

# Formation of Student Character Through School Culture At Sawang Elementary School, North Aceh Regency

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#### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the application of character education through religious culture and to explore the character values contained in religious culture. This type of research is descriptive using a qualitative approach. The research location was Elementary School (ES) 26 Sawang, North Aceh Regency. The research subjects are school principals, teachers, and students. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. Technique the validity of the data using triangulation techniques. Data analysis using data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The research results show that 1) the formation of student character through religious culture is carried out through praying before and after learning, reading *Yasin* every Friday, reading *Asmaul Husna* every Thursday, and dhikr activity every Friday; and 2) The meaning of this religious culture is the formation of religious and moral student character glorious. The religious culture developed at ES 26 Sawang has character values such as the values of faith and piety, *Akhlakul qarimah*, discipline, responsibility, mutual respect, and cultur smiles, greetings, greetings, politeness.

Keywords: Character, School Culture, Religious Culture.



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### **INTRODUCTION**

Success in the education system cannot be separated from government policies in implementing the curriculum. One of the government's efforts to improve the quality of Indonesian education is to change the curriculum. Curriculum implementation can be said to be successful if there is an increase in student achievement in learning and there is a change in behavior and mindset in students. The existence of a government policy in the curriculum that emphasizes character education is a form of government effort to give birth to a generation of people who have noble character and can compete globally. Research conducted by Suwahyu (2018) regarding Ki Hadjar Dewantara's thoughts on character education reveals the importance of the role of an environment in which character is formed, a spirit of leadership and mutual assistance to one another, and the growth of love for the nation's culture to shape generations young successors of a good nation. According to Diananda (2018), character education is a process for fostering development, maturing, organizing, and directing so that the potential that exists in children can emerge as well as a good personality that is beneficial for themselves and their environment. So it can be said that character education is very important to be instilled in students so that they have a good personality. The occurrence of various moral problems that occur in Indonesia such as drug abuse, brawls, and so on is a form of moral problem that must be overcome. Aan Bustamam (2021) as an administrator for the DPP Artipena in the discussion on International Anti-Narcotics Day said that 27% of drug users in Indonesia come from students and university students (http://www.beritasatu.com./news/792291/ 27-drug-users among students and students). The results of Cahyani's research, 2015 discuss busy parents, peers, and the environment are factors of drug abuse. Law No. 35 of 2009 regarding factors of drug abuse among adolescents consisting of 1) self factors such as curiosity, the desire to try the desire to have fun and the desire to be accepted in the community; 2) environmental factors in the form of broken home families, parents of users and the influence of the community; and 3) the availability of drugs in the form of easy to obtain cheap prices and there are various types. Thus it can be said that cases of drug abuse are caused by various factors such as the peer environment and personal factors (Nuraini et al., 2021).

In addition to the drug problem among adolescents, bullying at school is also a crucial problem that must be resolved by all parties because it can damage the mental development of students. Referring to the opinion of Steinberg & Lerner (2004) cited by Almira & Marheni (2021) said that bullying is intimidation that is harmful to the victim and causes the victim to feel afraid and thus experience stress. The results of research conducted by Herawati & Deharnita (2019) say that the factors that cause bullying are the family environment, school environment, and peers. Furthermore, Lestari et al (2019) explain the impact of bullying on children's mental health, namely experiencing trauma to the perpetrator, depression which causes a decrease in concentration, decreased self-confidence, bullying, social phobia, excessive anxiety disorder, dropping out of school, and suicide. From the several opinions that have been described, it can be concluded that bullying behavior can damage a child's mentality.

