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STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EDUCATION AT MBUANG-MBUANG ONE-STOP STATE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, BOKAN ISLANDS DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Strengthening religious character education is a strategic problem in the world of education, especially in one-stop schools in the archipelago which are faced with limited facilities, infrastructure, and human resources. The development of technology and the current of globalization also affect the attitudes and behaviors of students, so schools are required not only to emphasize academic achievements, but also the formation of religious character in a sustainable manner. This study aims to describe the program to strengthen religious character education, analyze its implementation strategy through the Reading and Write Al-Qur'an (BTQ) approach and Qur'anic habituation, and identify obstacles and challenges in its implementation at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang, Bokan Kepulauan District. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The research participants included principals, teachers, and students who were selected using purposive sampling techniques. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, while data analysis used the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive analysis model which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that the program to strengthen religious character education through BTQ activities and daily Qur'an literacy has a positive impact on the formation of students' character, especially in improving discipline, politeness, and worship habits. The program implementation strategy is supported by the example of teachers, the leadership of the principal, and religious habits that are integrated into the school culture. The main obstacles faced include limited learning media, coaching staff, and supporting facilities for religious activities. This study concludes that strengthening BTQ-based religious character education is effectively applied to schools with limited facilities if supported by school commitment and collaboration with parents. The implications of this study confirm the importance of developing a contextual and sustainable model of religious character education for one-stop schools in the archipelago.

KEYWORDS: religious character education, Read and write the Qur'an, Qur'anic habituation, one-stop school.

INTRODUCTION

Strengthening religious character education is a strategic issue in the national education system, especially in the midst of the challenges of globalization and the degradation of moral values in junior high school-age students. The development of technology and information flows that are not optimally filtered have the potential to affect students' attitudes, behaviors, and mindsets, so that education is not enough to be oriented only to academic achievements, but also to instill religious, moral, and ethical values in a sustainable manner (Komalasari & Saripudin, 2018). Religious character education is seen as an important foundation in shaping the personality of students who have faith, piety, and noble character as mandated by the goals of national education (Wibowo, 2019).

In response to this issue, researchers are of the view that schools, especially in archipelagic and remote areas, have a strategic role in internalizing religious values in a contextual and sustainable manner. Strengthening religious character education does not have to depend on the completeness of infrastructure, but on the consistency of programs, teacher examples, and the habituation of values in daily learning activities (Ladamay & Jabbar, 2024). Mbuang-Mbuang One-Stop State Junior High School, Bokon Islands District, shows the practice of strengthening religious character through the Reading and Writing of the Qur'an (BTQ) approach and the habituation of the Qur'an that is relevant to the socio-cultural conditions of students.

A number of previous studies have shown that religious character education is effective in improving students' attitudes of discipline, responsibility, and spiritual awareness (Suyatno et al., 2019). Other research confirms that the integration of religious values in learning is able to shape students' character holistically (Anwar et al., 2022). Nevertheless, most of the research was conducted in urban schools or schools with adequate facilities. There are still limited studies that examine in depth the implementation of strengthening religious character education in one-stop schools in the archipelago with limited resources, especially through the BTQ approach as the main strategy for character development.

The novelty of this research lies in an in-depth study of strengthening BTQ-based religious character education and Qur'anic habituation integrated with the Independent Curriculum in the context of one-stop schools in the archipelago. Theoretically, this research is based on the concept of character education which emphasizes the development of values through habituation, example, and internalization of moral-religious values in all educational activities (Lickona, 2018). In addition, Al-Ghazali's view of moral education that balances spiritual and worldly aspects is a philosophical foundation in understanding the relevance of religious character education in formal schools (Mainuddin et al., 2023).

Based on this description, the focus of this research is directed at the program to strengthen religious character education, implementation strategies, as well as obstacles and challenges faced at Mbuang-Mbuang One-Stop State Junior High School, Bokon Kepulauan District. The purpose of this study is

to comprehensively describe the program to strengthen religious character education, analyze its implementation strategy through the BTQ approach and Qur'anic habituation, and identify obstacles and challenges that arise in its implementation, so that it can be a reference for the development of character education in schools with similar characteristics.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a type of qualitative research with the aim of understanding in depth the process, meaning, and dynamics of the implementation of strengthening religious character education in the school environment. Qualitative research was chosen because it is able to explore social reality in a naturalistic way and emphasizes contextual understanding of the behavior, experiences, and interactions of research subjects (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In the context of character education, qualitative approaches are relevant to uncover religious values, habits, and practices that cannot be measured quantitatively (Suyatno et al., 2019).

