis.

The study therefore aims to describe the implementation of PAI extracurricular activities, identify the character values emphasized, analyze processes of internalization, examine enabling and constraining conditions, and describe reported outcomes at the two schools. Academically, the comparison clarifies the relationship between organized participation and claims about value

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internalization. Practically, it can help principals, teachers, and activity supervisors examine whether their programs give students repeated and meaningful opportunities to practice the values they promote.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a multisite design to examine how character values were introduced and practiced through PAI extracurricular activities (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The sites were SDN Talagasari I and SDN Pasirtalaga II in Karawang Regency, Indonesia. Each site was analyzed separately before findings were compared across the schools. This sequence supported attention to institutional context and comparison of practices across sites (Yin, 2018).

Participants and Data Collection

Principals, PAI teachers, extracurricular supervisors, students, and parents were selected purposively for their involvement in the programs or experience of them. Interviews addressed strategies, enabling conditions, constraints, and perceived outcomes. Participant observation examined activities, interactions, and the religious school environment. Documents included work programs, schedules, and evaluation reports. These sources provided perspectives on planned arrangements, implementation, and participants' interpretations.

Data Analysis

Analysis followed the interactive framework of Miles et al. (2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Within each site, findings were organized around implementation, character values, internalization processes, enabling and constraining conditions, and reported outcomes. Cross-site comparison examined the different activity emphases and the practices shared across both schools. Documentary evidence was used to establish program arrangements, while observations and interviews informed the account of participation and meaning.

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Trustworthiness

The study used source, method, and time triangulation and member checking to strengthen credibility. Trustworthiness was considered through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). Interpretations were examined against information from different participant groups and against the interview, observation, and documentary strands. The account distinguishes the presence of an activity, the conduct visible during participation, and the personal significance attributed to it. Contextual descriptions support assessment of the applicability of findings to other schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of PAI Extracurricular Activities

Annual and semester programs formed the planning framework for activities at the two schools. Work programs and schedules were the documentary sources reviewed to establish these arrangements. The reported implementation followed recurring religious activities alongside particular events and performances.

Talagasari I. Activities emphasized congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, memorization, brief religious talks, collective supplication, and observance of Islamic holidays. These were the principal forms of participation described for the site. Their shared emphasis was repeated engagement in worship and religious learning.

Pasirtalaga II. The program combined daily religious practice with Islamic arts, including marawis or hadrah percussion ensembles. Speech practice and preparation for religious competitions added opportunities for students to rehearse, perform, and work with others.

Participant observation addressed how activities were carried out, how participants interacted, and how the school environment supported religious practice. The practices summarized in the findings included teacher example, recurring routines, and group activities. They supplied the setting in which the character expectations were enacted.

Interviews addressed teachers' strategies and the conditions affecting delivery. Read alongside program documents, the accounts showed shared reliance on planned activities and different emphases in their content. Talagasari I centered the program on worship routines, while Pasirtalaga II gave greater visibility to arts and speech activities.

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Character Values Expressed Through the Activities

Congregational prayer, Qur'anic reading, memorization, and supplication were the main practices associated with religious values. Program descriptions and the account of participation identify how these values entered school activities. Interviews provided a basis for exploring what those activities meant to participants.

Punctuality and adherence to activity rules were the reported expressions of discipline. These expectations applied to participation in religious routines and organized activities. Observation focused on conduct within those settings, while schedules established the planned times and sequence of activities.

Independent task completion and acknowledging mistakes were the examples associated with honesty in the findings. These examples describe the conduct the programs sought to reinforce. The available account identifies honesty as a shared educational expectation across the activities.

Group tasks, duties associated with worship, and arts rehearsals provided opportunities to take responsibility and work together. These were the clearest links between an activity format and the social conduct expected from students.

The research identified social concern alongside the other values as a program aim and a reported aspect of student conduct. The comparison locates these values within participation in shared activities. The most specific examples concern punctuality, honesty in tasks, and responsibility for group work.

Processes and Strategies of Value Internalization

The findings describe an initial process of introducing the values expected during participation. This was interpreted as value transformation. Teachers' explanations and guidance gave students a basis for understanding the conduct promoted by the activities.

Teachers and principals provided examples in worship, punctuality, and speech. These practices were reported as uswah hasanah, or exemplary conduct. They connected the expectations communicated to students with the behavior of adults involved in school life.

Daily and weekly religious routines provided repeated occasions to practice the expected conduct. The program arrangements established opportunities for repetition, and observation addressed participation and interaction during the activities. This aspect of the process was interpreted as value transaction.

