



Implementation of Religion-based Character Education at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon

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Abstract. This research aims to determine the process and form of implementation of religion-based character education, as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. The research method used is descriptive qualitative research with several data collection techniques, namely literature study, observation, and interviews. The research subjects were the principal, religious teachers, and various parties in the school. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling. The results of the study can be concluded that: (1) The process of implementing religion-based character education at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon City has been carried out in the form of daily, weekly, monthly, and annual activity programs; (2) The supporting factors are the good cooperation between school leaders, teachers and education personnel as well as the students themselves and parents who give a positive response; and (3) The inhibiting factors encountered include the low understanding of students of the importance of religious education, especially morals due to different religious knowledge and the majority of students are junior high school graduates. The solution is to conduct stimulant activities regarding religion-based character education through exemplary teachers, educating with love, self-awareness toward more mature students, and so on. In overcoming these obstacles, one is packaged as activities for the Night of Faith and Taqwa (MABIT).

Keywords: Process Implementation, Religion-based Character Education, Senior High School Education.

1 Introduction

Character education is an effort to shape an individual's personality through the development of ethics. It involves good manners, honesty, responsibility, and other positive values. Experts such as Lickona [1], Williams and Schnaps [2], and Creasy and Kusuma [3] Describe character education as cooperation between schools, parents, and communities to develop thinking competencies, moral principles, and the courage to do right. The goal is to help children and adolescents grow up with caring, positive, and responsible characters. In this case, the character is not something innate but can be instilled and developed in the individual through education.

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According to Suyadi [4], eighteen character values must be instilled in students to build the nation's character. These values include religion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, national spirit, love of the motherland, respect for achievements, communication, love of peace, love of reading, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility [4]. Nevertheless, the distinctive character of Prophet Muhammad includes four aspects, namely *siddiq*, *tabligh*, *amanah*, and *fathanah* [5]. The application of religious values in character education refers to the basic principles of Islam. Character building requires a process, and identifying character values in schools is important in determining competency standards and learning materials.

To succeed in faith-based character education, it is necessary to transfer knowledge and culture. Religion plays a role in the cultivation of values, the development of faith, and moral adjustment. In the Qur'an, it has been explained that Prophet Muhammad SAW sent to the earth as *uswatun Hashanah* (good example) (Q.S. Al-Ahzab ayat 21). In the hadith narrated by Al-Baihaqi, it is also explained that the Prophet Muhammad SAW was assigned to the earth to perfect the morals of humanity [6].

In Islam, character and morals have the same meaning, emphasizing human behavior. Basic skills in faith-based character education include faith, understanding the Qur'an, worshiping, exemplifying Rasulullah, and *muamalat* Islam. Character education requires practical implementation. Dependence on technology and foreign cultures has distanced learners from cultural and religious values. The application of faith-based character education still needs to be an alternative for today's young generation. Faith-based character education includes instilling intelligence, internalizing noble values, and applying them in attitudes and behaviors, effectively involving the entire school community.

Research on character education at a high school in 2 Semarang and character education models through the AIKA curriculum at the University of Muhammadiyah Prof Dr HAMKA has been conducted by Qowaid [7] and Tohirin [8]. Qowaid [7] found that character education at a high school in 2 Semarang is integrated through various aspects of learning and involves Religious Education and Ethics. Tohirin [8] noted that University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. HAMKA developed a character education model with a structured and systematic AIKA curriculum. Both highlight the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of character education. Meanwhile, Siti Muhibbah (2020) emphasized that character education is integrated through classroom learning methods and student activities. Islamic Religious Education lecturers and campus facilities are supportive, but obstacles include student unseriousness and heterogeneity [9].

