



Developing Students' Character through Tauhid-Based Learning: An Analytical Study of the Implementation of Kitab As-Sa'adah

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine how students' character is formed through tauhid learning using Kitab As-Sa'adah. Employing a qualitative approach with a field research design, the study collected data through observations, interviews, and documentation involving teachers, school leaders, and students to gain an in-depth understanding of the learning process and value internalization. The findings indicate that tauhid learning is implemented systematically through structured stages and supported by diverse teaching methods, including lectures, discussions, and habituation practices. Internalization of tauhid values occurs through religious activities, teacher role modeling, and integration into daily behavior, fostering students' religious, disciplined, and responsible character. Key supporting factors include a consistent religious program, an immersive learning environment, and active teacher involvement, whereas challenges arise from students' difficulty with classical terminology, varied learning abilities, and external influences such as social and media exposure. The study highlights that tauhid-based instruction using Kitab As-Sa'adah effectively enhances both students' understanding of faith and the holistic development of their character.

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INTRODUCTION

Character education has become a critical concern in contemporary society as rapid globalization, technological advances, and widespread social media influence pose challenges to the moral development of young people (Muzakki et al., 2025; Riduan, 2024). Students often face conflicting cultural norms, exposure to negative online content, and peer pressures that may undermine their ethical and social behavior. Developing strong character in students is not only essential for their personal development but also for maintaining societal harmony, reducing social vices, and promoting responsible citizenship.

Muhammad Adnan (2022) emphasizes that character education cultivates values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and integrity, which are crucial for forming individuals capable of contributing positively to society. In addition, integrating moral education with daily practices strengthens students' resilience against external moral challenges and supports holistic human development (Jasri, 2025; Rahmadan & Shudiq, 2024). Therefore, understanding effective methods for instilling these values is fundamental, and studies exploring systematic approaches, particularly within Islamic education, are vital for addressing the moral needs of contemporary communities.

Despite the recognized importance of character education, many students in junior high schools experience moral and behavioral crises. These crises manifest as dishonesty, lack of discipline, weak social responsibility, and diminished ethical awareness, largely influenced by globalized culture and pervasive social media (Hefniy & Alwahedi, 2025; Holidi, 2025; Kusumawati, 2025). Traditional education systems tend to prioritize academic achievement, often neglecting the cultivation of affective and psychomotor domains essential for moral growth. As a result, students may excel cognitively but fail to internalize values necessary for everyday life, such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and empathy. This discrepancy underscores a systemic gap in education, where theoretical knowledge is not effectively transformed into practical ethical behaviour (Qushwa & Baharun, 2024; Sain & Abdullah, 2024; Suhermanto, 2024). Addressing this gap requires a comprehensive approach that integrates moral, social, and spiritual dimensions, particularly within Islamic education, where foundational beliefs like tauhid can guide ethical and responsible conduct. Investigating how structured religious instruction can strengthen character is therefore critical for educators and policymakers.

In practice, character formation in schools often faces inconsistencies between the curriculum and actual student behavior. Many educational institutions implement character education programs in theory, but the internalization of values remains limited due to insufficient habituation, inconsistent teacher role modeling, and varying student engagement. In Islamic education, tauhid-based learning, when implemented effectively, can bridge this gap by linking spiritual understanding with daily ethical practices. Observations in Islamic schools indicate that students exposed to systematic religious instruction demonstrate higher levels of discipline, responsibility, and moral awareness compared to peers without structured guidance. However, challenges persist, such as difficulties in comprehending classical Islamic texts, differences in students' learning abilities, and external environmental influences including family, peers, and media exposure. These field phenomena suggest that while educational frameworks exist, effective internalization of values requires a deliberate integration of teaching methods, habitual practices, and active

guidance from educators, making it an urgent area of investigation for character development research.

Previous research has highlighted the link between religious education and character development. For example, al-Qosam, Maulida, and Priyatna (2022) found that learning *aqidah akhlak* positively influences students' religious character through habituation and structured religious practices. Similarly, Jaelani (2022) emphasized that character education should address cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains to ensure that moral values are not merely theoretical but actively demonstrated in daily life. Studies on tauhid education indicate that deep understanding of the oneness of Allah fosters spiritual awareness, which directly affects ethical behavior, including honesty, patience, justice, and responsibility (Khofsah, 2025; Rahman, 2026; Shoha, 2026). These findings collectively suggest that tauhid learning has significant potential to enhance both faith comprehension and practical moral character, but they often focus on generalized implementation and cognitive understanding, leaving a gap in exploring the concrete internalization process within students' daily behavior.

Despite existing studies confirming the effectiveness of tauhid or *aqidah* learning in shaping moral character, several limitations remain. Many investigations primarily examine knowledge acquisition or abstract moral reasoning rather than observing the practical integration of values into real-life conduct. Additionally, limited research specifically explores the role of classical texts, such as *Kitab As-Sa'adah*, in systematically guiding character formation. This text, authored by Syaikh Abdur Rahim Manaf, uniquely integrates tauhid concepts with practical applications, covering belief in Allah, the prophets, divine decree, and aspects of the Hereafter (Hikmah & Mudarris, 2026; Manshur, 2026; Syafiih, 2025). Its potential to foster moral and religious character has been underexplored in contemporary empirical studies. Addressing this research gap is crucial because understanding the mechanisms through which students internalize tauhid values can inform more effective educational strategies. A detailed examination of learning methods, habituation practices, and teacher guidance using this text provides new insights for enhancing moral education in Islamic schools.

