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IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT IN THE FORMATION OF STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS CHARACTER AT RA ISLAM AN-NAAS

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ABSTRACT

The formation of religious character in early childhood has become a central concern in Islamic education, especially in responding to rapid social and cultural changes. Schools are increasingly expected to deliver academic knowledge and shape values that guide children's behavior and identity. This research explored how curriculum management contributes to cultivating religious character among students at RA Islam An-Naas Cakura, Takalar. Adopting a qualitative phenomenological design, this study involved teachers, school leaders, and parents as participants, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation, with the researcher as the primary instrument supported by field notes and recording tools. The findings reveal three main themes: integrating Islamic values into the curriculum, habituating religious practices such as prayer and Qur'an recitation, and the central role of teachers' modeling reinforced by parental support at home. Challenges such as inconsistent parental involvement and limited facilities emerged as significant barriers. This study concludes that effective curriculum management for character education relies on continuous collaboration between schools, families, and communities. Its contribution lies in extending character education theory by contextualizing it within Islamic early childhood education, while practically offering a model that strengthens home-school synergy in religious formation.

Keywords: curriculum management, religious character, early childhood education.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

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Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of moral degradation in the era of globalization has caused deep concern in society, especially regarding the loss of the younger generation's religious orientation and spiritual values¹ The rapid flow of modernization, globalization, and technological advancement has significantly impacted children's lifestyles, mindsets, and social behaviors, which often stray away from moral and religious values² In this context, religious education at an early age is seen as a fundamental instrument for building a spiritual foundation while forming a strong religious character³ Islamic education, as affirmed in the theory of character education by Lickona, focuses on integrating aspects of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action as the basis for the formation of intact noble morals⁴

Early childhood education, especially in the Raudhatul Athfal (RA) institution, has a strategic role in instilling religious values through worship activities, prayer habits, memorization of short surahs, and examples of daily attitudes. RA is not just a place to learn, but the first social environment where children internalize Islamic moral values⁵ Within the framework of Bronfenbrenner's developmental ecological theory, the formation of religious character is influenced by the interaction of family, school, and community systems that consistently instill spiritual values in children⁶ Thus, RA Islam An-Naas Cakura is a strategic space in building a generation of faith, morals, and Islamic character.

Previous research has shown a variety of strategies for the formation of religious character in various educational institutions. For example, Kasi (2023)

¹ Umi Nurjamilah, 'Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Values in Early Childhood Moral and Religious Development', *Journal of Childhood Development*, 4.2 (2024), pp. 510–21, doi:10.25217/jcd.v4i2.5136.

² Dwi Istiyani and others, 'Challenges and Opportunities in Early Childhood Religious and Moral Education: A Perspective from the Evaluation of Logical Models', *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7.2 (2024), pp. 233–49, doi:10.31538/nzh.v7i2.4843.

³ Ayu Intan Permana, Nurhafizah Nurhafizah, and Khairiyah Titi Wahyu Adibah, 'Strategies for Developing the Religious and Moral Aspects of Early Childhood', *Al-Athfaal: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 5.2 (2022), pp. 111–29, doi:10.24042/ajipa.v5i2.13970.

⁴ Hernik Farisia, 'Nurturing Religious and Moral Values at Early Childhood Education', *Didaktika Religia*, 8.1 (2020), pp. 1–27, doi:10.30762/didaktika.v8i1.1881.

⁵ Miftahul Jannah and others, 'FORMATION OF CHILD CHARACTER THROUGH RELIGIOUS CULTURE', *Proceeding of The International Conference on Economics and Business*, 1.1 (2022), pp. 237–49, doi:10.55606/iceb.v1i1.159.

⁶ Sandiko Sandiko and others, 'School Management in Forming Children's Religious Character', *AL-TANZIM: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 6.3 (2022), pp. 656–66, doi:10.33650/al-tanzim.v6i3.3383.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

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Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

found that tadarus Al-Qur'an effectively forms students' religious character at MTs Tholabuddin, although its success is highly dependent on facilities and teacher supervision ⁷ Meanwhile, Sipayung (2023) emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach through religious activities in junior high schools, combining cognitive, affective, and social aspects to instill religious values ⁸ Another study by Afidah (2023) at SDIT Ahmad Yani Malang shows that routine worship, such as congregational prayers, almsgiving, and sunnah fasting, can strengthen religiosity. However, it is still constrained by parental supervision and the influence of the environment outside the school ⁹

In addition, Agustina (2023) shows that scouting can also be a vehicle for internalizing religious values through extracurricular activities that emphasize discipline, solidarity, and spirituality. Furthermore, Ma'ruf's (2019) research at MA Tahfizul Qur'an Sambas confirms that integrating intracurricular, extracurricular, and religious programs can foster a strong Islamic spirit in students ¹⁰ However, the similarity of all these studies is that there are still limited studies on curriculum management as a strategic instrument in forming children's religious character, especially at the early childhood education level.