Cahyani and Raharjo [10] revealed that character education is implemented through the planning, implementation, evaluation, and results stages. This process includes 9 of the nation's 18-character values, such as religious, honest, and creative. The supporting factors involve parents and teachers who provide motivation. However, inhibiting factors include environmental influences and immaturity of adolescent thinking. Evaluation is carried out to monitor changes in behavior according to ethics and morals of character education [10]. Meanwhile, in their research, Ahdar and Musyarif [11] found that juvenile delinquency in Liliriaja Village was influenced by globalization factors, uncontrolled association, lack of Islamic

education, and low example. Islamic education emphasizes the improvement of faith, piety, social, intellectual, and individual awareness.

Research on character education at a high school in 2 Semarang and character education models through the AIKA curriculum at the University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. HAMKA raises various aspects and supporting and inhibiting factors. Character education is integrated into various student learning and activities by involving PAI lecturers and campus facilities. Meanwhile, in another study, juvenile delinquency in Liliraja Village was influenced by globalization factors and a lack of Islamic education. Evaluation and social environment play an important role in developing adolescent character and behavior. Based on some of the problems in the background that the researcher wrote, the researcher is interested in raising the research title to "Implementation of religion-based character education at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon".

2 Method

This descriptive qualitative study aims to describe the process of religion-based character education at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon City. The approach used is the behavioral psychology approach. The data collection techniques used were: (1) document review to find out the programs and activities of religion-based character education that have been planned at school; (2) interviews to collect data related to the planning process and implementation of religion-based character education at school; and (3) observations were made to find out directly about the implementation of religion-based character education at school. The research subjects were the principal, religious teachers, and various parties in the school. The sampling technique used is non-probability, which only selects certain informants who are considered to have accurate and adequate information about the problem to be studied. Data were analyzed qualitatively descriptive-narrative through data reduction, triangulation, and inference. The results of this study are expected to provide an overview of the implementation of religion-based character education in schools and its impact on student character.

3 Findings and Discussion

Faith-based character education at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon is a significant effort that aims to improve students' intelligence, knowledge, personality, noble character, and skills. This research will discuss how the faith-based character education program in these schools is implemented. In this context, the discussion is divided into three main points: the process and form of implementation of faith-based character education, supporting factors in implementing this program, obstacles that may be faced, and efforts to overcome them.

3.1 Implementation of Religion-Based Character Education

The process and form of implementation of faith-based character education at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon is divided into 4 programs, namely: (1) daily programs and activities, (2) weekly programs and activities; (3) monthly programs and activities; and (4) annual programs and activities. The daily programs and activities carried out consist of tadarus Al-Qur'an activities, Dzuhur prayers in congregation, and seven-minute lectures (kultum). In the Qur'anic tadarus activity, every student is required to do the Qur'anic tadarus every morning. This tadarus activity is carried out to build student character with moral education that is integrated with God and to appreciate all of His creations. The next daily activity is Dzuhur prayer in congregation and kultum where in this activity all students and teachers are required to perform Dzuhur prayer together or in congregation at the school mosque. Here, teachers set an example by performing prayers on time and in congregation, as well as providing a kultum that contains motivation, religious discussion, and self-introspection.

The next program is the weekly program and activities. There are two activities in this weekly program, namely advice given during the flag ceremony and clean Friday activities. The advice to students in the flag ceremony was delivered by the master of ceremonies (Principal of SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon) which contained morality to God, living beings, and the environment. This ceremony mandate activity aims to make students understand social morality.

Furthermore, Friday clean-up activities are carried out by cleaning the environment around the school which is routinely carried out on Friday mornings. This clean Friday activity is a character education initiative that aims to promote the values of cleanliness and respect for the environment to students. This clean Friday activity has previously been implemented in various schools in Indonesia, such as SMA Negeri 8 Bekasi [12], Madani Elementary School in Cilegon, Banten [13], and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nur Riska in Lubuklinggau City [14]. The program involves routine activities conducted on Fridays to clean the school environment, with the participation of students and teachers. Through this program, students learn the importance of cleanliness, cooperation, responsibility, and care for the environment [15], [16]. These values are seen as important for character education and can be integrated into the school curriculum to instill a sense of environmental care and cleanliness among students.

