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**STRATEGIES FOR INTERNALISATION IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER AT SD IT HAFIZUL  
ILMI IN GAMPONG BLANG KRUENG**

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**Abstract**

This study aims to analyse strategies for the internalisation of religious values in the formation of religious character among pupils at Hafizul Ilmi Islamic Primary School, Gampong Blang Krueng. The background to this research is based on the importance of religious character education amidst the challenges of globalisation and technological developments that influence pupils' behaviour and morals. The internalisation of religious values is understood as a process of instilling values through role modelling, habit formation and direct experience, so that religious values are not only understood cognitively but are also manifested in attitudes and behaviour. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using interviews, observation and documentation to obtain in-depth data on the role of teachers, the implementation of internalisation strategies, and the outcomes of habit formation among pupils. The research findings indicate that teachers play a significant role as role models, spiritual guides and facilitators in instilling religious values through routine activities such as the Dhuha prayer, communal prayer, morning talks and the cultivation of noble character. Internalisation strategies at the school are implemented through setting a good example, habit formation, and the continuous reinforcement of values integrated into the school culture. These habits foster the development of pupils' religious character across cognitive, spiritual, psychomotor and social dimensions, characterised by increased discipline, responsibility, polite behaviour, and the ability to understand and practise religious teachings in daily life. The study concluded that the success of the internalisation of religious values at Hafizul Ilmi Islamic Primary School is influenced by the active role of teachers, a supportive school culture, and collaboration between the school and parents.

**Keywords:** *internalisation, religious values, religious character, the role of teachers, habit formation*

**INTRODUCTION**

The development of religious character is one of the key aspects of education, particularly amidst the rapid technological advancements and globalisation taking place in the modern world today. Rapid social change means that moral and religious values are often neglected by pupils. Religious character education is vital as it helps pupils to develop an attitude of faith, moral character and behaviour in line with religious teachings (Lickona, 1991; Samani & Hariyanto,

2012). In the digital and globalised era, the influence of the external environment often means that religious values receive less attention amongst children and young people (Hidayat, 2020). Therefore, schools must take an active role not only in teaching religious content but also in ensuring that these values are internalised into daily habits and attitudes (Muslich, 2011). In this context, religious education is not sufficient if delivered merely through the presentation of subject matter; rather, strategies for internalisation are required so that religious values are truly ingrained in pupils, ensuring that religious content is not merely theoretical in classroom learning but can also be applied in daily life—whether at home, amongst friends, or in social settings.

Internalisation is the process of instilling values through habit formation, role modelling and direct experience. Muslich (2011) explains that the internalisation of values takes place in three stages: value transformation, value transaction and trans-internalisation. Through these stages, pupils not only learn about religious values but also experience them and are able to practise them in their daily lives. This demonstrates that the roles of teachers and the school environment are crucial to the successful development of religious character, which provides pupils with religious knowledge by helping them to internalise both praiseworthy and reprehensible behaviour and to apply these principles to their own lives.

However, in reality, many schools still face challenges in instilling religious character. For example, religious education sometimes remains focused on theory; pupils' characters vary from one individual to another; teaching methods are not always effective; and so on. According to Samani and Hariyanto (2012), strategies for internalisation must involve all aspects of school life, such as school culture, rules, routine activities, and the example set by teachers. Without a comprehensive approach, it is difficult for religious values to develop consistently in pupils, which can result in the process of internalising religious values to shape pupils' character failing to achieve its full potential. Furthermore, the consequences that may arise in the future due to a lack of reinforcement of religious values in pupils mean that they are easily influenced by negative external factors.

Consequently, an appropriate, systematic and sustainable internalisation strategy is required to shape pupils' religious character. It is hoped that this strategy will foster attitudes of faith, good moral character, discipline and responsibility in accordance with the values of Islamic teachings. Through this approach, schools can serve as places that not only impart knowledge but also guide pupils to become individuals of noble character, thereby shaping and fostering their religious character. This enables pupils to obey the commands of Allah SWT in their daily lives and apply the teachings of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach as it aims to provide an in-depth description of the internalisation strategies applied in shaping the religious character of pupils at SD IT Hafizul Ilmi in Gampong Blang Krueng. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to understand social phenomena naturally and holistically, based on the informants' direct experiences, without manipulating variables (Creswell, 2013). A descriptive model was used to describe the processes, activities and practices of the internalisation of religious values taking place within the school environment as they actually occur.