Seeing the problems that occur, schools as educational institutions have a role and responsibility in shaping the character and morals of the nation's generation. One of the efforts made by the school is through the development of a positive school culture. According to Zamroni (2016), school culture is norms, values, beliefs, attitudes, expectations, and traditions in schools that have been passed down from generation to generation and influence the mindset, behavior, and actions of all components of the school. Furthermore, Suliman et al (2021) explain that school culture is all forms of daily activities and behavior of school members that describe how individuals and groups uphold values, beliefs, or beliefs at school. Meanwhile, Sukardi et al (2019) say that school is the basic capital in character building. Thus it can be said that school culture has an important role in the formation of student character. Therefore schools must be able to develop positive school cultures so that good student character is formed. Strengthening character in formal education units is carried out through a school culture-based approach by emphasizing the habituation of basic values in schools, setting a good example for school members, involving all stakeholders in schools, building and complying with school norms, rules, and traditions, developing the uniqueness of the school, developing the selfpotential of students through literacy activities, developing extracurricular activities (http://peraturan.bpk.go.id.Home/Details/138192/permendikbud-no-20-tahun-2018).

A positive school culture will certainly have a good impact on school development, especially in increasing student academic achievement. Research conducted by Pervez et al (2017) said that school culture has a good impact on student achievement. Furthermore

(Melesse & Molla, 2018) school culture has a contribution to student achievement. Meanwhile (Kisumo et al, 2013) school culture can improve quality and improve school performance. From the results of several studies that have been conducted, it can be seen that school culture has a contribution to student achievement. One form of school culture that needs to be developed in the formation of student character is religious culture. Umar et al (2023) explain the role of religion in everyday life, including 1) Islamic religious life is by human dignity as the highest creature on earth; 2) religious life is life for rational humans; 3) religious life is by human nature, this is a demand of conscience, therefore those who deny religion are those who deny their conscience; 4) religion can reveal human identity about origins, goals and what to do; and 5) religion plays a role in character building and nation building. Reveal that cultural activities in Islamic schools will assist in developing students' characters to become Islamic characters (Jumroatun et al, 2018). Meanwhile, the results of research conducted by Raudhatinur (2019) explained that the application of Islamic culture was responded positively by students, students were happy and very supportive of the application of Islamic school culture because it had a good impact on changing their attitudes. Based on observational studies and preliminary observations conducted at ES 26 Sawang related to student character there are still problems such as being impolite in speaking, low ability to read the holy verses of the Koran, lack of discipline, and low ability of students in literacy. Therefore it is necessary to conduct a research study related to the problems that occur.

In particular, one of the school cultures developed at ES 26 Sawang is a religious culture that aims to build a religious character in students. There are several programs related to a religious culture that have been developed, namely *Asmaul Husna*, *Yasinan*, reciting short verses every time you enter class, praying before studying and at the end of studying, Islamic boarding schools for Ramadan, and commemorating religious holidays. The purpose of this study was to analyze the application of character education through religious culture at ES 26 Sawang and explore the character values contained in the religious culture developed at ES 26 Sawang.

#### **METHODS**

This type of research is descriptive using a qualitative approach. The research location was ES 26 Sawang, North Aceh Regency. The research subjects are school principals, teachers, and students. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. Technique The validity of the data using triangulation techniques. Data analysis techniques use data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions.

# **RESULTS**

Based on the research findings, show that religious culture is very important in the formation of the religious character of students. According to Albi (2022), school religious culture is a tradition of instilling Islamic behavior formed by the school environment as a

routine that is realized in the form of worship. Meanwhile, Azet in Syaroh & Mizani (2020) explains that the religious realm is very important for students to develop and develop to construct the words, thoughts, and actions of students which strive to always be based on divine values and norms based on the teachings of the religion they adhere to. Therefore schools must be able to develop the religious realm in students. The formation of a religious character in students is the foundation for students in living their lives. Through their religious strength, students have self-defense in facing negative influences that can damage their mentality. According to Silkyanti (2019) religious value-based character education can also be termed developing character values based on religion can shape personality, attitudes, and behavior in life, this can be formed through school culture so that the school culture applied in character building is religious. Meanwhile, according to Nurbaiti et al (2020), the religious character is the first and main character that must be instilled in children as early as possible which forms the basis of religious teachings in the life of individuals, society, and the Indonesian nation. Religious character is not only related to relations but also concerns relations between human beings.