This study contributes to the literature by focusing on the process of character formation through tauhid learning using *Kitab As-Sa'adah*, moving beyond cognitive mastery to examine value internalization and behavioral outcomes. While previous research largely emphasizes theoretical understanding, this study investigates practical habituation, teacher role modeling, and integration of religious values into daily life. Furthermore, it explores contextual factors such as students' comprehension of classical terminology, differences in learning abilities, and external influences from the social environment and media. By addressing these dimensions, the research offers a more comprehensive understanding of character education within

Islamic pedagogy. The findings are expected to provide actionable recommendations for educators to strengthen holistic student development, aligning spiritual knowledge with ethical and responsible conduct, thus contributing both academically and practically to the field of moral education.

The central research problem addressed in this study is how tauhid learning using Kitab As-Sa'adah contributes to the formation of students' character in a meaningful and sustainable way. Preliminary observations suggest that while students may achieve cognitive understanding of tauhid, effective internalization into attitudes and behaviors requires structured teaching, habituation, and active role modeling by teachers. This study argues that a systematic approach integrating lectures, discussions, advisories, and daily religious practices can foster moral, social, and religious qualities simultaneously. The contribution of this research lies in demonstrating a replicable model for tauhid-based character formation, emphasizing practical value integration, and addressing challenges in comprehension and external influences. Ultimately, this study aims to offer insights that can inform curriculum design and pedagogical strategies for Islamic education, enhancing students' ethical competence, spiritual awareness, and holistic character development.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative case study design, chosen to provide an in-depth exploration of the phenomena related to students' character formation through tauhid learning using Kitab As-Sa'adah (Fahmi, 2024; Niam et al., 2024; Okoko et al., 2023). The case study approach allows the researcher to investigate complex processes within their real-life context, capturing rich, detailed insights into the implementation of tauhid education and the internalization of values in students' daily behavior. By focusing on a single, bounded case, the study can systematically examine interactions between teaching methods, habituation practices, and student responses, providing comprehensive understanding that cannot be achieved through quantitative methods alone. The qualitative nature of the study emphasizes data in the form of words, observations, and documents rather than numerical measurements, which is particularly suitable for analyzing educational practices and moral development processes.

The research was conducted at SMP Alberr Pandaan, an institution affiliated with an Islamic boarding school (pesantren), selected due to its strong commitment to character development and integration of Islamic values into teaching and student activities. The school environment provides a rich context for observing tauhid-based learning in practice, as well as the habituation processes that support students' moral and spiritual growth (Fadli, 2021). The site enables direct access to participants who are actively involved in the learning

process, including teachers, school leaders, and students, allowing the researcher to capture authentic, contextualized data.

Data collection in this study involved multiple integrated techniques to ensure depth, accuracy, and triangulation. Primary data were obtained from semi-structured interviews and participatory observations of the principal, tauhid teacher, and students, while secondary data were gathered from documents including Kitab As-Sa'adah, school archives, and relevant literature. Observations focused on teaching practices, student interactions, and habituation activities, while interviews explored participants' experiences, perceptions, and reflections on character formation. Documentation provided supporting evidence of learning processes and institutional programs. Using these complementary methods allowed for the construction of a holistic, multi-perspective understanding of tauhid learning and its role in shaping character.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, which involved three continuous, systematic stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the data reduction stage, raw data were condensed, organized, and coded to highlight relevant patterns, themes, and insights (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2025; Donkoh & Mensah, 2023; Nurfajriani et al., 2024; Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024). Data display employed matrices, charts, and narrative summaries to present findings in a clear, structured manner, facilitating interpretation and synthesis. Verification and validation were ensured through trustworthiness criteria, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, with triangulation of interviews, observations, and documentation used to confirm the accuracy and reliability of findings (Chantika et al., 2024). These procedures ensured that the results faithfully represented the real conditions of tauhid learning and character development within the study context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Tauhid Learning Using Kitab As-Sa'adah

The implementation of tauhid learning using Kitab as-Sa'adah in Grade VII at SMP Alberr Pandaan has been carried out systematically and in a well-planned manner. This is evident from the structured stages of learning, starting from the opening, core activities, and closing, which are conducted continuously. These findings are in line with the concept of instructional implementation in Islamic education, which emphasizes the importance of planning, execution, and evaluation as an integrated process (Margiutomo & Jayanti, 2025; Mockler & Stacey, 2024).

From a theoretical perspective, tauhid learning is not only aimed at providing cognitive understanding of the oneness of Allah SWT but also at

developing spiritual awareness that influences students' behaviour. This aligns with research stating that tauhid values serve as the primary foundation in shaping students' mindset, attitudes, and behaviour (Rambe et al., 2025). Field findings show that teachers have implemented this by relating tauhid material to students' daily lives, making the learning process more contextual and meaningful.

