

From Religious Instruction to Religious Life: A Case Study of the Implementation of Holistic Islamic Education in Shaping Students' Religious Attitudes

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ABSTRACT

Islamic Religious Education is expected not only to develop students' religious knowledge but also to translate that knowledge into attitudes and everyday practices. However, a gap remains between students' cognitive understanding of Islamic teachings and their consistent practice in daily life. This study examines the implementation of holistic Islamic education in shaping students' religious attitudes at MTsN 8 Cirebon Regency and identifies the factors that support and constrain its implementation. The study employed a qualitative case study design and was conducted over six months, from December 2023 to May 2024. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation and were analyzed using an interactive process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. The findings show that holistic Islamic education is implemented primarily through three structured habituation practices: greeting activities, Qur'an recitation before lessons, and congregational Dhuhr prayer. These practices support students' discipline, respectful interaction, religious awareness, and the application of religious values in daily life. However, the internalization of religious attitudes is not uniform among students. Its effectiveness is strengthened by school leadership, teacher involvement, and adequate facilities, while family background, peer influence, inconsistent teacher reinforcement, and digital exposure may hinder sustained behavioral change. Theoretically, this study shows that religious attitude formation is not a direct outcome of classroom instruction alone, but a relational process shaped by the interaction of habituation, teacher modeling, institutional support, and students' broader social environment.

Keywords: Holistic Islamic Education, Religious Attitudes, Religious Habituation, Character Formation, Islamic Education

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education is expected to develop not only students' knowledge of religious teachings but also their capacity to internalize and practice religious values in everyday life attitudes¹ However, translating religious knowledge into consistent attitudes and practices remains an important challenge in contemporary Islamic education. The increasing influence of digital media, changing patterns of social interaction, and students' diverse social environments have made the formation of religious attitudes more complex.² Consequently, the effectiveness of Islamic education should be examined not merely through what students know, but also through how religious values become part of their everyday behavior.

The rapid advancement of science and technology in the era of globalization and digital transformation has significantly influenced various aspects of human life, including education While these developments provide broader access to information and accelerate learning processes, they also present serious challenges, particularly in shaping students' moral character and religious attitudes.³ In Indonesia, education is not merely aimed at developing intellectual competence but also at fostering character and spiritual values. Religious attitudes and moral values are considered fundamental and essential components of the national education system, as emphasized by policymakers and scholars.⁴ Education, in this sense, is expected to humanize individuals by helping learners develop their full potential, including their ethical and spiritual dimensions.

Religious attitude refers to an individual's tendency to understand, accept, and consistently express religious values through everyday attitudes and practices.⁵ In Islamic education, students are therefore expected not only to understand religious teachings cognitively but also to demonstrate those values through respectful interaction, discipline, worship, and socially responsible behavior.⁶ Nevertheless, recent studies indicate that schools continue to face challenges in translating religious instruction into consistent student behavior.⁷

¹J. Sulaeman et al., 'Islamic Religious Education Holistic-Integrative Learning in Elementary School', *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* (2023), doi:10.47191/ijsshr/v6-i3-51.; A. K. Andri et al., 'Design of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning Management in Integrated Islamic Schools', *EDUTEC: Journal of Education and Technology* (2024), doi:10.29062/edu.v7i4.818.

²L. S. Nurlaela, H. W. Pratomo, and N. Araniri, 'Pengaruh Pola Asuh Orang tua terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Anak pada Siswa Kelas III Mandrasah Ibtidaiyah Tahfizhul Qur'an Asasul Huda Ranjikulon', *Eduprof: Islamic Education Journal*, 2.2 (2020), 226–41, doi:10.47453/eduprof.v2i2.35.; S. Susanto, A. W. Ritonga, and A. Desrani, 'Islamic Boarding School Paradigm: As a Religious Education Institution and Strengthening Student Character', *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 4.4 (2023), doi:10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i4.641.

³J. Sulaeman et al., 'Islamic Religious Education Holistic-Integrative Learning in Elementary School'

⁴A. K. Andri et al., 'Design of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning Management in Integrated Islamic Schools'

⁵M. Anggraini, N. Nadlir, and E. Made, 'Implementing a Holistic Islamic Religious Education Curriculum Based on Multicultural Values', *Al-Insyiroh: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* (2025), doi:10.35309/alinsyiroh.v11i2.454.

⁶Y. Permana, N. Araniri, and N. Nurhidayat, 'Penerapan Metode Peer Teaching dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Pada Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Silam di Sekolah Menengah Atas', *Eduprof: Islamic Education Journal*, 2.2 (2020), 242–60, doi:10.47453/eduprof.v2i2.36.