The research design used is a case study, focusing on one research location, namely SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang, Bokan Kepulauan District. The case study was chosen because it allows researchers to examine in depth and comprehensively the phenomenon of strengthening religious character education in a typical social, cultural, and geographical context (Yin, 2018). This design provides space for researchers to understand the practice of BTQ-based character education and Qur'anic habituation as a unique case that cannot be generalized widely, but is rich in meaning and theoretical implications (Rahman & Nurhayati, 2021).

The research participants included school principals, subject teachers, Islamic religious education teachers, and students of Mbuang-Mbuang-Mbuang One-Stop State Junior High School. The selection of participants was carried out by purposive sampling technique, namely selecting informants who are considered to have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the implementation of strengthening religious character education in schools (Etikan et al., 2018). This technique is seen as appropriate in qualitative research because it emphasizes the depth of information rather than the number of participants. The number of informants is adjusted to the principle of data sufficiency (data saturation), where data collection is stopped when the information obtained has been repeated and does not produce new findings (Guest et al., 2020).

The main instrument in this study is the researcher himself, who acts as an observer, interviewer, and data analyst. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation is used to observe the learning process, interaction between teachers and students, and religious habituation activities in schools. In-depth interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with principals, teachers, and students to explore understanding, experiences, and strategies for strengthening religious character education (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Documentation includes analysis of Merdeka curriculum documents, P5 teaching modules, school programs, and records of religious activities, which function to strengthen and verify data from observations and interviews (Bowen, 2019).

This research was carried out at Mbuang-Mbuang One-Stop State Junior High School for four weeks, from the beginning to the end of May 2025. The presence of researchers is carried out directly on active school days, Monday to Friday, adjusting to the learning schedule and school activities.

Data analysis was carried out using the interactive analysis model of Miles et al., (2020) which includes three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction is carried out by selecting and focusing data that is relevant to strengthening religious character education. The data that has been reduced is then presented in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic groupings to facilitate the understanding of patterns and relationships between concepts. The final stage is the drawing of conclusions that are carried out continuously and verified through triangulation of sources and techniques, as well as member checking to ensure the validity and credibility of the findings.

RESEARCH RESULTS

In this section, the results of the research will be presented regarding: (1) The program to strengthen character education at Mbuang-Mbuang-Mbuang State Junior High School; (2) The strategy for the implementation of the character education strengthening program at Mbuang-Mbuang One-Stop State Junior High School; (3) Obstacles and challenges of the character education strengthening program at Mbuang-mbuang-mwang One-Tap State Junior High School. The following is a description of the research results.

Character education strengthening program at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang

One of the activities that is routinely carried out is the activity of learning to read and write the Qur'an, because this activity is a step to form a good personality or morals for students at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang, this activity is periodically carried out in collaboration between students and students of SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang and SDN Mbuang-mbuang, in this activity guided by Islamic Religious Education subject teachers of SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang and SDN Mbuang-Mbuang. This activity is very good in the formation of morals and ethics for students because learning to read and write the Qur'an is a step to instill religious values in forming good character for students as conveyed by the following principal.

"As a school leader, I ensure that the program to strengthen character education at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang runs in a planned manner through religious activities, especially the learning of Reading and Writing the Qur'an which is carried out every Friday and habituating Qur'an literacy every morning before learning activities begin. Based on the evaluation I conducted, this activity has a real positive impact on the formation of students' character, especially in improving discipline, politeness, and worship habits. The behavior of students who previously often used harsh language and mocked each other is now rare and no longer heard, because they have become accustomed to Qur'anic literacy activities, such as reciting hijaiyah letters well, memorizing short letters, and practicing daily prayers in daily life."

The results of the interview with the principal are supported by the results of interviews with other sources as follows.

"The religious activities that we carry out regularly every Friday have the full support of the school principal, so that the implementation can run in a directed and sustainable manner. In this activity, students are accustomed to reciting the hijaiyah letters correctly, which begins with the activity of tadarus Al-Qur'an, prayer reading before studying, dhikr before learning the Qur'an, and closing with the recitation of prayer. I see that the enthusiasm of the students is very high in participating in this religious activity, especially because of the direction and continuous support from the principal. However, we still face some limitations, especially related to the availability of activity venues and learning support facilities, such as Iqra' books, sound systems, and Qur'an mushaf which are still insufficient."