The development of religious culture cannot be separated from the role of the principal and teacher. The principal's main task is to manage the situation, control the activities of the group, organization, or institution, and become the spokesperson for the group. Principals are required to be able to play multiple roles, both as catalysts, solution providers, process assistants, and resource liaisons (Arif, 2020). The role of the school principal in improving the quality of education is to manage, plan, organize, activate, and evaluate (Kharismawati, 2019). The role of the principal as a leader in improving the quality of education is supervising, intermediary between teachers and students, disciplining, motivating, establishing cooperation with outsiders, fostering and improving teacher abilities, and making decisions.

The success of the school in developing a school culture is not only in the head of the school but also in the teacher as an educator. According to Sapdi (2023), the role of the teacher in building character education in the era of society 5.0 is as a learning director, supervisor, coach, class manager, facilitator, motivator, demonstrator, mediator, and evaluator, besides the role of the teacher is also as a substitute for existing parents at home because the teacher is the student's parent while in the student's environment seeking knowledge or the school environment. In forming the character of students who are religious and Islamic, the role of religious teachers in making religious programs in schools cannot be separated. The results of the study (Nur'asiah, 2021) show that the role of Islamic religious education teachers in the formation of student character is very much needed because the presence of Islamic religious education teachers who act as parents of students certainly has a very large role in educating students to become insane human beings. So it can be said that building a religious culture in schools requires the participation of all components of the school. ES 26 Sawang is a school that has developed a religious culture in building student character. Based on the findings in the field, there are several religious cultures developed in the school, namely:

#### 3.1 Pray before and after studying

Prayer is a form of attitude or deed in begging and asking Allah SWT to be given mercy and guidance by the creator. According to the language, prayer means begging, asking, calling, and hoping, meanwhile by definition prayer is an expression of a servant's request

to Allah in asking for what he wants (Isnawati et al., 2023). Prayer is an activity of worship because Allah SWT commands believers to pray. When Allah SWT command is carried out, it is worship to Allah SWT, (Sutarman, 2018). In its implementation at ES 26 Sawang, prayer activities before and after learning were directly led by the teacher which was carried out in the morning. This is done to get the blessing of Allah SWT. Therefore, getting students to pray before and after learning, will form the attitude of students who always remember Allah SWT. According to Jannati (2022) One form of communication with Allah SWT is praying. To get closer to Allah SWT, humans beg, ask, and draw closer to Allah SWT.

### 3.2 Read Yasin's letters every Friday

According to Orami (2022), there are several virtues of reading the Yasin letter obtained from the hadith of Rasulullah SAW, namely being forgiven of sins, considered martyrdom, gaining peace of mind, increasing faith and reward, gaining glory, interceding in the afterlife, the soul will be clean, giving light in darkness, get a reward like a person giving charity. From the writings written by Orami, it can be seen that reading Yasin's letter provides many benefits for humans, both for safety in this world and in the hereafter. In addition, reading Yasin's letters can form a calm and clean soul. Meanwhile, according to Achdami (2023), the virtues of reading Yasin on Friday nights are getting a reward comparable to reading the Koran 10 times, being able to prevent thirst in the afterlife, asking for something, hastening the fulfillment of hajad (wishes), getting forgiveness and goodness in this world and the hereafter, making it easier to leave spirit, cure disease, defeat the unjust. At ES 26 Sawang, reading Yasin is a routine activity carried out by the school every Friday. The formation of student character through reading the Al-Qur'an Surah Yasin is a form of instilling religious values in students. By carrying out these activities regularly, students will become accustomed to reading Yasin's letters, not only at school but also at home. This needs to be done on an ongoing basis because of the benefits and virtues of reading this *Yasin* letter as stated by the opinions above. According to (Aini, 2023) Yasinan is held every morning so that all those who carry out their wishes are fulfilled, the teacher's wish is so that their students get a heart that is easy to advise. *Hajat* Students can accommodate learning from teachers. So it can be said that with Yasinan's activities at school, the wishes of teachers and students can be fulfilled.