Although many studies emphasize the importance of habituation and example, there is still a research gap in how curriculum management is systematically implemented to internalize religious values in early childhood learners. Most previous research has focused on religious ritual activities or extracurricular approaches, while aspects of curriculum management, including planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning, have not received adequate attention. The curriculum is the heart of education that determines the direction, strategy, and consistency of school learning ¹¹

⁷ Moh Kasi, 'Strategi Pendidikan Karakter Religius Melalui Tadarus Al-Qur'an Di MTs Tholabuddin Masin Warungasem Batang' (UIN KH Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, 2023).

⁸ Ami Syadila Sipayung, 'Perkembangan (Kognitif, Fisik-Motorik, Sosio-Emosional) Dan Penanaman Nilai Agama Pada Masa Prnatal', *ARZUSIN*, 3.3 (2023), pp. 220–33, doi:10.58578/arzusin.v3i3.1085.

⁹ Fitri Nurul Afidah, 'Penguatan Karakter Religius Peserta Didik Melalui Kegiatan Pembiasaan Di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu Ahmad Yani Kota Malang' (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2023).

¹⁰ Amar Ma'ruf, 'Penanaman Karakter Religius Di Madrasah Aliyah Tahfizul Qur'an Istiqomah Sambas Purbalingga' (IAIN Purwokerto, 2019).

¹¹ Khairan Sari and others, 'Perananan Pelaksanaan Administrasi Kurikulum Pendidikan', *Perspektif: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Bahasa*, 3.1 (2025), pp. 41–51, doi:10.59059/perspektif.v3i1.2062; Ira Wirtati, Rizki Hasanah Nasution, and Muhammad Fuad Zaini Siregar, 'Curriculum Management as a Foundation for Effective Schools', *EDUTECH: Journal of Education And Technology*, 8.3 (2025), doi:10.29062/edu.v8i3.1101.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

This research gap is important because early childhood is in a sensitive developmental phase, where the internalization of values requires a structured, consistent, and appropriate approach to their developmental needs¹². In a qualitative approach, an in-depth exploration of the meaning, experience of teachers, and curriculum-based learning strategies in forming religious character will make an important contribution to the development of Islamic education theory and practice in RA.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on implementing curriculum management to shape the religious character of students at RA Islam An-Naas Cakura. Not only researching religious habituation practices or activities, this study examines how the curriculum is designed, organized, and implemented so that religious values can be integrated into all learning aspects¹³. Thus, this study presents a new perspective that forming religious character is not just an additional activity, but an integral part of curriculum management.

In addition, the context of the research conducted at RA Islam An-Naas Kasarura, Takalar Regency, presents its uniqueness. The local context, with a strong Islamic value base and socio-cultural challenges in the region, provides a different color from similar research in other regions. From a methodological perspective, this study uses a qualitative approach to explore the meaning of the experiences of teachers and students, thus producing more in-depth and humanistic findings than previous quantitative research.

In general, this research aims to describe and understand in depth how curriculum management is implemented in the formation of the religious character of students in RA Islam An-Naas Kasarura, Takalar Regency. This study seeks to explore the meaning behind educational practices, not just assessing results, so that it can enrich academic discourse on Islamic education at the early childhood level¹⁴

¹² Kasmiasi Kasmiasi, 'Internalization Methods Multicultural Value in Early Childhood Education', *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15.1 (2023), pp. 329–40, doi:10.35445/alishlah.v15i1.2769; Ni Luh Drahati Ekaningtyas and I Made Ardika Yasa, 'Internalization of Religious Values in Early Childhood', *Jurnal Syntax Transformation*, 3.12 (2022), pp. 1608–14, doi:10.46799/jst.v3i12.656.

¹³ Toni Gunawan Rambe, 'Student-Oriented Islamic Religious Education Curriculum Design: Integrating Spiritual Values and Modern Needs', *LECTURES: Journal of Islamic and Education Studies*, 4.1 (2025), pp. 131–43, doi:10.58355/lectures.v4i1.134; Nuni Norlianti, Siti Rabiatal Aliyah, and Habib Zainuri, 'Principles of Islamic Religious Education Curriculum Development', *ISTIFHAM: Journal Of Islamic Studies*, 2024, pp. 206–14, doi:10.71039/istifham.v2i3.71.

¹⁴ Muhammad Amirul Ramli, 'Early Childhood Education in Islamic Perspective', *Bulletin of Early Childhood*, 1.1 (2022), p. 31, doi:10.51278/bec.v1i1.416.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

This study also aims to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in forming religious character. Thus, the research results are expected not only to make a theoretical contribution in the field of Islamic education management, but also to provide practical recommendations relevant for teachers, schools, and education policy makers.

The specific objectives of this research are: first, to explore the curriculum management strategies used by teachers in shaping the religious character of students ¹⁵ Second is understanding students' experiences internalizing religious values through integrated learning ¹⁶ Third, analyze the factors that support and hinder the process, both from the internal aspects of the school and external influences such as family and community ¹⁷

The research questions answered in this study include: how is the implementation of curriculum management in forming religious character in RA Islam An-Naas Cakura? What factors support and hinder the process? What strategies do teachers use to overcome these obstacles? The answers to these questions are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of implementing a religion-based curriculum in early childhood education.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with phenomenological design because it aims to deeply understand the experiences of teachers and students in the implementation of curriculum management for the formation of religious character ¹⁸ Phenomenology was chosen because it can explore the subjective meaning of the educational phenomenon at RA Islam An-Naas Cakura and place the participants' experiences as the primary source of understanding ¹⁹ The research location is at RA Islam An-Naas Cakura, Takalar Regency, which was chosen because this institution combines academic education and the habituation

¹⁵ Mumuh Muhtarom and others, 'Islamic Religious Education Learning Management in Forming the Religious Character of Students', *International Journal of Nusantara Islam*, 9.2 (2021), pp. 411–25, doi:10.15575/ijni.v9i2.16577.