Data collection methods included in-depth interviews, participatory observation and documentation. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, Islamic Religious Education teachers, form tutors and a number of pupils selected using purposive sampling. Observation was used to directly observe internalisation practices such as habit-forming activities, role modelling and school culture, whilst documentation served to collect data in the form of photographs of activities, religious programme timetables and teaching materials. The use of these various techniques aimed to triangulate the data in order to enhance the credibility of the research findings (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data analysis was carried out from the beginning to the end of the study through the stages of data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions in accordance with the analytical model proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014). The reduction process involved sorting relevant data relating to internalisation strategies, whilst data presentation was carried out in the form of descriptive narratives so that patterns and meanings could be clearly identified. Conclusions were drawn gradually by integrating field findings with the theoretical framework. To ensure the validity of the data, this study employed source triangulation, methodological triangulation and extended participation, thereby ensuring that the findings obtained are reliable (Moleong, 2017).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **General Overview of the Research Site**

SD IT Hafizul Ilmi Blang Krueng is an integrated Islamic primary school located in Gampong Blang Krueng, Baitussalam Sub-district, Aceh Besar Regency. The school operates under the auspices of the Hafizul Ilmi Foundation as an expression of the local community's commitment to providing quality, Islamic education focused on character development. SD IT Hafizul Ilmi has been in operation since 2015 and was designed from the outset to be a Qur'an-based educational centre with a comfortable and religious learning environment. With a fairly spacious school grounds, Hafizul Ilmi Islamic Primary School has adequate facilities to support the learning process, both inside and outside the classroom. The school implements an integrated Islamic education concept that combines the national curriculum with religious values, ensuring that pupils not only master academic competencies but also develop strong spiritual character. The school's flagship programmes include Qur'an memorisation (tahfizh), the practice of daily acts of worship such as the Dhuha prayer, dhikr, and communal prayer, as well as regular religious activities that instil discipline and noble moral character. Furthermore, the school emphasises character building through social activities, teamwork, and environmental awareness.

In an effort to improve the quality of education, the school actively sends teachers to attend various curriculum training courses, including training on the 2013 Curriculum and professional development for teachers. In the area of pupils' health and wellbeing, SD IT Hafizul Ilmi also runs a School Health Unit (UKS) programme and provides basic training in simple first aid for teachers and pupils. The school is highly valued by the community of Blang Krueng as it plays a vital role in the educational revival of the village, which previously faced limited educational facilities in the wake of a disaster. The presence of SD IT Hafizul Ilmi has helped Blang Krueng gain recognition as one of the villages that is education-conscious and excels at the local level. With a grand vision to nurture a Qur'anic generation that is principled, intelligent and independent, the Hafizul Ilmi Islamic

Primary School ( ) functions not only as an educational institution but also as a centre for fostering religious values within the community. Looking ahead, the school is set to expand to higher levels of education, such as an Islamic secondary school (SMP IT) or a tahfizh boarding school, as part of the Hafizul Ilmi Foundation's grand ambition to broaden access to quality education in Aceh.

### **The Role of Teachers in Instilling Religious Values in Pupils at SD IT Hafizul Ilmi, Gampong Blang Krueng**

The role of teachers in helping pupils internalise religious values is a crucial factor in the success of character building. Teachers serve as role models whose behaviour is observed and emulated by pupils; consequently, setting a good example is the most effective method for instilling moral values such as honesty, discipline and responsibility (Suyatno et al., 2019). Furthermore, teachers also act as facilitators and spiritual guides who direct pupils through positive practices such as communal prayer, reading the Qur'an, and interactions that emphasise good manners (Rahmawati & Hasanah, 2022). The religious learning approach adopted by teachers is conveyed not only through lectures but also through dialogic and reflective strategies that encourage pupils' understanding of religious values in the context of everyday life (Zen & Fitri, 2021).

Teachers play a vital role in helping pupils to internalise and put religious values into practice; indeed, teachers serve as role models whose commendable behaviour is worth emulating. It is not just form tutors or teachers who teach during lesson time, but all teachers and the wider school community who must implement and apply religious values within the school environment until they become second nature and can be applied in everyday life.

Findings from direct research, conducted through interviews with Islamic Education (PAI) teachers at Hafizul Ilmi Blang Krueng Islamic Primary School, indicate that the role of teachers in helping pupils internalise religious values involves direct application with the pupils. For example, in the event of a fight, bullying or a quarrel between pupils, the teacher resolves the issue by reconciling the pupils at , encouraging them to reflect on their own mistakes, and then

explaining to them that such behaviour is wrong and can affect friendships as well as their emotional well-being; because arguments inevitably cause children to feel hurt, offended and so on, even minor or trivial matters must be addressed and resolved.<sup>1</sup>

In light of such situations, teachers provide direct instruction by demonstrating and explaining to pupils the importance of commendable behaviour, apologising and forgiving. As for who is at fault or who is to blame, the one who apologises first is the more magnanimous and the better person

### **Implementation of the Strategy for the Internalisation of Religious Values Applied at SD IT Hafizul Ilmi, Gampong Blang Krueng**