#### 3.3 Read Asmaul Husna every Tuesday

Sitoresmi (2023) explains that there are several virtues of practicing *Asmaul Husna*, namely answering prayers, getting to heaven, knowing Allah SWT, strengthening faith, giving a sense of security, remembering sins, and fearing the torment of the afterlife. Meanwhile, according to (Usmi & Kadri, 2021) the habit of reading *Asmaul Husna* is the first step to practicing and emulating Allah SWT qualities in it. Still in the writings of Usmi and Kadri referring to the opinion of Zakiah (1970) children until they are 12 years old are not yet able to think abstractly, therefore religion must be given within reach, therefore, it is important to make habits for children in teaching something, especially religious education. Based on the results of the study, the habit of reading *Asmaul Husna* at the *ES 26 Sawang* is carried out every Tuesday. This has become part of the school culture in ES 26 Sawang. From the observations that the researchers made, it was found that the students were very enthusiastic in reciting the sentences *Asmaul Husna*. Explain that the

habit of reading *Asmaul Husna* has a positive effect on students' self-control (Syaefudin & Bhakti, 2020). Meanwhile, the results of the study (Khoirunnisa, 2018) said that there was a relationship between the habit of reading *Asmaul Husna* and students' emotional intelligence. Meanwhile, according to (Arofah, 2019) the habit of reading *Asmaul Husna* is a learning process that is carried out repeatedly with the hope that those who learn can appreciate, practice, and change behavior that appears to reflect the practice of *Asmaul Husna*. So it can be concluded that reading *Asmaul Husna* has a very positive influence on the formation of student character as from several research results it can be seen that the habit of reading *Asmaul Husna* can provide positive self-control and emotional intelligence in students. This will be realized by doing it regularly and with the participation of all elements of the school.

#### 3.4 Dhikr

According to Latif (2022) dhikr is the remembrance of Allah in the mind which requires an awareness of the heart about the nature of divinity which is grown in humans and applied in life both verbally and in deeds. Thus, the concept of dhikr is an earnest effort to present the role of Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala in the heart and daily life both speech, word, and deed. Meanwhile, according to (Martin et al., 2018) reading dhikr Alhamdulillah as a form of gratitude to Allah, is not just read but requires knowledge and understanding of the meaning and meaning of the sentences read so that they can be more solemn and able to interpret them in everyday life. Meanwhile (Latif, 2022) the purpose of dhikr is to purify the soul cleanse the heart, and build conscience, so whoever is given taufig to do so has been allowed to become a Wali Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala. At ES 26 Sawang the Dhikr activity was attended by all students and also all elements of the school. This dhikr activity, will provide peace in the souls of students so that it is easier to seek knowledge. So it can be said that dhikr will open the hearts and minds of students in learning and have a positive impact on improving student learning outcomes. In addition, dhikr is also one of the important things in the formation of religious character in students. This was also revealed by (Djazilan & Nafiah, 2022) that dhikr can improve the religious character of elementary school-age children. Furthermore, Syihabudin (2022) explains dzikrullah is a method for instilling faith that targets the heart. The heart is a human controller so that heart must be filled with faith. A heart that is filled with faith means that the heart has been filled by Allah SWT so that all the actions of the owner of the heart are always full of goodness. Meanwhile, the results of the study (Amahorosea, 2022) revealed that the recitation of the morning dhikr helps students more easily understand lessons and memorize the Verses of the Qur'an at school. In the religious culture developed at ES 26 Sawang there are character values, namely:

Faith and piety: Faith and devotion to Allah SWT is an attitude that carries out his commands and stays away from what is forbidden. Faith and devotion will be formed if it is supported by an activity that can increase one's faith. When viewed from the profile of Pancasila students, having faith and piety to Allah SWT Almighty is an aspect that is emphasized. According to Azizah (2023) Application of the Pancasila Student Profile on the dimension of Faith and Fear of Allah SWT Almighty can train students to improve themselves to become Allah SWT-oriented individuals, students are expected to be able to understand the teachings of the religion or beliefs they adhere to well so that they can apply the character it in life. According to (Syafeie, 2020) the