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Positive conduct received appreciation, while breaches of expectations prompted educational guidance. Interviews were used to explore these strategies. The findings place both forms of response within the effort to maintain participation and reinforce the conduct the program emphasized.

Cleanliness, order, and the arrangement of worship facilities formed part of the religious school environment described in the study. The account interpreted this environment and recurring practice as supporting transinternalization. Evidence of the setting was clearer than evidence of how consistently individual students carried the values into other contexts.

Conditions Supporting and Constraining the Programs

Principal commitment was identified as a major support for implementation. Interview inquiry addressed the conditions sustaining the program, and work programs and schedules supplied the documentary basis for its organization.

PAI teacher competence and exemplary conduct were identified as further supports. The account of activities linked teacher involvement with guidance, recurring practice, and the reinforcement of expectations. Observation addressed these interactions within the school environment.

Parents and school committees were identified as sources of support. At the same time, the findings described uneven guidance for children's religious practice at home. These accounts identify variability in how school activities were reinforced in family settings. Existing worship facilities supported participation. Space and equipment became constraints during larger activities. The findings identify these material conditions as affecting implementation across the programs.

Differences in students' backgrounds and perceived negative influences from digital media were also identified. These were reported contextual concerns. The available account gave more concrete detail on the activity program, space limitations, and the continuity of guidance between school and home.

Reported Outcomes and Cross-Site Synthesis

Both schools incorporated religious activities into recurring programs. The documentary strand established the planning context, while the findings on activities described how children encountered values through worship, talks, tasks, and arts. The reported examples linked

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discipline with punctuality, honesty with independent work and admitting mistakes, and cooperation with shared tasks and rehearsals. These examples describe how the intended values could be recognized in school conduct. The research interpreted the combination of teacher example, repeated practice, and reinforcement as supporting positive conduct. Interviews addressed perceived outcomes. The available findings provide a more developed account of program practices than of individual changes tracked over time.

Talagasari I provided recurring worship and Qur'anic routines, while Pasirtalaga II added more opportunities for arts, speech, and competition preparation. These emphases offered different settings for responsibility and cooperation within a shared approach to religious character education. Documents supplied evidence of planned arrangements, observation addressed participation and interaction, and interviews explored strategies, conditions, and perceived outcomes. The comparison supports a model linking program opportunities with adult example, repeated practice, guidance, and school culture. Table 1 summarizes the findings for the five research objectives.

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Table 1.Summary of Findings Across the Two Primary Schools

Research objective	SDN Talagasari I	SDN Pasirtalaga II	Basis of the finding
Describe implementation	Worship routines, Qur'anic learning, brief talks, and Islamic holiday activities	Worship with Islamic arts, speech practice, and competition preparation	Program descriptions, work programs, schedules, and accounts of implementation
Identify character values	Religious commitment, discipline, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and social concern	The same reported values, with opportunities for cooperation in arts and performance	Reported conduct during participation and interview inquiry into program meaning
Explain internalization	Adult example, repeated worship, appreciation, and guidance	Adult example, repeated practice, group tasks, appreciation, and guidance	Interviews, observation of activity and interaction, and program arrangements
Identify enabling conditions and constraints	Leadership, teacher involvement, family support, facilities, and space limitations	Shared enabling conditions, with varied home guidance and limits during large activities	Interviews on implementation and context, with documentary support for program organization
Describe reported outcomes	Established opportunities to practice values through religious routines	Established opportunities through religious routines, arts, and speech	Site summaries and comparison of practices and perceived outcomes

DISCUSSION

The two programs gave students recurring opportunities to act on the values their schools promoted. Talagasari I emphasized worship and Qur'anic routines, while Pasirtalaga II added more visible opportunities for Islamic arts and speech. The comparison suggests that different formats can support shared character aims when the expectations are made relevant to what

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participants do. Bandura (2001) explains learning in terms of interactions among personal factors, conduct, and the social environment. This perspective helps locate the educational role of the activities in the relationships and tasks through which students participated.

Teacher and principal example connected the programs with expectations about everyday conduct. Worship, punctuality, and the way adults spoke to others were described as expressions of the values students were expected to practice. In Bandura's (2001) account, observing a model provides information about possible conduct and its consequences. In these schools, the example offered by adults was therefore part of the learning environment. The significance of that example for an individual student would depend on how the student understood it and on the opportunities available to practice the same conduct.