¹⁶ Hasan Baharun and others, 'Optimizing Independent Curriculum Management to Shape Excellent Student Character', *Nidhomul Haq : Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 9.3 (2024), pp. 503–16, doi:10.31538/ndhq.v9i3.19.

¹⁷ Sandiko and others, 'School Management in Forming Children's Religious Character'.

¹⁸ Brian Bantugan, 'Qualitative Mindset behind Phenomenology: Implications to Qualitative Research Training', *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, IX.IV (2025), pp. 4627–41, doi:10.47772/IJRIS.2025.90400331.

¹⁹ Ivan Aldrich Urcia, 'Comparisons of Adaptations in Grounded Theory and Phenomenology: Selecting the Specific Qualitative Research Methodology', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20 (2021), doi:10.1177/16094069211045474.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

of religious values from an early age. Participants were determined through purposive sampling, involving teachers, principals, and several students, with the number of participants adjusted to the principle of data saturation. In qualitative research, participants are selected not based on quantity, but on the data quality that can provide depth of information ²⁰

Data collection techniques include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were used to capture the real practice of religious character formation in daily activities, while in-depth interviews were conducted with structured question guidelines so that the researcher obtained a rich narrative from the participant's perspective. Documentation in the form of school policy notes, photos of activities, and internal archives was used to reinforce the findings ²¹ In qualitative research, researchers serve as the primary instrument that determines the direction and quality of data through sensitivity, critical reflection, and full involvement in the field. Auxiliary instruments in the form of interview guidelines, observation sheets, field notes, and recording devices are also used to improve the accuracy of the data ²² The research process is carried out in stages, from instrument preparation, data collection, recording, transcription of interview results, to validation through member checking techniques that allow participants to reconfirm the results of the researcher's interpretation ²³

Data analysis was carried out thematically by following the steps of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data reduction is carried out by selecting relevant information and presenting it as thematic categories to see patterns ²⁴ Conclusions were drawn iteratively, verified with field notes, and validated through triangulation of sources, methods, and time. The data validity strategy is strengthened by trail audits, peer debriefing, and triangulation,

²⁰ Yoki Yusanto, 'Ragam Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif', *JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION (JSC)*, 1.1 (2020), doi:10.31506/jsc.v1i1.7764.

²¹ Cecilia Vindrola-Padros and Ginger A. Johnson, 'Rapid Techniques in Qualitative Research: A Critical Review of the Literature', *Qualitative Health Research*, 30.10 (2020), pp. 1596–604, doi:10.1177/1049732320921835.

²² Elaine Denny and Annalise Weckesser, 'How to Do Qualitative Research?', *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology*, 129.7 (2022), pp. 1166–67, doi:10.1111/1471-0528.17150.

²³ Hossein Nassaji, 'Good Qualitative Research', *Language Teaching Research*, 24.4 (2020), pp. 427–31, doi:10.1177/1362168820941288.

²⁴ Rachel A. Ankeny and Sabina Leonelli, 'Investigating Research Practices: How Qualitative Methods Enhance Philosophical Understandings of Science.', *Qualitative Psychology*, 11.2 (2024), pp. 247–62, doi:10.1037/qup0000289.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

allowing cross-checking between sources and methods²⁵ This technique is considered important in ensuring the credibility, dependability, and transferability of qualitative research results, so that the findings produced are not only contextual but also have academic and practical usefulness in the development of Islamic education curriculum management²⁶

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's main findings show that the implementation of curriculum management in RA Islam An-Naas Cakura has been carried out by emphasizing the integration of religious values into daily learning activities. Teachers play the role not only as teachers of academic materials, but also as role models in worship practices, such as congregational prayers, daily prayer readings, and strengthening the memorization of short surahs. This emphasizes that the curriculum implemented is not purely cognitive, but connects the aspect of knowledge with the spiritual experience of children. In line with qualitative research in other Islamic educational institutions, a consistent religious character can be formed if religious values are internalized in the daily routine of schools²⁷

Furthermore, it was found that the curriculum management process includes three main aspects: planning programs based on religious values, implementing learning that emphasizes worship habits, and evaluation through supervision and reflection of teachers. In the planning stage, teachers and school principals prepare a schedule of religiously oriented activities, ranging from joint prayer and worship practices to socio-religious activities²⁸ In the implementation stage, teachers instill religious values in exemplary methods and habituation. Meanwhile, at the evaluation stage, the school regularly reflects on students' behavior and religious development. This structure shows that the successful

²⁵ Marissa D. Abram, Karen T. Mancini, and R. David Parker, 'Methods to Integrate Natural Language Processing Into Qualitative Research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19 (2020), doi:10.1177/1609406920984608.