manifestation of the Muslim person is piety to Allah, virtuous character, perfect personality, extensive knowledge and insight, and physical and spiritual health. Humans who fear Allah SWT mean those who fear and love Allah, are careful and alert, protect themselves from all attitudes, actions, and deeds that are not blessed by Allah SWT, and carry out all His commands. Seeing the importance of instilling faith and piety in students, the school must be able to develop school programs that emphasize Islamic character. According to (Fitriani & Saumi, 2018) the faith and piety program is an activity carried out by an institution in a structured manner that contains activities such as opening by reading thoyyibah sentences, badar blessings and continuing by reading *Yasin* letters, sunnat dhuha prayers with prayers, faith and piety lectures, and prayers aim to get closer to Allah SWT. Faith is a belief that sinks into the heart with full confidence, is not mixed with self-doubt, and influences outlook on life and behavior (Rifa'i, 2021). Furthermore, (Suparlan, 2021) taqwa is maintenance and self-care. Taqwallah means piety to Allah SWT, namely self-care and care for Allah SWT with full awareness and dedication, both to His commands and to His prohibitions.

Akhlakul garimah: The main foundation in the formation of the human person is morals. The formation of a moral personality is an important thing to do because it will underlie the stability of the human personality as a whole, besides that morals are also a means of psychological and social control for individuals and society. Firdaus, 2017). The results of the research (Ismatullah, 2019) explain that to achieve better results a strategy is needed through the method of giving exemplary, religious lectures, advice, and punishment which must be carried out continuously and adapted to the values to be conveyed. So it can be said that Akhlakul garimah is a commendable person, therefore in developing it at school, strategies and methods are needed that are by the programs developed by the school. The formation of akhlagul garimah in character education is important for schools, therefore good and commendable morals can become the basic capital for students in their lives. The results of research conducted by (Na'imah, 2019) the Akhlakul garimah values that can be internalized in character education in schools are 1) Ash-sbar, 2) gratitude, 3) sincerity, 4) Al-tawadhu, 5) Ash-shidq, 6) Al-amanat, 7) Al-'afw, 8) qona'ah. Meanwhile, according to (Muhsin, 2020) people who have strong character and both individually and socially are those who have good morals, morals, and manners. The school's success in forming good student morals can be seen from the attitudes and actions of students. Because the role of schools and parents is very influential in the formation of the character of students who have noble character. According to Nuraini & Wiza (2021) educating students with Akhlakul garimah is the starting point for children because they have a good personality, so that they can become pious children, in this case, the role and figure of an educator or a teacher is a milestone in the formation of Akhlakul garimah in students therefore the actions and behavior of educators or teachers will be imitated by their students.

#### 3.4 Discipline

Discipline is an attitude of obedience to predetermined rules and regulations. So if there is a rule, we must obey it. According to Annisa (2019) discipline is very important for a child's development so that he succeeds in achieving a happy life, and achieving good adjustments in his social environment, to achieve this condition discipline needs to be instilled from the beginning of a child's life. Meanwhile Nugroho (2020) discipline is an

act that shows orderly behavior and obeys various rules and regulations where students who have a disciplinary character will always obey the rules and regulations that apply in school, therefore the character of discipline is very noble so that it must be instilled and owned by students so that they can live in an orderly and directed manner.

The formation of the character of discipline in schools cannot be separated from the condition of the school environment which is one of the important factors in discipline. According to Sobri et al (2019) from several research results that have been carried out that the formation of disciplinary character can be carried out through nine policies, that is; creating character education programs, establishing school rules, conducting dhuha and midday prayers in congregation, creating affective posts in each class, monitoring students' disciplinary behavior at home through activity diaries, giving affective messages in various corners of the school, involving parents and committees school, creating a conducive classroom climate. From some of the opinions above it can be said that the formation of the character of discipline in students is very important as self-control for students. According to Susanto (2018) in Uge et al (2022) discipline functions as; 1) socialization, namely that children learn about standards of behavior that are approved and tolerated in a social system; 2) for normal personality maturity, namely for children to acquire personality traits that are reliable, self-confident, self-controlled, diligent and able to overcome frustration; 3) internalization of moral standards and obligations that are not only centralized but also embodied in external behavior even to ensure the stability of the social order; 4) children's emotional security, namely to assure their confusion and adherence to a behavior. The formation of the character of discipline in students requires cooperation and participation from all parties so that programs that have been made by schools related to student discipline in schools can be achieved as planned. According to (Irsan & Syamsurijal, 2020) to achieve disciplinary character education students need cooperation between all parties, teachers, parents, and school committees. Therefore policies that can be implemented in schools include cultivating and understanding disciplinary character education and setting disciplinary rules students, teacher control in monitoring student disciplinary behavior at home, distributing disciplinary messages on school walls, distributing disciplinary messages on school walls, and parents as supporters of the implementation of disciplinary character education in schools. Meanwhile, the results of research conducted (Dole, 2021) character education has a significant effect on student discipline.

