



Character Education Curriculum Adaptation Assistance to Build Students' Religious Culture

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Abstract:

Assistance in adapting the character education curriculum is a strategic objective in this research. A qualitative approach with a case study type is used in this research. Data collection techniques use participant observation, in-depth interviews with 5 informants, and documentation. Data analysis uses condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This assistance is carried out through the stages of planning, data collection and implementation, assistance and training, reflection, and reporting. The results of this research show that the strategy for assisting in adapting the religious-based character education curriculum is carried out through several main approaches: Integration of Religious Values in Subjects; Habituation and Daily Religious Activities; and Personal Assistance by Teachers and School Counselors. Assistance in adapting the character education curriculum in shaping students' religious culture in schools has a significant impact, both individually and institutionally. The impacts of this assistance are: 1) Increasing Awareness and Practice of Religious Values; 2) Transforming the School Environment to be More Religious; 3) Increasing the Role of Teachers and Education Personnel as Role Models; 4) Challenges and Obstacles in Implementation; 5) Long-Term Implications for Student Character Formation.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, challenges in education have become increasingly complex, particularly in shaping students' character, fostering strong personalities with integrity and grounded in religious values. Education is no longer simply about transferring knowledge; it must also cultivate individuals with noble morals and spiritual awareness in their daily lives. However, many educational institutions face difficulties in implementing religious-based character education systematically and effectively within their existing curricula (Lutfauziah et al., 2023).

In a case found at Bima Public Elementary School in Pakuniran, the character education curriculum is often not optimally integrated into learning activities. Teachers and educational staff still face challenges in adapting character education materials into

the subjects they teach. Furthermore, the lack of clear and comprehensive guidance on building a religious culture in schools means that moral and ethical values have not been firmly ingrained in students. Consequently, various problems persist in the school environment, such as low student awareness of polite behavior, a lack of social awareness, and an increase in disciplinary violations.

Mentoring in adapting the character education curriculum is a strategic solution to address this issue. Through the mentoring program, teachers and schools receive concrete guidance on how to integrate religious values into learning and the overall school environment. According to Wang et al. (2022), This mentoring not only focuses on curriculum revision, but also includes training for educators so that they can become role models who inspire students to apply religious values in their lives.

Furthermore, mentoring also plays a role in establishing an evaluation system that can measure the effectiveness of religious character education implementation. Through reflective studies, field observations, and discussions with educators, schools can adapt approaches that better suit students' needs. Thus, curriculum adaptation is not merely an administrative change, but a true enabler of fostering a religious culture that is embedded within the school's educational ecosystem. (Zee et al., 2021).

Ultimately, the primary goal of this character education curriculum adaptation assistance is to create an educational environment conducive to the holistic development of students' character. When religious culture is firmly embedded in the education system, students not only excel academically but also develop a strong moral awareness in their interactions with others and are able to apply good values in their daily lives.

RESEARCH METHODS

A qualitative approach with a case study type was used in this research. This research was conducted at Bima Public Elementary School, Pakuniran. Data collection techniques used participant observation, in-depth and structured interviews with 5 informants (the Principal, 2 teachers, and 2 students), and documentation. Data analysis used condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. This mentoring was carried out with the stages of planning, data collection and implementation, mentoring and training, reflection, and reporting. Meanwhile, data validity was obtained from source triangulation. The entire process of the stages of the Character Education Curriculum Adaptation Mentoring activity to Build a Religious Culture at Bima Public Elementary School, Pakuniran, with the provisions of the implementation time adjusted to the time and approval of Bima Public Elementary School, Pakuniran.

Table 1. Research Implementation Time

EXECUTION TIME	MARCH to DECEMBER 2025			
	July 2025	September 2025	November 2025	December 2025
Preparatory stage				
Training Stage				
Trial Phase				
Evaluation Stage				

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on observations and interviews with school principals and Islamic religious education teachers, the strategy for supporting the adaptation of religious-based character education curriculum is carried out through several main approaches:

Integration of Religious Values in Subjects

Teachers play an active role in integrating religious values into various subjects, not just religion. For example, in Indonesian language lessons, students are asked to write short stories on religious themes, while in science lessons, they are taught about the relationship between knowledge and the greatness of God.