²⁶ Jolanta Bienkowska and Czesław Sikorski, 'Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: A Balanced Approach to Management Research', *Eastern Journal of European Studies*, 15.1 (2024), pp. 345–60, doi:10.47743/ejes-2024-0115.

²⁷ Abiyyul Ridho and Triono Ali Mustofa, 'Internalization of Religious Character Values Through Himpunan Putusan Tarjih Muhammadiyah Learning in College Student Boarding School', *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme*, 6.3 (2025), pp. 293–311, doi:10.37680/scaffolding.v6i3.6283.

²⁸ Hilal Najmi and others, 'The Boarding Madrasah Aliyah Religious Program Curriculum Management by Building Religious Character', *JPPi (Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Indonesia)*, 8.4 (2022), p. 1221, doi:10.29210/020222097.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

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Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

formation of religious character cannot be separated from the overall curriculum management cycle ²⁹

Furthermore, the findings show that there are supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the religious curriculum. Supporting factors include teacher commitment, the support of the principal, and the involvement of parents who actively guide the child at home ³⁰ However, obstacles also arise, such as limited learning facilities, the lack of consistency of some parents in supporting religious habits at home, and the challenge of influencing the environment outside of school. This shows that forming religious character requires synergy between schools, families, and society. These results align with the findings of international studies that emphasize the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in early childhood character education ³¹

Qualitative data analysis yielded several main themes: integration of religious values in the curriculum, worship habituation strategies, teacher examples, and parental support. The first theme, integrating religious values, emphasizes that all learning activities are associated with Islamic values, such as the discipline of prayer times and daily manners ³² The second theme, worship habituation strategies, shows that religious routines effectively internalize values ³³ The third theme, teacher example, is key because early childhood tends to imitate the behavior of its teachers. Finally, parental support plays a role in strengthening the consistency of habituation at home ³⁴ These four interrelated themes form a framework for forming a sustainable religious character ³⁵

²⁹ Najmi and others, 'The Boarding Madrasah Aliyah Religious Program Curriculum Management by Building Religious Character'.

³⁰ Jihan Fira Aziza and others, 'Islamic Religious Education Curriculum as a Pillar of Islamic Character Formation for Students', *Journal of Contemporary Islamic Primary Education*, 3.2 (2024), pp. 245–51, doi:10.61253/jcipe.v3i2.311.

³¹ Ardianto, Muhammad Umair Khan Usman, and Gunawan, 'Curriculum Management in The Character Forming of Students', *Andragogi: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 3.2 (2024), pp. 62–73, doi:10.31538/adrg.v3i2.1282.

³² Hanina Maria Ulfa, 'Peran Guru Dalam Meningkatkan Religiusitas Siswa Di SD Integral Hidayatullah Probolinggo', *Ikhlas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam*, 2.1 (2025), pp. 301–15, doi:10.61132/ikhlas.v2i1.604.

³³ Nabila Nabila and others, 'Pentingnya Islam Dalam Pendidikan Anak Ditingkat Sekolah Dasar', *Indo-MathEdu Intellectuals Journal*, 5.4 (2024), pp. 5207–13, doi:10.54373/imeij.v5i4.1673.

³⁴ Khotimatul Majidah S, 'Peran Guru Dalam Menanamkan Nilai-Nilai Religius Pada Anak Usia Dini Di PAUD Al- Arbain', *EDU-RILIGIA: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Islam Dan Keagamaan*, 8.4 (2024), doi:10.47006/er.v8i4.21432.

³⁵ Shofwatunnida Julia Alfarisy and Iswandi, 'INTEGRATION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION VALUES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEARNING AT SCHOOL', *Multidisciplinary Indonesian Center Journal (MICJO)*, 2.2 (2025), pp. 1503–09, doi:10.62567/micjo.v2i2.660.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

More specific subthemes emerged from this big theme. For example, in the worship habituation strategy, there were subthemes of congregational prayer practice, prayer reading before studying, and memorizing short surahs. In the theme of teacher example, the subthemes that emerged were discipline, simplicity, and polite speech³⁶ Meanwhile, in parental support, subthemes emerged of child assistance at home, control of technology use, and involvement in school activities³⁷ These categories and subthemes show that forming religious character is a multidimensional process systematically connected in children's daily lives. The interconnectedness of these themes and subthemes reflects the complexity of religious education that cannot be fully understood³⁸

The coding results also show strong inter-theme relationships. For example, integrating religious values in the curriculum cannot run effectively without the example of teachers. Similarly, the strategy of habituating worship will be more meaningful if supported by parents' consistency at home. This relationship shows that the formation of religious character is not the result of a single factor, but rather a collaboration of various aspects that support each other. Thus, a comprehensive curriculum management approach is the most realistic way to form religious character from an early³⁹

Verbatim excerpts from interviews reinforce these findings. One teacher stated, "We always start the lesson with prayer and the recitation of short surahs, so that the child gets used to it from an early age" (Teacher A). This emphasizes the role of habituation in shaping children's religious behavior. Meanwhile, one of the parents said, "If at school the children are used to praying in congregation, then at home we continue that habit" (Parent P1). This statement shows the continuity between school and home as a factor that strengthens children's internalization of religious values. In line with other qualitative research,

³⁶ Khairunisa Nurkhasanah, Munawar Rahmat, and Muhamad Parhan, 'FORMATION OF STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS CHARACTER THROUGH RELIGIOUS HABITUATION ACTIVITIES AT MIS AL-MAHDIYYIN KADUNGORA at MIS Al-Mahdiyyin Kadungora', *PIONIR: JURNAL PENDIDIKAN*, 14.1 (2025), p. 39, doi:10.22373/pjp.v14i1.28814.