### 3.5 Responsibility

Responsibility is an act in which a person can complete the task properly assigned to him. According to Ardila et al (2017) the character of responsibility is the attitude and behavior of a person to carry out their duties and obligations which should be carried out towards oneself, society, the environment (natural, social, and cultural), the State and Allah SWT Almighty, Indicators for the attitude of responsibility is submitting assignments on time, independent (not cheating), focused, consistent, diligent, cooperative, grateful, and helping friends who have learning difficulties. Meanwhile (Viona et al., 2022) explain that students are said to be responsible if they do their assignments and homework well, are responsible for every action, and complete assignments according to a predetermined schedule, this attitude or character of responsibility must be instilled from an early age in student. The formation of responsible student character is not only the responsibility of the

school but also the responsibility of parents. The results of the study (Nurmasita & Rofiah, 2018) support factors in instilling the character of responsibility in students that several parents consider the character of responsibility to be very important for children by imposing punishments on children if children do not respond to the advice or motivation of parents or teachers, and giving assignments to students is also applied by the teacher during the learning process takes place. Meanwhile, the results of research (Jayuni et al., 2022) the process of forming the character of student responsibility is carried out by providing an understanding of the value of the character of responsibility, guiding or directing students, and the role of parents at home in educating their children to have a sense of responsibility. Further research results (Prihastutia, Santa, 2020) character of responsibility in students can be seen from several aspects, namely aspects of carrying out assignments that are well received and full of readiness, aspects of completing things with full responsibility, aspects of doing tasks according to ability, aspects of thinking before acting and considering the consequences, aspects are responsible for attitudes, words and actions and aspects use the time that has been determined effectively and efficiently.

## 3.6 Smile, greet, greet, polite

Culture Smiles, greetings, greetings, courtesy, and manners are part of the school culture that aims to build student character. According to Khotimah (2019). Smiling, greeting, greeting, polite, and courteous activities can have a different influence on the character of students where students are better able to respect teachers and friends around them with the Smile, greeting, greeting, polite, and polite program. Furthermore, the results of the study (Kusumaningrum, 2020) by maintaining a culture of Smiles, Greetings, Greetings, Politeness, and Politeness which are introduced from an early age will have a positive impact on the world of education. Further research results (Ezra Sarwina et al., 2022) culture of smiles, greetings, greetings, courtesy, and manners is very important for the future of students because in the future to realize their aspirations, then that's when character education smiles, greetings, greet, polite and courteous will show the results as a culture that builds their own character and character education that will later help them in living their lives in achieving success. From some of the results of the research that has been described, it can be concluded that the culture of smiles, greetings, greetings, politeness, and courtesy has a positive impact on the formation of student personality, where if students are equipped with smiles, greetings, greetings, politeness, and courtesy can be the key to student success for their future.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The formation of student character through religious culture is carried out through praying before and after learning, reading Yasin every Friday, reading Asmaul Husna every Thursday, and dhikr activities every Friday. The meaning of religious culture is the formation of the character of students who are religious and have noble character. The religious cultures developed at ES 26 Sawang have character values such as the values of faith and devotion, Akhlakul qarimah, discipline, responsibility, mutual respect, and smile, greeting, greet, polite, and courteous.

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