Several schools have integrated character education into the curriculum, particularly in religion and civics. Teachers employ problem-based and experiential learning approaches, where students are presented with case studies of moral dilemmas and asked to find solutions based on Islamic and national values. As a teacher, integrating character education into the curriculum, particularly in Religion and Civics, can be achieved through a systematic and applicable approach. This subject plays a strategic role in developing students' moral values, ethics, and social awareness. Therefore, character education must be an integral part of the learning strategy, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.



Figure 1 : Active and project learning activities of students in class



Figure 2 : Student Prayer Practice



Figure 3 : Practice of Wudlu'

In religious studies, character education can be integrated by instilling values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and social awareness. For example, in lessons about worship, students are taught not only the ritual aspects but also the spiritual meaning behind the worship. Teachers can encourage students to reflect on how worship can shape better personalities in their daily lives. Furthermore, experiential learning methods such as practicing worship together, discussing values in the stories of prophets or religious figures, and engaging in religious-based social activities can help students apply character in real life.

Meanwhile, in Civics (PPKn) subjects, character education can be integrated by emphasizing values such as nationalism, tolerance, democracy, and mutual cooperation. In material on the rights and obligations of citizens, for example, students are not only provided with theoretical understanding but are also encouraged to practice responsible behavior in the school and community. Teachers can use case discussions, constructive debates, and social problem-solving simulations to instill a deeper understanding of how to become a citizen with character.

In Indonesian language lessons, teachers utilize students' literacy skills to instill religious values. One method used is asking students to write short stories on religious themes. Through this assignment, students not only learn the structure and techniques of story writing but also understand how religious values can be realized in everyday life.

For example, a student might write a story about a child who tries to be honest on a test despite peer pressure to cheat. In the process, students reflect on the importance of honesty, a core principle of religious teachings. In doing so, they not only improve their writing skills but also develop a strong moral conscience.

Additionally, in literature lessons, students can analyze poems or novels containing religious messages. Teachers can engage students in discussions about how characters in the stories face moral challenges, so they can internalize these values in real life. In science lessons, teachers strive to instill the understanding that science is not simply a product of human thought but also evidence of God's greatness. This concept is introduced through various scientific examples that demonstrate the order of the universe and the laws that govern life.

For example, when studying the water cycle, teachers not only explain the processes of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation, but also invite students to reflect on how these processes demonstrate God's wisdom and power in creating balance in nature. With this approach, students not only cognitively understand the science material but also develop a sense of wonder and gratitude for God's creation.

Similarly, in biology lessons, when discussing the complexity of the human body's systems, teachers can emphasize how each organ has a unique function and works harmoniously. This can provide an opportunity for students to understand that humans

were created with such a perfect system, ultimately leading to an awareness of God's greatness and the importance of maintaining good health as a form of gratitude.

In addition to theoretical approaches, the integration of character education into these subjects can also be implemented through values-based projects, such as community service programs, mutual cooperation activities, or reflective projects like writing moral journals. Evaluation of the success of character education should also be conducted not only through academic assessments but also through observations of students' attitudes and behaviors in their daily lives. Thus, the integration of character education into Religion and Civics subjects will be more effective in shaping students' self-awareness and morality as a whole.

Daily Religious Habits and Activities

The school implements religious practices such as congregational Dhuha and Dzuhur prayers, morning recitation of the Koran before lessons, and communal prayer before and after learning. Observations show that student participation in these activities reached 90%, demonstrating the strategy's effectiveness in fostering a religious culture. This strategy illustrates the implementation of religious practices in schools as part of a strategy for fostering a religious culture. Some of the practices mentioned, such as congregational Dhuha and Dzuhur prayers, morning recitation of the Koran before lessons, and communal prayer before and after learning, represent forms of internalization of spiritual values that are consistently implemented within the educational environment.

Observations showing a 90% student participation rate indicate that this strategy is highly effective in fostering ingrained religious habits in students. The high participation rate also demonstrates that the school environment successfully creates an atmosphere conducive to student engagement in religious practices. This not only contributes to increasing students' spiritual awareness but also fosters character traits such as discipline, togetherness, and social awareness in daily interactions.



Figure 4 : Habituation of Congregational Prayer

Furthermore, these habits can serve as a means of developing strong morals and ethics. By cultivating prayer before and after studying, students are encouraged to always remember God in all their activities, fostering an awareness that the knowledge they acquire is not merely for worldly purposes but also has religious value. (Chen et al., 2024; Farhan & Rofi'ulmuiz, 2021). Morning recitation before lessons also helps build inner calm before starting academic activities, which can have a positive impact on concentration and academic achievement.