⁷S. M. Puteri, 'Kontribusi Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Edukasi Moral dan Etika Anak Usia Sekolah Dasar', *Journal of Character and Elementary Education* (2025), doi:10.35508/jocce.v4i3.23051.

At MTsN 8 Cirebon, Islamic Religious Education is delivered through subjects such as Aqidah Akhlak, Qur'an-Hadith, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History and is reinforced through school-based religious activities. Preliminary observations, however, revealed a noticeable gap between students' understanding of religious teachings and their everyday practices. Some students still required reminders to perform obligatory prayers, showed inconsistent respectful behavior toward teachers, and demonstrated varying levels of Qur'an-reading proficiency despite participating in routine religious activities. These conditions suggest that exposure to religious instruction does not automatically lead to the consistent internalization of religious values.

The discrepancy between religious knowledge and everyday practice raises an important pedagogical question concerning how Islamic education moves from instruction to internalization.⁸ Islamic Religious Education is intended to involve cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions rather than functioning merely as the transmission of religious knowledge.⁹ When learning remains predominantly cognitive, students may understand religious principles without necessarily developing the habits and personal commitment required to practice them consistently. In the context of this study, the central issue is therefore not whether students have received religious instruction, but how that instruction is transformed into lived religious attitudes.

To address this gap, it is necessary to actualize Islamic Religious Education learning through a more holistic and integrative approach.¹⁰ Holistic Islamic education emphasizes the integration of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and spiritual dimensions in a unified learning process. Through this approach, students are not only expected to understand religious teachings but also to internalize and practice them meaningfully. In MTsN 8 Cirebon, efforts toward this actualization have been implemented through various habituation programs, such as greeting practices (salam, sapa), congregational Dhuhr prayer, and collective Qur'an recitation before learning activities. These programs aim to foster religious habits and embed Islamic values into students' daily routines.¹¹

The internalization of religious values does not take place within the classroom alone. Students interact with teachers, families, peers, school routines, and increasingly complex social and digital environments, which may reinforce or challenge the values introduced through Islamic

⁸A. Aprilatip, 'Pengaruh Implementasi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Secara Daring dan Kendalanya dalam Penguasaan Pengetahuan', *Eduprof: Islamic Education Journal*, 3.2 (2021), 151–64, doi:10.47453/eduprof.v3i2.90.

⁹C. M. Hermawan et al., 'Core Strategy of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Forming Student Piety Through Contextual and Meaningful Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Al-Munawaroh Tangerang', *Journal of Research in Islamic Education*, 7.1 (2025), doi:10.25217/jrie.v7i1.6253.; E. Nurhidin, 'Implementasi Model Pembelajaran Kelas Terbalik pada Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu', *Eduprof: Islamic Education Journal*, 4.1 (2022), 61–76, doi:10.47453/eduprof.v4i1.118.

¹⁰N. A. R. A. Faruqi, M. T. M. Tauhid, and N. Khoiri, 'Integration of the Concept of the PAI Material Curriculum with the Love Curriculum and Deep Learning Approach', *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 8 (2025), doi:10.47191/ijsshr/v8-i9-74.

¹¹S. Rukmana, M. Pasaribu, and S. Sofyan, 'Holistic Integration of Islamic Religious Education Values: A Comprehensive Strategy for Character Development at MAN 1 Tapanuli Tengah', *FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Manajemen Islam* (2024), doi:10.32806/jf.v14i2.636.

education.¹² Therefore, the formation of religious attitudes needs to be understood not only as a pedagogical process, but also as an interaction between school-based religious practices and the broader environments surrounding students.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the relationship between Islamic religious education and students' character formation involves more than the transmission of religious knowledge. Komariah & Nihayah¹³ found that Islamic Religious Education teachers employed both direct and indirect instructional strategies in shaping students' Muslim personality. Rukmana et al.¹⁴ Their study showed positive changes in religious behavior, discipline, and respect for others, although the development of disciplinary behavior remained uneven and was influenced by school policies, cooperation among educators, and family and community environments. Putri & Amin¹⁵ reported an important knowledge-behavior discrepancy: students demonstrated a high level of Islamic religious knowledge, with an average score of 82.7, while their behavioral score remained at a moderate level of 48.3. Ismanto et al.¹⁶ Their findings indicate that high religious knowledge does not automatically translate into correspondingly positive behavior because other contextual factors also shape students' actions.

The novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing religious attitude formation as a process of translating formal religious instruction into lived religious practice. Rather than treating classroom learning, habituation, and school culture as isolated components, this study examines how structured religious practices, teacher modeling, institutional support, and students' broader social environments interact in shaping the internalization of religious values.¹⁷ This perspective allows the study to explain not only what religious programs are implemented, but also how and under what conditions religious instruction is transformed into students' everyday religious attitudes.

Complementing these findings, Rukmana et al.¹⁸ identified a holistic framework of Islamic education built around faith (akidah), worship, and moral conduct (akhlak). Their study showed

¹²M. Muhamamd Anas, 'Strengthening Local Wisdom through Pancasila Student Profile-Based PAI Learning for Muslim Students in Bali', *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education Journal* (2025), doi:10.59373/attadzkir.v4i1.89.; A. Luthfi, E. Saputra, and N. Ali, 'Development of a Multicultural-Based Islamic Religious Education Learning Model in Fostering Moderate Attitudes of Junior High School Students in Cilegon', *Journal of Educational and Social Research* (2025), doi:10.36941/jesr-2025-0126.

¹³N. Komariah and I. Nihayah, 'Improving The Personality Character of Students Through Learning Islamic Religious Education', *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education Journal*, 2.1 (2023), doi:10.59373/attadzkir.v2i1.15.

¹⁴S. Rukmana, 'Holistic Integration of Islamic Religious Education Values: A Comprehensive Strategy for Character Development at MAN 1 Tapanuli Tengah'

¹⁵K. E. Putri and S. Amin, 'The Relationship between Islamic Religious Knowledge and the Behavior of High School Students', *At-Ta'lim: Media Informasi Pendidikan Islam* (2024), doi:10.29300/attalim.v23i2.5827.

¹⁶H. Ismanto et al., 'Religiosity and Attitudes: A Study of Indonesian Islamic Primary School Students', *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 16.3 (2024), doi:10.35445/alishlah.v16i3.5564.

¹⁷Y. Bachtiar and H. Salim, 'Instilling Student Discipline Through Islamic Religious Education Activities', *Indonesian Journal of Innovation Studies* (2025), doi:10.21070/ijins.v26i3.1522.; A. Sanusi et al., 'Investigating Islamic Religious Education learning in Public Higher Education: Epistemological, ontogenic, and didactic barriers', *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Religious Education* (2025), doi:10.63243/d53wwk48.

¹⁸S. Rukmana, 'Holistic Integration of Islamic Religious Education Values: A Comprehensive Strategy for Character Development at MAN 1 Tapanuli Tengah'

that the internalization of these values was supported by teacher modeling, habituation, persuasive guidance, and educational reinforcement, while limited parental involvement, peer influence, and uncontrolled social media use remained important challenges. Similarly, Ismanto et al.¹⁹ found that students' external religiosity, shaped by environmental influences and personal motivation, could develop into internal religiosity characterized by conscientiousness, initiative, and altruism when supported by continuous guidance from teachers and parents. Taken together, these studies demonstrate that religious knowledge, school practices, teacher involvement, and environmental support all contribute to students' religious development. However, they leave an important question insufficiently explained: how these elements interact as a process through which formal religious instruction is transformed into lived religious practice. Accordingly, the research gap addressed in this study lies not simply in whether Islamic education influences students' attitudes, but in explaining the mechanism through which religious knowledge is internalized and sustained in students' everyday lives.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse on holistic Islamic education by explaining the process through which religious instruction is translated into everyday religious attitudes.²⁰ Practically, the findings are expected to provide insights for teachers and school leaders in designing religious education that combines classroom instruction with structured habituation, consistent teacher modeling, and supportive school practices.²¹ In this way, the study moves beyond describing religious programs and focuses on the conditions that make the internalization of religious values more meaningful and sustainable.²²

Therefore, this study aims to examine how holistic Islamic education is implemented in shaping students' religious attitudes at MTsN 8 Cirebon and to identify the factors that support or constrain the translation of religious instruction into students' everyday religious practices.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design.²³ The qualitative approach was chosen to explore and understand social phenomena in their natural context, particularly the actualization of Islamic Religious Education learning in shaping students' religious attitudes. This approach emphasizes meaning, interpretation, and in-depth understanding of human behavior and interactions. The case study design allows the researcher to examine a bounded

¹⁹H. Ismanto et al., 'Religiosity and Attitudes: A Study of Indonesian Islamic Primary School Students'

²⁰F. Adinda, I. Musthofa, and T. A. Anshori, 'Islamic Values Comprehension and its Correlation with Religious Tolerance Among High School Students', *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education* (2025), doi:10.35723/ajie.v9i3.197.