³⁷ Suyanee Aumar, Tri Endang Jatmikowati, and Angraeny Unedia Rachman, 'Pendidikan Nilai Karakter Religiositas Anak Usia Dini', *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 1.1 (2023), doi:10.47134/paud.v1i1.31.

³⁸ Yasmin Izzatunnisa and Mutiawati Mutiawati, 'Parenting Practices and Religious Character Development in Early Childhood', *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture, and Social Studies*, 4.1 (2024), pp. 112–22, doi:10.53754/iscs.v4i1.674.

³⁹ Ardianto, Usman, and Gunawan, 'Curriculum Management in The Character Forming of Students'.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

contextualized qualitative data citations can provide strong legitimacy to analytical findings⁴⁰

In addition, other quotes show the obstacles. One of the teachers said, "There are still parents who do not pay attention to the practice of children's worship at home, so sometimes the results at school are inconsistent" (Teacher B). This quote shows that obstacles need attention in the continuity of religious character education. On the other hand, student participants said, "I like to join congregational prayers with friends, but sometimes I forget to stay at home" (P2 Student). This illustrates the daily reality of children who still need intensive support from the family environment. Thus, the participants' quotes reveal the complex dynamics between school habituation and practice at home.

To clarify the results, an additional quote from the principal's interview can be noted: "We direct teachers always to associate the subject matter with religious values, so that every activity has a religious spirit" (Principal P3). This statement shows that curriculum management is consciously directed to integrate religious values into all subjects. This strategy reinforces that the formation of religious character is not an additional activity but an essential part of the curriculum. By displaying verbatim data from various parties (teachers, students, parents, principals), this study provides a more complete picture of religious education in RA Islam An-Naas Cakura. The visualization of the data from the analysis is presented in the form of a table showing the relationship between the following themes, subthemes, and quotes:

Table 1. Management of Religious Character Formation

Main Theme	Subtopic	Participant Quotes
Integration of religious values	Faith-based curriculum	"We associate every subject matter with religious values" (Principal P3).
Worship habituation strategies	Prayer, prayer, memorization	"We always start the lesson with prayers and short surahs" (Teacher A).
Teacher role model	Attitude, speech	"Teachers are an example of discipline and simplicity" (Teacher B).
Parental support	Assistance at home	"At home, we continue praying in congregation" (Parent P1).
Obstacles	Parental inconsistency	"Sometimes children forget to pray at home" (P2 Student).

⁴⁰ Linda Miftahurrohman, Achmad Sya'dullah, and Muhammad Turhan Yani, 'Instilling Religious Values in Children Through the Role of Parents and Habituation at School', *Journal of Islamic Education Students (JIES)*, 4.2 (2024), p. 251, doi:10.31958/jies.v4i2.12482.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

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Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

The table shows how the formation of the religious character of students at RA Islam An-Naas Cakura is manifested through five interrelated themes. First, integrating religious values in the curriculum shows that each subject matter is viewed from an academic side and is always connected to religious values. This reflects that education in this school does not place religion as a separate subject, but as a spirit that colors the entire learning process ⁴¹

Second, the habituation strategy of worship appears as a real practice in daily life, such as joint prayer, congregational prayers, and memorization of short surahs. This repetitive practice makes religious values not only cognitively introduced, but also habituated affectively and psychomotorly, so children learn through direct experience ⁴² Third, the example of teachers is a determining factor that strengthens this habit. Teachers not only play the role of teachers, but also as exemplary models in discipline, simplicity, and speech ⁴³

Furthermore, parental support is crucial in maintaining the continuity of religious practices at home. Participant testimonials show that habits built at school will be more rooted when strengthened by family assistance, such as congregational prayers at home. However, the table also shows that there are obstacles, namely the inconsistency of the role of parents. Some children do not continue praying at home, so internalizing religious values is hampered. This confirms that forming religious character is a collective process that demands full involvement between the school and the family.

In addition to the table, a concept map can illustrate the flow of integrating religious values, habituation, example, and parental support in shaping the child's religious character. This map shows how these factors support each other, where the curriculum becomes the driving force that connects schools, teachers,

⁴¹ Finadatul Wahidah, Kholilur Rahman, and Alfiyatin Intaningtyas, 'PAUD RELIGIOUS VALUES-BASED CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT', *Ar-Risalah Media Keislaman Pendidikan Dan Hukum Islam*, 20.2 (2022), p. 298, doi:10.69552/ar-risalah.v20i2.1487.

⁴² A. Qomarudin and Roihatul Jannah, 'Strategi Pengembangan Kurikulum Tingkat Lembaga Pendidikan Berbasis Moderasi Beragama Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Al-Asyhar Malang', *Journal Evaluasi*, 9.1 (2025), pp. 43–57, doi:10.32478/5hccwy16.