Monthly programs and activities carried out at SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon as an implementation of faith-based character education is the holding of the Faith and Taqwa Development Night (MABIT) program. This Faith and Taqwa Development Night (MABIT) activity lasts for one night and aims to equip students with faith and devotion, and it is hoped that after the MABIT activity is completed, students can implement it in their daily lives. During the MABIT program, students engage in activities such as Islamic motivational recitations, self-reflection, Quran recitation, night prayers, and spiritual exercises that are conducted to strengthen faith values, with rewards and punishments used as evaluation tools to strengthen their beliefs and moral values. The program faces challenges such as lack of parental awareness and difficulty in waking up students for night prayers. The implementation of the MABIT

program has shown positive results in improving students' discipline, not only in the implementation of religious activities but also in other aspects of their lives [17].

Annual programs and activities carried out by SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon as an implementation of faith-based character education is by conducting 3 activities, namely: (1) praying together (istighotsah), (2) commemoration of Islamic holidays, and (3) Pesantren Kilat (Sanlat). The activity of praying together (istighotsah) is held before the final exam of the semester. It is intended that students' final semester exam activities run smoothly and students can get the scores they expect. Azizi et al. [18] and Rajin and Mawarti [19] revealed that prayer can help calm and relieve stress, so students can complete the exam smoothly. Furthermore, research by Ahmad [20] showed that Islamic religious activities, such as reading, writing, and understanding the Quran, can improve students' circadian rhythms and improve academic performance. Therefore, praying together activities before final exams can contribute to the sustainability of student exams where students can feel calm, relaxed, and not stressed in facing exams which will correlate to academic success.

Islamic commemorative activities involve activities undertaken to commemorate important Islamic events and often include visits to places of educational value with Islamic significance. Islamic commemorations are conducted on Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Quran, Islamic New Year, Isra Mi'raj commemoration, and so on. These activities aim to instill religious values in students and strengthen their relationship with God. In addition to visiting places of Islamic educational value in person, schools also program technology that can be used to develop systems that remind students of Islamic events and provide them with information, this is in line with previous research conducted by Munshi [21].

The last annual activity is the flash Islamic boarding school conducted during the month of Ramadan where students participate in various religious activities at school and lessons that focus on character values. The flash pesantren activity is an implementation of faith-based character education that aims to develop students' religious character, discipline, responsibility, and other positive traits.

3.2 Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Religion-Based Character Education

There are four factors supporting the implementation of faith-based character education, namely (1) religious and other teachers, (2) students' level of awareness, (3) internal and external school factors, and (4) stakeholder support. Teachers in schools play an important role in running the faith-based character education program and creating activities that help students understand religious values. They are responsible for instilling Islamic values in students by incorporating religious activities into the curriculum, such as prayer, habituation to religious practices and special religious events [22]–[26]. These activities aim to develop students' moral foundation, strengthen their religious character, and shape their behavior and attitudes in accordance with Islamic teachings. Teachers also need to create habits through special activities that are mandatory for students to participate in, such as prayers before and after learning, and scheduling various extracurricular religious activities. By working closely with parents, teachers ensure that the habits and values taught at

school are reinforced at home, creating a holistic approach to faith-based character education.

The next supporting factor is student awareness. Student awareness plays an important role in supporting the implementation of faith-based character education [27]. It is considered as one of the main factors contributing to students' religious character formation [28]. When students are self-aware and conscious of their actions, they are more likely to engage in commendable behavior and adhere to moral and religious values. In addition, support and motivation from parents, as well as the surrounding community, also play an important role in fostering students' self-awareness and character development [29]. By creating an environment that encourages and reinforces positive behaviour, students are more likely to internalize and practice the values taught through faith-based character education.