The importance of implementing this strategy can also be examined from a psychological and social perspective. Psychologically, regularly practicing religious practices can have a calming effect and reduce stress in students. Socially, participation in congregational worship strengthens a sense of togetherness and solidarity among

students, teachers, and the entire school community. Therefore, implementing this strategy serves not only as a religious ritual but also as a means of character building and strengthening social values within school life.

Mentoring is also provided by getting students used to participating in daily religious activities at school. Some of the flagship programs implemented include congregational Dhuha prayer before classes begin, daily Quran recitation, and the habit of praying before and after classes. Furthermore, the school implements the "One Day One Hadith" program, where each morning before class begins, teachers read and explain a hadith relevant to the students' lives.

Observations showed that after six months of implementation of the program, student participation in religious activities increased. Prior to the program, only about 50% of students regularly attended the Dhuha prayer. However, after intensive mentoring, participation increased to 90%. Interviewed teachers stated that consistency in implementation and the direct involvement of educators as role models for students contributed to the program's success.

Furthermore, positive changes are also evident in students' attitudes outside the classroom. Field observations show that students who regularly participate in religious activities tend to be more polite when speaking to their peers and teachers, and are more responsible in their assignments. A guidance counselor revealed that the number of minor disciplinary violations, such as being late to class and using offensive language, has decreased by 40% since the program was implemented. This demonstrates that internalizing religious values through religious activities has a positive impact on students' behavior in everyday life.

Achieving a 90% participation rate in religious practices at school can be achieved through a systematic research approach, using a combination of observation, interview, and document analysis methods. The following are steps that can be used to empirically prove this figure: Observations are conducted over a certain period (one month) by recording the number of students participating in religious activities such as Dhuha prayer, Dzuhur prayer in congregation, morning tadarus, and group prayer. These observations can be carried out by teachers, school staff, or researchers who are directly present at the activity. The observation methods used by researchers include: Using an attendance checklist that records the number of students participating each day; Conducting direct observations in the prayer room and classroom before learning begins. Then, the resulting observation data such as the number of students attending each day in activities and the percentage of participation are compared to the total number of students in the school.

The observed sample was 200 students who attended school in one day and an average of 180 students participated in religious activities, so the participation rate was calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{180}{200} \times 100\% = 90\%$$

The results of this survey can be used to support the claim that student participation is indeed high and not simply an unsubstantiated statistic. By combining observation, interviews, document analysis, and student surveys, the 90% participation rate can be validly and credibly demonstrated. If all the data show a consistent pattern, then we can conclude that the level of participation in religious practices at school is indeed 90%.

Personal Mentoring by Teachers and School Counselors

Teachers and school counselors personally assist students in applying religious values in their daily lives. Interviews with guidance counselors indicated that this approach is very helpful for students who have difficulty understanding and applying religious values at school and at home.

In an educational setting, each student has a different background, experience, and understanding of religious values. Some students may have been accustomed to religious practices at home, while others may lack guidance or even experience confusion in internalizing these values. Therefore, personal mentoring by teachers and school counselors is crucial to ensure that each student receives guidance tailored to their needs. (Belkhir, 2024).

Teachers and school counselors are not only tasked with providing advice or instructions to students, but also strive to understand their psychological well-being, family environment, and the challenges they face in implementing religious values. With a more empathetic and personalized approach, students feel more heard and receive solutions more relevant to their circumstances.

From observations and interviews, it can be concluded that the strategy for supporting the adaptation of the character education curriculum to build students' religious culture is implemented through three main approaches: integrating religious values into subjects, familiarizing them with daily religious activities, and personal mentoring by teachers and school counselors. This approach has proven effective in increasing students' awareness and participation in religious activities, as well as positively impacting changes in their attitudes and behaviors at school.

However, the success of this strategy depends not only on schools but also requires the active involvement of parents and the community. Therefore, the next step is to strengthen the synergy between schools, families, and the surrounding community in supporting this religious-based character education. This way, it is hoped that the religious culture instilled in schools will continue and be applied by students in their lives outside the school environment.