⁴³ Asrul Faruq, Raharjo Raharjo, and Nur Sholeh, 'The Essence of Islamic Religious Education Curriculum: Integrating Islamic Values with Contemporary Education', *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset Dan Kajian Keislaman*, 13.2 (2024), pp. 85–98, doi:10.35878/islamicreview.v13i2.1258.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

students, and parents. This conceptual visualization is important so that cross-disciplinary readers can comprehensively understand the research results ⁴⁴

To clarify the relationship between findings, a concept map is presented to visualize the relationship between the main themes and subthemes that emerge from the results of the data analysis. This visualization helps readers see more systematically how the integration of religious values, worship habituation strategies, teacher examples, parental support, and obstacles that arise interact with each other in shaping the religious character of students. Thus, concept maps are not just graphical summaries, but logical representations of the constructs of meaning revealed through data encoding. The visualization is in the form of the following concept map:

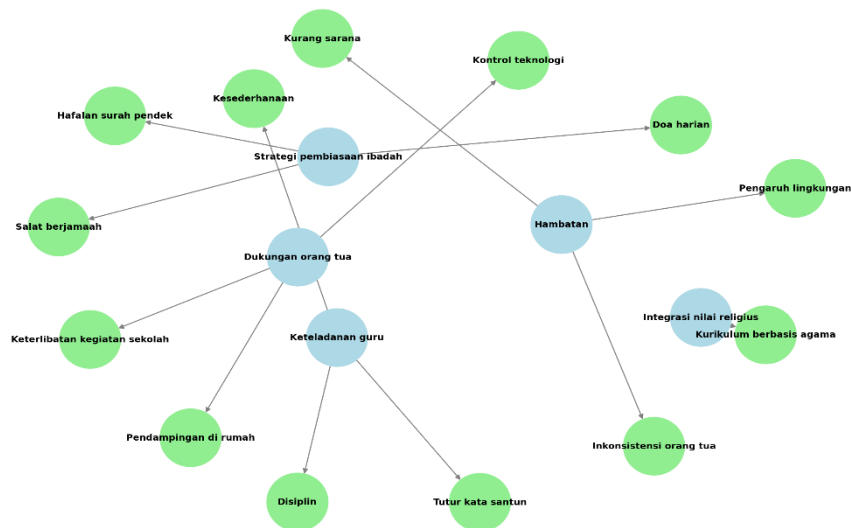


Figure 1. Concept Map: Religious Character Building Management

The concept map above shows that integrating religious values is the primary foundation for other themes. All school activities are directed to internalize Islamic values through a religion-based curriculum. However, this integration does not stand alone; it is strengthened by a habituation strategy that makes religious practice a daily routine. The relationship between the two illustrates that the internalization of religious values is more effective if it is accompanied by real experiences that are constantly repeated, according to the principles of early childhood learning based on habits and example ⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Abdul Revandi, Mukhammad Bakhrudin, and Hayumuti Hayumuti, 'The Role of Parents in Shaping Children's Religious Character Amidst the Challenges of the Digital Era', *Paradigma*, 22.1 (2025), pp. 154–69, doi:10.33558/paradigma.v22i1.10354.

⁴⁵ Ekaningtyas and Yasa, 'Internalization of Religious Values in Early Childhood'.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

Furthermore, the teacher's example occupies a central position in the concept map, as children tend to imitate the behavior they observe. Teachers who consistently show discipline, simplicity, and polite speech will be strong role models for students. This role is strengthened by the support of parents who maintain continuity between school and home. Subthemes such as at-home mentoring, technological supervision, and parental involvement in school activities affirm that religious character education cannot stop in the classroom, but must be continued in the family environment ⁴⁶

However, the concept map also shows a real obstacle. Inconsistency in the role of parents, limited facilities, and the influence of the environment outside the school can potentially weaken the effectiveness of the religious curriculum. These obstacles show that the formation of religious character is complex, non-linear, and always confronts social dynamics. Therefore, curriculum management strategies must be accompanied by a collaborative approach involving all parties and innovations that can address resource limitations. By understanding inter-theme interactions through concept maps, it can be affirmed that the success of early childhood religious character formation is highly dependent on the balance between curriculum design, teacher example, family support, and the management of external factors that affect students ⁴⁷

The findings of this study succeeded in answering the gap mentioned in the introduction, namely, the lack of in-depth studies on how curriculum management plays a role in the formation of early childhood religious character. Previous research has highlighted more theoretical aspects of character education, but has not contextually explored the concrete experiences of teachers, students, and parents. Through a phenomenological approach, this study shows how religious curriculum practices are implemented in children's daily lives, so that gaps related to a lack of understanding of the meaning and experience of the subject can be appropriately filled.

In addition, this study also addresses the limitations of the context in previous studies, which generally focused on formal schools at the primary or secondary level. Taking the context of RA Islam An-Naas Cakura, this study shows that the formation of religious character begins from early childhood education, through habituation and exemplary strategies. This context expands the

⁴⁶ I Wayan Darna and I Gede Sedana Suci, 'Model of Synergy Parents and Teachers in Character Education of High School Students', *Edunesia : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 5.2 (2024), pp. 1084–97, doi:10.51276/edu.v5i2.884.