The implementation of strategies for the internalisation of religious values in schools can be carried out through three main approaches, namely modelling, habituation and reinforcement. According to Sutarto (2018), teachers' role modelling forms the strongest foundation for instilling religious values, as pupils find it easier to understand moral teachings when they observe them being practised directly in everyday life. Furthermore, Suyatno et al. (2019) emphasise that habituation—such as communal prayer, greetings, mutual respect, and maintaining the cleanliness of the school environment—constitutes a tangible form of internalisation strategy capable of shaping religious behaviour in a sustainable manner. In the context of learning activities, Rahmawati & Hasanah (2022) explain that the internalisation of religious values must be integrated into all learning activities, not just in Religious Education (PAI) lessons, so that religious values become part of the school culture. The implementation of strategies to internalise religious values among pupils by teachers and staff within the school environment of the ' ' is carried out by organising religious activities. These are not confined to Religious Education lessons but form an integral part of the school's culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Results of an interview with C, an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher, on 24 November 2025

Based on the findings from direct observation of Islamic Education (PAI) teachers and interviews with them, the teachers explained that the school implements daily religious activities, including Dhuha prayers in the musalla in the morning, followed by a sermon before lessons begin, and then a prayer. Furthermore, once in the classroom, the teacher conducting the lesson or activity would remind pupils of and reinforce the material covered by the teacher in the prayer room.

The implementation of existing school policies and regulations regarding the internalisation of religious values greatly supports the development of pupils' religious character. This begins with daily congregational Dhuha prayers, followed by lessons on instilling religious values that are consistently integrated into pupils' daily lives, enabling them to apply these values within their peer groups and social circles.

In the process of instilling religious values in pupils, teachers also draw on verses from the Qur'an and the Hadith, as well as the stories of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, which serve as exemplary role models for the pupils.

Thanks to the strategies for instilling religious values in the development of pupils' religious character—which have already been implemented—it has become easier for pupils to apply Islamic values in their daily lives, whether at school, amongst their friends, or at home. However, as teachers or educational staff, we should remind them more frequently of what is good, as well as of what is forbidden or wrong. Consequently, pupils are better able to recall what they have been taught at school.

### **Results of Habituation Following the Internalisation of Religious Values in Shaping the Religious Character of Pupils at SD IT Hafizul Ilmi, Gampong Blang Krueng**

The results of the programme to instil religious values in shaping the religious character of pupils at SD IT Hafizul Ilmi, Gampong Blang Krueng, which has already been implemented, have yielded positive outcomes. The introduction

of rules and the organisation of various religious activities at the school have had a positive impact on the pupils, making them more disciplined, more responsible, more respectful of one another, and fostering other positive qualities.

The internalisation of these religious values shapes the cognitive aspect through pupils' understanding of the religious teachings, concepts and values they are learning. In this regard, pupils are able to explain the meaning of worship, understand the moral values within religious teachings, recognise the commandments and prohibitions, and relate their religious knowledge to everyday situations. Cognitive development indicates that pupils not only practise their religion but also understand the reasons, purposes and wisdom behind each teaching they follow. With a sound cognitive understanding, pupils are better able to make moral decisions in line with religious values.

The internalisation of these religious values can also foster spiritual, psychomotor and social aspects of pupils' religious character through the development of their awareness and adherence to religious teachings. This includes the habit of praying, a sense of gratitude, sincerity, discipline in worship, and the ability to understand the significance of religious values in daily life. Furthermore, it encompasses the skills required for worship, such as performing prayers with the correct movements, reciting the Qur'an properly, and engaging in physical activities that support religious values, such as maintaining cleanliness and order. In this regard, pupils not only understand these values but are also able to put them into practice. Through the application of these religious values, pupils demonstrate politeness, respect for others, cooperation, honesty, empathy, compassion, and the ability to interact ethically. Social behaviour reflects the successful internalisation of religious values in interpersonal relationships.

There are very few obstacles to the internalisation of religious values in the development of religious character among pupils, owing to the reciprocal relationship between teachers and pupils. Teachers explain and present material on religious values, after which pupils apply them in their daily lives, with teachers serving as role models for them in putting these religious values into practice.

Cooperation between teachers and parents is also a key factor in fostering the internalisation of religious values among pupils; communication between the school or teachers and parents makes it easier for parents to supervise their children at home. Teachers inform parents of the religious values covered or taught at school that day, so that parents can then apply and monitor these teachings to ensure that what has been learnt at school continues to be practised at home.

## CONCLUSION

The role of teachers in instilling religious values in pupils is a crucial factor in the successful development of religious character. Teachers do not merely act as educators, but also serve as primary role models whose behaviour is observed and emulated by pupils. Setting a good example, fostering habits, and reinforcing these values are the main strategies employed by teachers to instil religious values on an ongoing basis, whether through regular acts of worship such as the Dhuha prayer, communal prayer, and recitation of the Qur'an, or through conflict resolution that teaches moral values such as apologising, forgiving, self-reflection, and fostering good relationships.

Overall, the consistent internalisation of religious values practised at school is capable of shaping pupils' religious character holistically. Support from teachers, the school environment, and parental involvement ensures that this character-building process is more effective and sustainable, enabling pupils to apply Islamic values in their school life, friendships, and within the family environment.

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