Implementation strategy for strengthening character education program at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang

The strategy for the implementation of the character education strengthening program at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang is carried out through religious habituation that is integrated into school activities, such as learning to Read and Write the Qur'an every Friday and Qur'an literacy every morning before learning begins. The implementation of this activity is supported by the example of teachers and the role of the principal in providing direction, supervision, and motivation in a sustainable manner. Through this strategy, religious values, discipline, and politeness of students can be internalized in daily behavior in the school environment.

"As the principal, I provide full support for the Qur'an Reading and Writing learning program by providing direction and supervision, as well as receiving input related to the learning strategies and models used so that the program really has a positive impact on students. In its implementation, we use a method of how to quickly read the Qur'an for 10 hours which has been proven to be effective and able to increase students' enthusiasm in learning to read the Qur'an. However, we still face limited facilities, because we do not have a prayer room or a special room, so the learning activities of Reading and Writing the Qur'an are temporarily carried out in classrooms that must be prepared first before use."

Furthermore, the teacher who supervised religious activities through an interview explained that.

"As a teacher, I implement this religious program well and responsibly, collaborating with Islamic Religious Education Teachers at SDN Mbuang-mbuang. With the full support of the Principal who always gives us clear directions so that we carry out this program well, even from the beginning of us he was directly involved in the activity to provide constructive input. To maintain the students' enthusiasm for learning, I usually use a variety of methods, or give rewards to students who have shown significant progress. Every child certainly has difficulty in absorbing lessons, there are also those who need longer learning time, for slow students I give extra attention, or even I ask students to learn extra outside of my lesson hours or provide special personal guidance"

Obstacles and challenges of the character education strengthening program at Mbuang-mbuang One-Tap State Junior High School

Facing these various obstacles and challenges requires a comprehensive and sustainable approach. It requires a strong commitment from all parties involved, innovation in learning methods, adequate system support, and an understanding that learning the Qur'an is a long-term process that requires patience and perseverance.

The identification of these obstacles should be the basis for designing a more effective strategy so that the program can run optimally and provide maximum benefits for participants as conveyed by the following Principal.

"In the implementation of the Qur'an Reading and Writing program, we still face several obstacles, especially the limitations of learning media such as Iqra' and Al-Qur'an books, as well as the lack of coaches in accordance with their fields. Nevertheless, I continue to strive to complete the facilities and add coaches so that religious activities can run more optimally in shaping the character of students. This program is also supported through cooperation with students' parents, so that the habit of good morals, such as diligently reading the Qur'an, being polite, and disciplined in worship, can be applied both at school and at home."

The formation of children's religious character does not only take place at school but is also strengthened through parental supervision and guidance in the home environment, as the results of interviews with other speakers below.

"As a teacher who carries out these religious activities, of course, do not forget to involve all elements of teachers in the school and also through the direction of the principal directly, related to the existing challenges, I believe that the principal is able to provide solutions to us in carrying out these activities continuously so that this program continues to run well. It is true that there is still a lack of Qur'anic literacy learning media, but with the method implemented, this process will continue to run well by maximizing existing resources."

DISCUSSION

Strengthening religious character education at Mbuang-mbuang State Junior High School of course there are several things, namely (1) the program to strengthen character education at the Mbuang-mbuang one-stop State Junior High School; (2) the implementation strategy of the character education strengthening program at the one-stop state junior high school in mbuang-mbuang; (3) Obstacles and Challenges of the Character Education Strengthening Program at One-Stop State Junior High School in Mbuang-Mbuang. The following is a description of the research results.

Character education strengthening program at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang

The implementation of the character education strengthening program at Mbuang-Mbuang State Junior High School One Tap through the Qur'an Reading and Writing activity shows that there is a significant internalization of religious values in the behavior of students. Interviews with school principals and educators revealed that the habituation of Qur'an literacy every morning and routine activities every

Friday is not only a religious routine, but also has a real positive impact in improving discipline, politeness, and keeping students away from negative behaviors such as the use of coarse language. This habituation pattern is in line with previous findings in the context of Islamic education which show that the incorporation of religious practices such as tadarus, joint prayer, and habituation of values in school activities is able to strengthen the moral character of students as a whole (Nurul Jadid & Kamilah, 2025).