The use of lecture, discussion, and question-and-answer methods indicates a variety of teaching strategies that enhance student engagement. Moreover, the contextual approach applied by teachers, linking the content of the kitab to real-life experiences, aligns with constructivist learning theory, where learning becomes more meaningful when students connect new knowledge with prior experiences (Bruton et al., 2024; Heath et al., 2022; Muali, 2025). Therefore, the strategies applied in tauhid learning can be considered consistent with modern principles of Islamic education.

However, challenges were found, particularly students' difficulty in understanding the terminology in Kitab as-Sa'adah. This indicates that the use of classical texts requires additional strategies, such as simplifying language and providing concrete examples. Overall, the implementation of tauhid learning at SMP Alberr Pandaan has been effective and aligned with Islamic educational theory, although further improvement is needed in teaching methods and language approaches.

The Internalization Process of Tauhid Values in Students' Character Formation

The internalization of tauhid values is a crucial aspect of this study, as the primary goal of tauhid learning is to develop students' religious character. Based on the findings, this internalization process is carried out through habituation, role modelling, and integration into students' daily lives.

Theoretically, value internalization is a gradual process through which values become part of an individual's personality, encompassing knowledge, attitudes, and actions (Hanafy et al., 2025; Sarikaya, 2023; Zamiri & Esmaeili, 2024). In this context, tauhid learning at SMP Alberr Pandaan has incorporated all these aspects. Habituation through religious activities such as collective prayers, polite behaviour, and other religious practices serves as an effective method of character education through repeated practice.

In addition to habituation, teacher role modelling plays a significant role in the internalization process. Teachers act as behavioural models for students in their daily lives. The findings indicate that teachers' religious, disciplined, and

responsible attitudes positively influence students' character development.

The internalization of tauhid values is also reflected in changes in students' behaviour, such as increased awareness in worship, a stronger sense of responsibility, and improved social relationships. This shows that tauhid values are not only understood theoretically but also applied in daily life. However, this process is not yet fully optimal, as some students still lack consistency in practicing these values. This confirms that character formation is a long-term process requiring continuous guidance and habituation (Asni, 2025; Sholehah & Ihsan, 2025; Tzimas & Demetriadis, 2024). Thus, while the internalization process has been effective, it still needs reinforcement, particularly in maintaining behavioural consistency among students.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Tauhid Learning in Character Formation

The success of tauhid learning in shaping students' character is influenced by both supporting and inhibiting factors, which can be categorized into internal and external factors.

The main supporting factor is the boarding school environment, which creates a religious and conducive atmosphere for internalizing tauhid values. Regular religious activities serve as effective means of habituation in character formation. Additionally, the active and competent role of teachers is a crucial supporting factor. Teachers not only deliver material but also guide and model good behaviour. The use of varied teaching methods and communicative approaches further enhances the effectiveness of learning. School policies that emphasize character education also strengthen the implementation of tauhid learning. The synergy between classroom instruction and religious activities outside the classroom reflects a well-integrated educational system.

On the other hand, several inhibiting factors were identified. One of the main challenges is students' difficulty in understanding the terminology in Kitab as-Sa'adah, indicating a linguistic barrier that requires adaptive teaching strategies. Differences in students' abilities and backgrounds also pose challenges, as not all students have the same level of understanding, thus requiring differentiated instruction.

Another inhibiting factor is the lack of consistency among some students in applying the values they have learned, indicating that the internalization process is not yet fully optimal and requires continuous reinforcement. Furthermore, external influences such as peer interaction and social media can hinder character formation. Values that are not aligned with Islamic teachings may negatively affect students' behaviour if not balanced with strong value

reinforcement at school. Therefore, the success of tauhid learning depends not only on the educational process within the school but also on the management of both internal and external influencing factors.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight that tauhid learning through Kitab As-Sa'adah plays a pivotal role in shaping students' Islamic character, demonstrating that systematic instruction, contextualized methods, and habituation can effectively enhance both spiritual awareness and moral behavior. The internalization of tauhid values through role modeling, daily practice, and structured religious activities fosters students' religiosity, discipline, and responsibility, providing valuable insights into how classical Islamic texts can serve not only as a source of knowledge but also as practical tools for character formation. This study underscores the importance of integrating ethical, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions in education, showing that holistic tauhid-based learning supports the comprehensive development of students and contributes to the broader discourse on moral and religious education. Additionally, it demonstrates that supportive institutional environments, active teacher involvement, and consistent school policies significantly reinforce the learning process, offering a replicable framework for character education in similar contexts.

Despite these contributions, the study faces several limitations, including students' difficulty in understanding classical terminology, differences in learning abilities, and the influence of external environmental factors such as family, peers, and media. Future research should explore more innovative and interactive learning approaches, including digital media or multimedia resources, to facilitate comprehension and engagement with classical texts. Moreover, subsequent studies could expand the scope to different educational levels, compare the effectiveness of alternative tauhid texts, and examine the role of external factors more deeply to provide a comprehensive understanding of character development processes. These directions will enrich both practical applications and theoretical knowledge in Islamic character education.

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