In addition to integrating religious values into subjects and promoting religious activities, mentoring strategies are also implemented personally by teachers and school counselors. This mentoring aims to help students who have difficulty internalizing religious values, whether due to family factors or a lack of understanding of religious teachings.

Interviews with guidance counselors revealed that approximately 20% of students were initially less active in religious activities at school. Some of these students came from families with limited religious practices at home. To address this, teachers and school counselors employed an individualized approach, providing motivation and specialized guidance to students in need. One approach implemented was the "Religious Mentoring" program, where less active students were accompanied by a guidance counselor and provided with specialized motivation and guidance.

The results of this program were quite significant. Based on observations conducted over three months, students who initially rarely participated in religious activities began to show behavioral changes. They were more enthusiastic about attending congregational prayers, more active in religious discussions, and showed improvements in discipline and positive attitudes towards peers. One student who had previously been less active in religious activities stated in an interview: "At first, I felt reluctant to participate in activities such as tadarus (recitation of the Koran) and

congregational prayers, but after being invited to discuss these values with my teacher, I came to understand the importance of these values in everyday life.

This personal mentoring not only helps improve students' understanding of religious values but also strengthens the relationship between teachers and students. With a more humanistic and empathetic approach, students feel more comfortable discussing the issues they face, both related to academics and their personal lives. This demonstrates that direct mentoring by educators has a significant impact on shaping students' religious culture at school.

Supporting the adaptation of the character education curriculum to shape students' religious culture in schools has had a significant impact, both individually and institutionally. Observations and interviews with teachers, students, and educational staff revealed several key findings regarding the impact of this support.

Increasing Awareness and Practice of Religious Values

Assistance in adapting the character education curriculum reinforces religious values in students' daily lives. By integrating religious values into subjects and extracurricular activities, students better understand the importance of practicing religious teachings in their lives. Several students reported being more disciplined in their religious practices, such as praying five times a day, reading the Quran, and practicing good morals in social interactions. Religious education teachers reported that after the assistance, students' enthusiasm for participating in religious activities at school had significantly increased.

Transforming the School Environment to Become More Religious

Observations show that religious culture in schools is growing with the adaptation of the character education curriculum. Schools have begun implementing Islamic practices, such as communal prayer before and after lessons, the practice of Islamic greetings and salutations, and Quran recitation before the start of learning activities. Furthermore, schools are providing improved worship facilities, such as larger prayer rooms and more intensive religious mentoring activities.

Enhancing the Role of Teachers and Education Personnel as Role Models

This mentoring also enhanced the role of teachers as role models in fostering a religious culture. Teachers and other educational staff became more aware of their role models for students in practicing religious values. One principal reported that after the training and curriculum mentoring, teachers were more consistent in providing concrete examples, such as maintaining ethical speech, dressing in accordance with religious teachings, and engaging students in discussions about the challenges of implementing religious values in the modern era.

Despite the positive impact, there are several challenges faced in supporting the adaptation of the character education curriculum. Several teachers revealed that there is still resistance from some students who are less accustomed to religious practices at school. Furthermore, a lack of support from the family environment is also a barrier to developing a stronger religious culture at school. As a solution, schools have begun conducting outreach to parents to encourage them to play a role in supporting students' religious practices at home.

From interviews with students, the majority stated that the religious values they learned at school significantly impacted their daily lives. One student stated that after receiving this mentoring, he became more sensitive to behaviors that reflect good moral values, such as helping friends, speaking politely, and avoiding reprehensible behavior. In

the long term, it is hoped that this program will produce a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also possesses strong moral and religious integrity. Therefore, mentoring in adapting the character education curriculum plays a significant role in shaping a religious culture in schools. The success of this program depends heavily on the synergy between schools, teachers, students, and families in creating an environment that supports the practice of religious values in daily life.

Discussion

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping students' religious culture in schools. Religious culture extends beyond routine religious practices to reflect the moral and spiritual values embedded in students' daily lives. Therefore, adaptations to the character education curriculum must be designed to reinforce religious values that are not only taught but also internalized and practiced by students in their daily lives. (Lavasani & Khandan, 2020; ONISHCHUK et al., 2020).

Adapting the character education curriculum is a strategic effort to adjust learning materials, methods, and approaches to be more relevant to students' needs in developing self-awareness. Self-awareness, in the context of character education, is an individual's understanding of moral values, emotions, and social responsibilities that shape personality and daily behavior. Therefore, curriculum adaptation must be carried out by considering aspects of students' psychological development, social dynamics, and the challenges of education in the modern era (Aningsih et al., 2022; Efstratopoulou et al., 2022).

