

Research Article

Implementation of Character Education in Developing Religious Personality Among Students at Sekolah Rendah Al-Amin Gombak, Kuala Lumpur-Malaysia

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Abstract: This study explores the implementation of character education to develop a religious personality among students at Sekolah Rendah Al-Amin Gombak, Kuala Lumpur. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings indicate that character education at the school is integrated into academic subjects, daily routines, and school culture. Teachers and school leaders play significant roles as moral exemplars. The study concludes that a consistent, religious-based school environment promotes the internalization of Islamic values and behaviors among students, reinforcing their religious identity and character.

Keywords: Character education; Islamic school; Malaysia; primary education; religious personality.

1. Introduction

Character education is central to holistic educational development, especially within Islamic education systems where moral and spiritual development is considered fundamental. In Malaysia, the integration of religious values in the national education system is emphasized, particularly in Islamic-based institutions such as Sekolah Rendah Al-Amin Gombak.

This study investigates how character education is implemented to develop students' religious personalities in this school. Religious personality is defined as the embodiment of Islamic moral values in behavior, attitudes, and decision-making, manifesting through devotion, honesty, modesty, and respect.

The study is significant as it offers insight into a practical and contextualized model of character education within an Islamic primary school setting, contributing to both national and global discourses on values-based education.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Character education, as conceptualized by Lickona (1991), involves deliberate efforts to cultivate moral virtues such as respect, responsibility, and integrity. In Islamic pedagogy, character (akhlak) development is inseparable from knowledge transmission, rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

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Religious personality in Islamic psychology involves the internalization of tawhid (belief in the oneness of God), which guides moral conduct and spiritual consciousness. Schools play a crucial role in shaping this personality through structured learning, modeling, and reinforcement.

2.2. Prior Studies

Previous studies have shown that school environment, teacher modeling, and curriculum design significantly influence the success of character education (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). In Islamic contexts, integration between religious rituals and character-building practices enhances students' moral reasoning and religious commitment (Wan Daud, 1998; Mahat, 2020).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study approach, focusing on Sekolah Rendah Al-Amin Gombak as a single bounded system.

3.2. Participants and Data Collection

Participants included the school principal, three teachers, and ten students. Data were gathered through:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Non-participant observations of classroom activities and religious programs
- Document analysis (lesson plans, school policy documents, student handbooks)

3.3. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to code and identify patterns related to the implementation of character education and its influence on students' religious personality.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Integrated Curriculum and Religious Values

Teachers integrate religious values into all subjects, not only Islamic Studies. Lessons begin with du'a and moral reminders, and Islamic ethics are incorporated into science, language, and social studies. This aligns with the ta'dib approach—embedding knowledge with moral purpose.

4.2. Role Modeling by Teachers

Teachers are viewed as *uswah hasanah* (good examples), consistently demonstrating Islamic manners such as punctuality, politeness, and sincerity. Their behavior influences students' daily conduct.

"We don't just teach about prayer—we show them how we pray, how we treat others with compassion. That's the real education," said one teacher.

4.3. School Routines and Culture

Daily routines include congregational prayers (Dhuhr), Qur'an recitation sessions, and weekly Islamic character themes. The school culture encourages mutual respect, empathy, and responsibility. Students are assigned roles (e.g., prayer leader, cleanliness monitor) to foster accountability.

4.4. Evidence of Religious Personality in Students

Students were observed demonstrating religious behaviors such as greeting with salam, helping others, and maintaining cleanliness. Interviews revealed a strong sense of responsibility to practice Islamic teachings.

4.5. Challenges and Reflections

The school faces challenges such as varied levels of parental involvement and balancing academic demands with character education goals. However, a strong school culture and committed staff help maintain program effectiveness.

5. Conclusions

Character education at Sekolah Rendah Al-Amin Gombak is effectively implemented through an integrated curriculum, moral exemplars, and a values-driven school culture. These strategies contribute significantly to the development of religious personality among students, reflecting both cognitive understanding and behavioral practice of Islamic teachings.

Recommendations:

- Policy-makers should support integrated religious character education across school types.
- Future research should explore longitudinal effects of such education on students' adolescent development.

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