School internal and external factors also play an important role in the implementation of faith-based character education. These factors include teachers' strategies in planning and implementing character education, parents' involvement in reinforcing religious values and coordination between teachers and parents through various means of communication [30]. In addition, the school culture and curriculum also contribute to the implementation of character education, with programs and activities designed to develop the characters of religion, discipline and responsibility [31], [32]. The availability of good religious programs, facilities and infrastructure can also further support the implementation of religious character education in schools. Overall, internal and external factors in the school environment play an important role in shaping and strengthening religious character education.

The last supporting factor is stakeholder support. Mubin and Furqon [33] and Komalasari and Yakubu [29] revealed that stakeholder support plays an important role in the implementation of faith-based character education. Character education can be effectively realized through religious education, which integrates religious and moral values. The involvement of stakeholders, including teachers, parents and communities, is crucial in fostering character education. Teachers, in particular, have a role in fostering character education based on religion, cultural values, the environment and personal potential. Therefore, stakeholder support is essential for the successful implementation of faith-based character education.

3.3 Factors Inhibiting the Implementation of Religion-based Character Education

Based on the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers, there are 3 inhibiting factors for the implementation of religion-based character education, especially in SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon that can be identified by researchers, namely (1) teacher seriousness, (2) student attitudes, and (3) environmental influences. The inhibiting factor originating from the seriousness of the teacher arises because not all non-PAI (Islamic Religious Education) subject teachers have sufficient insight in terms of religion, making it difficult to integrate religion-based character education. This is in accordance with previous studies that have been conducted by Nurhaibi et al. [34] and Khoir et al. [35] where there are still non-PAI teachers who are not *semanhaj* and various kinds of educational patterns used by non-PAI teachers, so that

the implementation of religion-based character education is not maximally implemented.

The next inhibiting factor of faith-based character education is the attitude of students who are often more focused on their existence and environmental influences that have the potential to go in a negative direction. This is a challenge for schools, so with this, schools, teachers and guardians must be able to implement religious habituation in various activities that have been designed and foster a positive school culture in order to contribute to the development of faith-based character education.

The family environment plays an important role in shaping students' character, and if the family's social environment lacks positive values and moral orientation, it can have a negative impact on students' character development [36]. In addition, the presence of promiscuity outside of school can expose students to behaviors and influences that may be contrary to positive character traits. Therefore, overcoming challenges and obstacles in the family environment, such as parental education, economic conditions, and socio-cultural values in the family, is very important to foster a conducive environment for student character development [37]. Therefore, teachers and schools should be able to play an active role in promoting character education and creating a multicultural atmosphere to reduce the negative impact of family background and external influences [38], [39].

3.4 Handling Barriers to the Implementation of Religion-based Character Education

Handling that can be done as a solution in resolving obstacles encountered in the implementation of religion-based character education, especially in SMA Negeri 1 Cirebon is (1) habituation, (2) facilities and materials, (3) compassion method, and (4) identification of character values. Habituation is done by giving examples of good habits. Positive habituation can be implemented as a solution to overcome obstacles in the implementation of faith-based character education [40]–[42]. By doing habituation activities consistently and regularly, students can develop good habits that are aligned with religious values [43]. Implementing positive habituation can help overcome challenges such as students' different backgrounds, limited supervision, and lack of awareness.

Updating and procuring facilities and materials can help overcome the obstacles encountered in implementing faith-based character education Ayu et al. [40] mentioned that inadequate facilities and infrastructure can be an obstacle in implementing character education. Furthermore, according to Augita and Arif [44] mentioned that time constraints and facilities from schools are obstacles in implementing religion-based character education. Therefore, by providing adequate facilities and materials, such as learning media and complete facilities for religious activities, schools can overcome obstacles in implementing faith-based character education.

The implementation of faith-based character education can overcome barriers by practicing the method of compassion and embracing all students without discrimination based on social, economic and cultural backgrounds. Here teachers play an important role in providing compassionate advice and creating a positive and conducive school environment. In addition, involving parents in the implementation

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