²¹S. R. A. Aisy, S. Syahidin, and A. Fakhruddin, 'The Contribution of Pesantren Kilat Program to Students' Religious Knowledge and Behaviors at Elementary School', *EDUCARE: Journal of Primary Education* (2024), doi:10.35719/educare.v5i2.311.

²²S. Susanto, 'Islamic Boarding School Paradigm: As a Religious Education Institution and Strengthening Student Character'

²³Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, 19th edn* (Alfabeta, 2022).

system-namely, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning in a specific school-comprehensively and contextually.

In this research, the researcher acted as the primary instrument, directly engaging in the field to collect data, interact with participants, and interpret findings.²⁴ The researcher's presence was essential to obtain authentic data and to understand the real conditions occurring in the research setting.

Research Location and Time

The research was conducted at MTsN 8 Cirebon, Indonesia. This location was selected because it represents an Islamic educational institution that actively implements religious learning programs and habituation activities. The study was carried out over a period of six months, from December 2023 to May 2024. The research process consisted of three main stages: preparation (proposal development, instrument design, and research permission), implementation (field observation, interviews, and data collection), and completion (data analysis and report writing). The researcher was directly involved in the field throughout this period to ensure accurate and comprehensive data collection.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected using purposive sampling because the study required informants who were directly involved in, experienced, or had sufficient knowledge of the implementation of Islamic Religious Education and religious habituation programs at the school. The participants represented several key groups within the school community, including the head of the madrasah, the vice principal, Islamic Religious Education teachers, the religious program supervisor, counseling teachers, school staff, and students. Adult participants were selected based on their direct involvement in planning, implementing, supervising, or evaluating religious education and habituation activities. Student participants were selected based on their active participation in the school's religious programs and their ability to provide relevant information about their experiences of greeting practices, Qur'an recitation, congregational prayer, and the application of religious values in daily life. The inclusion of participants from different roles was intended to obtain multiple perspectives and to support source triangulation in examining the implementation and internalization of religious values.

Data Collection Techniques

Data in this study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected directly from participants, including the head of the madrasah, teachers, students, and school staff, while secondary data were obtained from documents, archives, and relevant literature. The data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine students' behavior, participation in religious activities, and the implementation of habituation programs such as greeting practices, Qur'an recitation, and congregational prayer. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner to allow flexibility

²⁴J. W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (SAGE, 2014).

while maintaining focus on the research objectives. These interviews aimed to gather in-depth information regarding participants' experiences, perceptions, and roles in implementing Islamic Religious Education learning. Documentation was used to collect supporting data such as school records, photographs, and written reports.

The researcher served as the primary instrument, supported by semi-structured interview guidelines, observation checklists, and documentation guidelines. The interview guidelines were developed based on the research objectives and covered three main areas: (1) the implementation of holistic Islamic education and religious habituation programs; (2) students' experiences in understanding, internalizing, and practicing religious values; and (3) factors that supported or constrained the implementation and internalization of these values. Questions addressed, among others, the implementation of greeting practices, Qur'an recitation before lessons, congregational Dhuhr prayer, teacher involvement, students' behavioral responses, family influence, peer relationships, and challenges arising from the digital environment.

The observation checklist focused on both program implementation and students' observable religious attitudes. The observed aspects included the regularity and organization of greeting activities, Qur'an recitation, and congregational prayer; students' participation and discipline; respectful interaction with teachers and peers; teacher modeling and supervision; and the availability of facilities supporting religious activities. Field notes were used to record contextual information and behaviors that could not be adequately captured through predetermined checklist items.

Documentation was used to complement and verify information obtained from interviews and observations. The documents examined included school program records, schedules of religious activities, relevant school regulations, photographs of activities and facilities, and other records related to the implementation of Islamic Religious Education and religious habituation programs. The use of multiple instruments enabled the researcher to compare information across interviews, observations, and documents during the triangulation process.