⁴⁷ Izzatunnisa and Mutiawati, 'Parenting Practices and Religious Character Development in Early Childhood'.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

scope of character education studies so that it can make a new contribution to the discourse of Islamic education in Indonesia ⁴⁸

Furthermore, this study can also answer the existing methodological gap. If previous research used a lot of surveys or quantitative approaches, then this study chose a qualitative phenomenological method that is more likely to understand the meaning and experiences experienced directly by the research subject. This shows the advantages of the qualitative approach in capturing the reality of religious character education in a more complete, personal, and contextual⁴⁹

In the theoretical framework, this research's results align with Thomas Lickona's idea of character education, which emphasizes the importance of moral knowing, feeling, and moral action as a whole. The habit of worship at school is a form of moral action that strengthens the dimension of moral knowing that has been introduced from an early⁵⁰ This is also consistent with Bronfenbrenner's ecology theory, where the interaction between school, family, and the environment is a key factor in forming children's character ⁵¹

The study's results also show compatibility with previous research which confirms that teacher examples significantly impact the formation of early childhood values. For example, Kondrla's research (2023) found that teachers who behave consistently with religious values can create an educational climate conducive to internalizing values ⁵² However, this study provides a distinction through an emphasis on the synergistic role of parents, which has not been highlighted much in previous studies.

On the other hand, the difference is also seen in the context of inhibiting factors. While previous research has emphasized structural issues such as policy limitations, this study shows that the biggest obstacle is the inconsistency of parental support at home. This is an important finding because it shows that the

⁴⁸ Nurul Izzah, Ade Amalia, and Siti Mutiah, 'Character Formation Through Islamic Religious Education In Early Childhood', *Al-Ulum: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4.1 (2023), doi:10.56114/al-ulum.v4i1.545.

⁴⁹ Lalu Iwan Eko Jakandar and others, 'Integration of Religious Values in Character Education', *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 9.1 (2025), pp. 124–41, doi:10.35723/ajie.v9i1.107.

⁵⁰ Rian Damariswara and others, 'Penyuluhan Pendidikan Karakter Adaptasi Thomas Lickona', *Dedikasi Nusantara: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Pendidikan Dasar*, 1.1 (2021), pp. 25–32, doi:10.29407/dedikasi.v1i1.16057.

⁵¹ Sofni Indah Arifa Lubis, Zannatun Nisya, and Yuliana Lubis, 'Learning Environment and Early Childhood Character Development in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory', *International Journal of Educational Research*, 1.4 (2024), pp. 44–56, doi:10.62951/ijer.v1i4.93.

⁵² Peter Kondrla, 'Sustainability Values in Religious Education', *Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 14.1 (2023), pp. 19–32, doi:10.15503/jecs2023.1.19.32.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

success of religious curriculum management depends not only on institutional aspects, but also on the continuity of religious practices outside schools ⁵³

A contextual interpretation of these findings suggests that socio-cultural factors in Takalar Regency play an important role. A society that still upholds Islamic religious traditions provides a conducive space for implementing a religion-based curriculum. A religious social environment strengthens children's worship habits, as children learn at school and observe similar practices in the surrounding community ⁵⁴

However, global cultural dynamics also have a strong influence. The presence of technology and access to digital media expose children to popular culture that is not always in line with the religious values taught in schools. This poses new challenges for teachers and parents in maintaining children's religious character consistency. Therefore, the contextualization of the results of this study confirms the need for educational strategies that are adaptive to social and technological changes ⁵⁵

In addition, the family environment is also very decisive. In the context of the Takalar society, the involvement of extended families is still very thick, so children's religious habits are often strengthened or weakened by other family members outside of the nuclear parents. This contextual characteristic distinguishes this study from studies in urban areas, where parenting is more individualistic ⁵⁶

The main challenge arising from this study's findings is the continuity of children's religious practices outside of school. Obstacles such as the lack of worship facilities, harmful environmental influences, and the lack of attention from some parents are real problems. The theoretical implication is the need to

⁵³ Adi Wibowo and others, 'Educational Management Based on Religious Moderation: Empirical Study of Practices in Pesantren', *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 10.1 (2025), pp. 1–15, doi:10.31538/ndhq.v10i1.14.

⁵⁴ Miftahurrohmah, Sya'dullah, and Yani, 'Instilling Religious Values in Children Through the Role of Parents and Habituation at School'.

⁵⁵ Esin Mukul and Gülçin Büyüközkan, 'Digital Transformation in Education: A Systematic Review of Education 4.0', *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 194 (2023), p. 122664, doi:10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122664.

⁵⁶ Ayi Abdurahman and others, 'The Role of Family in Building Religious Awareness in Elementary School Children', *BASICA Journal of Arts and Science in Primary Education*, 4.1 (2024), pp. 1–10, doi:10.37680/basicav4i1.4989.