Repeated activities made the expectations familiar. Wood and Rünger (2016) explain how repeated action in stable contexts can become associated with recurring cues. A schedule for prayer or rehearsal supplies one such context, while repeated duties make a pattern of participation recognizable. The findings document these conditions at both schools. They also make it useful to distinguish the regularity of conduct from the personal meaning students give it, particularly when teachers organize and supervise the activities.

Appreciation and corrective guidance were further ways of communicating expectations. Their meaning for students may vary according to how they are used and explained. Ryan and Deci (2020) distinguish motivation shaped by external demands from motivation associated with personally endorsed goals. Applied to the present findings, this perspective directs attention to whether students understand why a behavior matters and have opportunities to act with a sense of responsibility. The existence of a reinforcement strategy establishes how adults respond to conduct, while students' own accounts are needed to explain how they experience that response.

Responsibility and cooperation were especially connected to group tasks, worship duties, and arts rehearsal. Those formats require students to coordinate their participation with others. Wentzel (1998) found that relationships with teachers, peers, and parents were associated with different aspects of students' motivation. Although the study concerned older students, it helps interpret the social opportunities present here. Shared tasks can make reliability and cooperation meaningful because students experience how their contribution affects other participants.

The findings also place family guidance within the conditions for continuity. School activities were organized, but guidance for religious practice at home was described as uneven. Sheldon and Epstein (2002) found that efforts to strengthen cooperation among schools, families,

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and communities were associated with improvements in student behavior and discipline. Their findings provide a reason to examine how schools communicate with families about the values and practices promoted through extracurricular participation. In the present study, the variability in home guidance identifies a condition that can shape students' experiences across settings.

Facilities and space affected which opportunities schools could provide. Worship facilities supported recurring practice, while larger activities created pressure on the available space. These constraints matter because students need access to the activities through which the values are meant to be practiced. The findings suggest considering provision and participation together when reviewing a program. A planned activity can offer opportunities for cooperation or responsibility only to the extent that children can take part and receive appropriate guidance.

The evidence supports a more detailed account of the programs than of changes in individual students' personal commitments. Work programs and schedules establish arrangements, observation addresses conduct during activities, and interviews provide interpretations of strategies and outcomes. Ryan and Deci's (2020) account of internalization makes students' reasons for acting relevant to the interpretation. In this study, the available findings identify expected values and examples of their expression, while an account of sustained personal endorsement would require more detailed evidence from students over time.

The comparative model therefore connects program opportunities with adult example, repeated practice, appreciation, and guidance within the school environment. Value transformation describes how expectations are communicated, value transaction concerns their enactment in interaction, and transinternalization concerns their uptake in personal conduct. Bandura (2001) and Wood and Rünger (2016) help explain why the social environment and repeated practice matter within this process. The comparison identifies different settings for the process at the two schools without establishing a necessary sequence for every student.

The academic contribution of this study is a comparison that links the content of Islamic Religious Education extracurricular programs with the opportunities they create to practice character values. It distinguishes evidence about planned provision, conduct during participation, and personal uptake. This distinction helps explain how a worship-centered program and a program combining worship with arts can pursue similar aims through different experiences. It also clarifies the evidence required to develop the conceptual model further, particularly evidence about how students understand and sustain the values in situations beyond the organized activity.

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CONCLUSION

At SDN Talagasari I and SDN Pasirtalaga II, PAI extracurricular activities provided recurring opportunities to practice religious commitment, discipline, honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and social concern. Talagasari I emphasized worship and Qur'anic routines, while Pasirtalaga II combined religious practice with arts, speeches, and competition preparation. Teacher and principal example, repeated participation, appreciation, and corrective guidance connected these activities with expectations about conduct. Leadership and teacher involvement supported implementation, while facilities and uneven guidance at home constrained continuity.

The study was limited to two primary schools, and the available evidence was more detailed on program arrangements and reported conduct than on individual changes sustained over time. Schools can strengthen the programs by connecting activity tasks with clear explanations of the values being practiced, providing adequate space, and communicating with families about continuity at home. Future research could follow students across activities and settings, using detailed observations and student accounts to examine how participation relates to personal endorsement and independent conduct.

DISCUSSION

Ultimately, school reputation in the digital environment is the result of the relationship between what the school does, what the school communicates, and how the public receives and experiences that information. Therefore, digital public relations cannot be separated from the quality of school management as a whole. Social media can strengthen reputation when digital information reflects the school's actual performance, communication is carried out consistently, and the public is given room to interact. From this perspective, digital public relations governance functions not merely as a publication tool but as a strategic part of reputation management and of the school's relationship with the community.

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