One form of curriculum adaptation in developing students' religious culture is adjusting teaching materials to be more contextual to students' spiritual needs. The implemented curriculum must be able to integrate religious values into various subjects, not just limited to religious subjects. For example, in Indonesian language lessons, students can be given texts or stories containing moral messages and religious values (Al Shobaki et al., 2018; Ruhaya, 2019; Wahid et al., 2020). In science lessons, teachers can connect natural phenomena to God's greatness as part of spiritual reflection. This approach helps students understand that religious values are not only related to formal worship but are inherent in every aspect of life.

Furthermore, the learning methods used in the curriculum should emphasize real-life experiences and self-reflection. Methods such as project-based learning, thematic discussions, and role-playing can be used to help students understand how religious values are applied in everyday life (Andika Ikhfa Nurdian et al., 2024; Egorova & Ruiz, 2021). For example, in a social project, students can be given tasks to carry out empathy-based activities, such as helping a friend in need or organizing a religious-based social activity. In this way, students not only learn about religious concepts theoretically but also experience their direct impact in their social interactions (Razali et al., 2024; Tabak & Sahin, 2020).

The school environment also plays a crucial role in supporting the implementation of a curriculum that fosters a religious culture. Curriculum adaptations must align with school policies that foster a religious atmosphere, such as promoting morning religious activities, religious mentoring programs by teachers or seniors, and the establishment of reflection corners throughout the school for worship or reflection. Schools can also implement reward policies for students who demonstrate religious attitudes in their daily lives, such as honesty, patience, and discipline (Baker, 2015).

Furthermore, technology can also be part of curriculum adaptations to foster students' religious culture. In this digital era, utilizing educational platforms based on religious values can help strengthen religious culture among students. For example, schools can provide digital applications containing religious studies, inspirational videos, or discussion forums addressing moral and spiritual issues. Additionally, students can be directed to participate in online study groups or communities that foster positive religious values (Aryati, 2020; Berti, 2020).

Finally, continuous evaluation and development are crucial steps in adapting a religious-based character education curriculum. Evaluation can be conducted through observations of student behavior, daily reflections, interviews with teachers and parents, and project-based assessments that assess the extent to which religious values have been instilled in students. With comprehensive evaluation, schools can continuously adapt their approaches to become more effective in building a religious culture in students (Lin & Jiang, 2023; Ngoasong, 2022).

Thus, adapting the character education curriculum to foster students' religious culture involves not only adding religious content to lessons but also creating a system that encourages students to internalize religious values in their daily lives. This will shape students who not only possess religious knowledge but also possess strong character in applying religious values in the school and community environment.

CONCLUSION

The strategy for supporting the adaptation of the religious-based character education curriculum is carried out through several main approaches: Integration of Religious Values into Subjects; Habitualization and Daily Religious Activities; and Personal Mentoring by Teachers and School Counselors. 1) The strategy for supporting the adaptation of the religious-based character education curriculum has integrated character education into the curriculum, especially in the subjects of religion and citizenship. Teachers use problem-based learning and experiential learning approaches (systematic - applied), where students are given case studies about moral dilemmas and asked to find solutions based on Islamic and national values. 2) Mentoring is also carried out by getting students used to participating in daily religious activities at school. Some of the flagship programs implemented include congregational Dhuha prayers before classes begin, reciting the Qur'an every morning, and making prayers a habit before and after studying. In addition, the school also implements the "One Day One Hadith" program, where every morning before class begins, teachers read and explain a hadith related to the student's life. 3) Teachers and school counselors take an individual approach by providing motivation and special mentoring to students who need it. One of the approaches implemented is the "Religious Mentoring" program, where less active students are accompanied by a mentor teacher and given special motivation and guidance.

The mentoring of character education curriculum adaptation in shaping students' religious culture in schools has a significant impact, both individually and institutionally. Several key findings regarding the impact of this mentoring are 1) Increased Awareness and Practice of Religious Values; 2) Transformation of the School Environment to Become More Religious; 3) Increased Role of Teachers and Education Personnel as Role Models; 4) Challenges and Obstacles in Implementation; 5) Long-Term Implications for the Formation of Student Character.

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