TADBIR: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam

P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

expand the religious character education model by incorporating external factors more seriously in the curriculum management framework ⁵⁷

Practically, this study implies that teachers must improve communication and collaboration with parents so that religious habits can run consistently at home. Schools must also design programs involving families, such as religious parenting training or parent discussion forums. This effort is expected to address the inconsistency in family support for children's religious practices ⁵⁸

In addition, this research also implies the need for education policies that better support the provision of religious facilities, such as adequate worship spaces and religious value-based learning facilities. This will strengthen religious practices in schools and provide structural support for teachers in carrying out their duties ⁵⁹

The main contribution of this study to the theory is to strengthen the relevance of Lickona's character education theory in the context of religion-based early childhood education. This research shows that moral action (habituation of worship) can be strengthened with the support of an integrated curriculum management system. Thus, the theory that was originally widely used in general education can be extended to the context of Islamic education ⁶⁰

A contribution to educational practice is offering a religious curriculum implementation model that emphasizes collaboration between teachers and parents ⁶¹ This model can be replicated in other Islamic educational institutions, mainly rural areas, by adjusting local socio-cultural conditions ⁶² The findings of this study also underline that early childhood education is oriented to cognition

⁵⁷ Ali Ahmad Yenuri and Sauqi Futaqi, 'Celebrating Interfaith Rituals to Build Togetherness Between Children in Elementary Schools', *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama*, 15.2 (2023), pp. 859–70, doi:10.37680/qalamuna.v15i2.3395.

⁵⁸ Miftahurrohmah, Linda, Achmad Sya'dullah, and Muhammad Turhan Yani, 'Instilling Religious Values in Children Through the Role of Parents and Habituation at School', *Journal of Islamic Education Students (JIES)*, 4.2 (2024), p. 251.

⁵⁹ Muhlisin, Muhlisin, Nur Kholis, and Juwita Rini, 'Navigating the Nexus: Government Policies in Cultivating Religious Moderation Within State Islamic Higher Education', *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)*, 11.1 (2023), p. 207.

⁶⁰ Rizqi, Wahid Tuftazani, Toto Suharto, and Sembodo Ardi Widodo, 'Family-Based Character Education through KH Bisri Mustofa and Lickona's Perspectives', *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 9.1 (2025), pp. 244–60.

⁶¹ Yusuf, M. Suyuti, Hadi Pajarianto, and Baso Sulaiman, 'A Collaborative Parent-Teacher Model for Religious Moderation Education in Early Childhood in Indonesia', *South African Journal of Childhood Education*, 15.1 (2025).

⁶² Sultmann, William, and others, 'Into the Deep: Teacher Reflections on the Development and Implementation of a Trial Religious Education Curriculum', *Religious Education*, 116.5 (2021), pp. 531–44.



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P-ISSN: 2338:6673; E-ISSN 2442:8280

Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

and the formation of religious personalities, which are an important foundation for children's development ⁶³

A contribution to education policy emphasizes the need for strategies that integrate families in implementing a religious character curriculum ⁶⁴ Local governments and education managers can use these findings to design policies emphasizing more school-parent collaboration, so children's religious character can form sustainably ⁶⁵ Thus, this research enriches the academic literature and provides practical input for improving the Islamic education system at the local and national levels.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that forming early childhood religious character cannot be separated from the synergy between the school curriculum, teacher example, and parental support. Religious values are firmly embedded only if they are enlivened in children's daily routines through consistent worship habits. This study's results convey that religious character education is not just a school program, but a collective responsibility between educational institutions, families, and communities. Thus, curriculum management based on religious values has strong relevance as a moral foundation in facing the challenges of globalization.

In terms of contribution, this study enriches the theory of character education by showing that the concepts of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, as stated by Lickona, find their most real actualization in the habit of worship at an early age. Practically, the results of this study have important implications for strengthening school and family collaboration in maintaining the consistency of children's religious values. Teachers cannot stand alone, but need to build intensive communication with parents, while education policies must also provide space for creating synergy. Thus, this research contributes a new perspective in character education theory and provides a practical model applicable to Islamic education.

⁶³ Kostorz, Jerzy Henryk, 'The Cooperation between Teacher of Religion and Parents According to The Religious Education Core Curriculum of the Catholic Church in Poland (2018)', *Family Forum*, 9 (2020).

⁶⁴ Yasin, Muhammad, Siti Nilam, and Zaitun Zahra, 'PENERAPAN PRINSIP DASAR KELUARGA DALAM MEMBENTUK KARAKTER RELIGIUS SISWA DI SEKOLAH', *Al-Rabwah*, 18.01 (2024).

⁶⁵ Tarmizi, Tarmizi, and others, 'The Roles of Family Strengthening Children's Religious Characters', *Journal of Humanity and Social Justice*, 2023, pp. 110–23.



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Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

Furthermore, these findings have strong social and cultural relevance. In a society that continues to deal with the rapid flow of globalization, religious character education from an early age is a significant moral fortress. Its potential applications include developing curriculum programs that are more adaptive to the challenges of digital technologies and policies that strengthen the involvement of families and local communities in children's education. For further research, it is recommended to delve deeper into the role of digital technology as a supporting and inhibiting factor for religious character education. Practically, schools, parents, and policymakers need to pay attention to integrating character education with contemporary social realities so that the religious values formed survive and are relevant to the times.

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Vol. 13. No. 03. Oktober, 2025, Hal: 873-895

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