These findings have important implications that character-building strategies integrated with religious activities can be effective models in other schools with similar contexts, especially in blending curriculum values with religious school culture (Ruswandi et al., 2023). However, this research has limitations that need to be considered, namely the limitations of facilities and infrastructure such as the Iqra' book, the number of Qur'anic mushafs, and inadequate special places for religious activities; This is also noted as a common challenge in the implementation of religious character education in various studies of Islamic education (Khairani & Rosyidi, 2022). Another limitation is that the research focuses more on interviewing key informants without quantitative measurements to support statistical generalizations of findings.

Implementation strategy for strengthening character education program at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-mbuang

The implementation of the program strategy to strengthen character education at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang is focused on structured religious habituation, especially the activity of Reading and Writing the Qur'an every Friday and Qur'an literacy in the morning before learning begins. School principals play an active role in providing direction, supervision, and continuous motivation, as well as receiving input related to effective learning models such as the method of how to quickly read the Qur'an for 10 hours, which has been proven to increase students' enthusiasm in the learning process. The supervisor added that collaboration with Islamic Religious Education teachers at SDN Mbuang-Mbuang and a variety of learning methods, including providing rewards and special guidance for students in need, are part of the strategy to maintain the spirit of learning and support the diversity of students' learning needs. This strategy shows that the approach to religious habituation is not only a formal ritual, but is able to internalize the values of discipline, politeness, and responsibility in students' daily behavior.

These findings are in line with studies that show that the integration of religious values habituation in school curriculum and culture has a significant impact on the formation of students' character (Sitorus, 2024). The study emphasizes that character-building strategies that include spiritual habituation, teacher example, and continuous monitoring from school management can strengthen the internalization of moral and religious values. The implication of these findings is that planned and collaborative religious learning strategies can be the best model in the context of community-based schools or remote areas. However, the limitations of this study include the limitation of supporting facilities such as the unavailability of prayer rooms or special rooms for learning the Qur'an, which force activities to be carried out in public classrooms so as to affect the comfort of the learning process.

The limitations of these facilities are similar to the challenges in character education found by other studies where limited facilities are an obstacle to strengthening religious character in schools (Rahman & Fitriani, 2023).

Obstacles and challenges of the character education strengthening program at Mbuang-mbuang One-Tap State Junior High School

Based on the results of field interviews, the main obstacle in the implementation of the program to strengthen religious character education at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang lies in the limitations of learning facilities, such as the lack of Iqra' books, Qur'anic mushaf, and the lack of coaches who have special competence in the field of Reading and Writing the Qur'an. This condition requires commitment and continuous efforts from the school to continue to run the program optimally by maximizing the available resources. This finding is in line with the research of Rahman and Fitriani (2023) who stated that limited facilities and human resources are common challenges in the implementation of religious character education, especially in schools with certain geographical and social conditions. Nevertheless, the support of the principal's leadership that is responsive to the needs of the program is an important factor in maintaining the continuity of activities and preventing the process of habituation of religious values.

In addition to limited facilities, another challenge faced is the sustainability of student character formation outside the school environment, which is highly dependent on the involvement of parents and the collaboration of all elements of teachers. In this context, cooperation between school and family is an important implication of the research findings, because moral habits such as diligently reading the Qur'an, being polite, and disciplined in worship cannot be formed instantly, but through a long-term and consistent process (Sitorus, 2024). However, the limitation of this study lies in the absence of a standardized written evaluation system related to parental involvement and the effectiveness of advanced coaching at home, so that the measurement of program impact is still qualitative and contextual. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the monitoring system and innovate learning strategies so that the character education strengthening program can run more effectively and sustainably.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the strengthening of religious character education at SMP Negeri Satu Atap Mbuang-Mbuang is carried out through an integrated religious habituation program, especially the daily Qur'an Reading and Writing activities, which have been proven to have a positive impact on the formation of students' character, such as increasing discipline, politeness, and worship habits, although they are still faced with limited facilities and resources support. This research contributes to the development of educational science, especially the study of religious character education, by showing that a religious habituation approach based on school culture, principal's leadership, and teacher-parent collaboration can be an effective model in the context of one-stop schools or areas with limited facilities. Recommendations for further research are the need to develop studies with a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative data,

expand the research subjects, and examine more deeply the role of parental involvement and continuous evaluation systems in increasing the effectiveness of religious character education strengthening programs Top of Form.

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