Table 1. Data Collection Instruments and Observed Aspects

Data collection technique	Main focus	Key aspects
Semi-structured interview	Implementation of holistic Islamic education	Program planning, greeting practices, Qur'an recitation, congregational prayer, teacher roles
Semi-structured interview	Students' religious attitudes	Discipline, respectful behavior, worship awareness, internalization and practice beyond school
Semi-structured interview	Supporting and inhibiting factors	Leadership, teachers, facilities, family, peers, digital environment

Observation	Program implementation	Regularity, participation, teacher supervision, use of facilities
Observation	Observable student behavior	Discipline, politeness, participation in worship, interaction with teachers and peers
Documentation	Supporting evidence	Program schedules, school regulations, activity records, photographs, relevant school documents

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted using an interactive model, which includes data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis process was carried out continuously and simultaneously with data collection. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, and simplifying the data to identify key themes and patterns relevant to the research objectives. Data display was performed by organizing the data into descriptive and narrative forms to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified continuously to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the findings. To ensure the credibility of the data, this study applied triangulation techniques, including triangulation of sources and methods. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from different participants, while method triangulation involved comparing results from observation, interviews, and documentation. These strategies enhanced the validity and trustworthiness of the research findings.

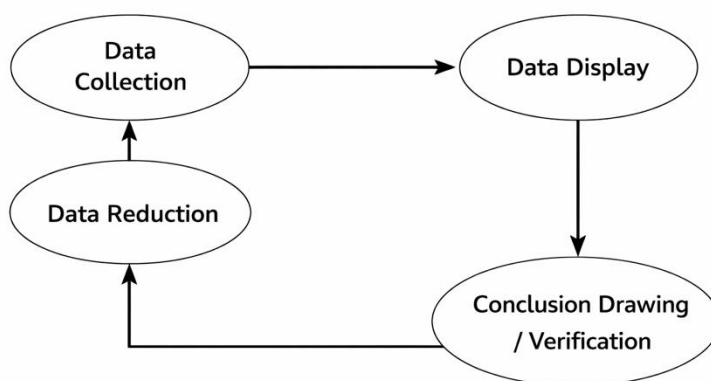


Figure 1. Data Analysis Techniques

Data Validity Technique

To ensure the validity of the research data, triangulation was employed. Triangulation is used to verify data by examining it from various sources, using different methods, and at different times. In the context of data collection, triangulation refers to the process of combining multiple techniques—such as interviews, observations, and documentation—as well as multiple data sources. By applying triangulation, the researcher not only collects data but also simultaneously tests its credibility. This is achieved by cross-checking the consistency of data obtained through different data collection techniques and from different sources. In this study, data validity was ensured through technique triangulation and source triangulation.

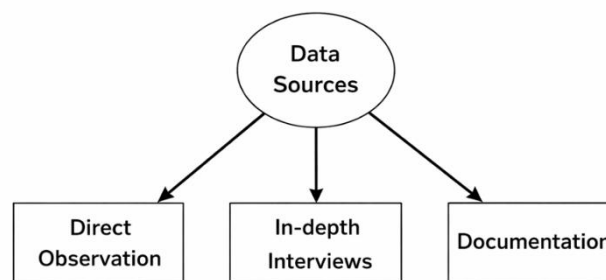


Figure 2. Data Collection Triangulation

1. Technique Triangulation

Technique triangulation refers to the use of multiple data collection methods to obtain data from the same source. In this approach, the researcher collects data through different techniques—such as observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation—to verify the consistency of the information.²⁵ This process helps strengthen the reliability and credibility of the data.

2. Source Triangulation

According to Sugiyono, source triangulation refers to obtaining data from different sources using the same technique. In this study, data were collected from various sources, including teachers, the school principal, religious program coordinators, and students, primarily through in-depth interviews. This approach allows the researcher to compare perspectives from different participants to ensure data consistency and accuracy.

²⁵Sugiyono, p. 330.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

A. The Implementation of Islamic Religious Education Learning Actualization in Shaping Students' Religious Attitudes

The findings of this study reveal that the actualization of Islamic Religious Education at MTsN 8 Cirebon is systematically implemented through structured habituation programs designed to integrate cognitive understanding with affective and psychomotor domains. These programs include greeting practices (salam-sapa), Qur'an recitation before learning activities, and congregational Dhuhr prayer. The implementation of these programs reflects a shift from conventional knowledge-based instruction toward experiential and value-based learning, which is essential in character education.

One of the most prominent findings is the significant role of the salam-sapa program in fostering discipline and religious attitudes among students. Initially, this activity was informal and inconsistently implemented. However, after institutionalization through a formal schedule, the program demonstrated measurable improvements in students' behavior. This transformation is illustrated in the following statement:

*"Initially, the greeting activity was not structured because there was no official schedule. Only certain teachers consistently greeted students at the school gate. Over time, the school principal formalized this activity, and the impact became very significant. Students who previously appeared untidy and undisciplined now show noticeable improvement. Their discipline increased from around 60% to approximately 90%."*²⁶

This improvement indicates that structured habituation, supported by leadership, plays a crucial role in shaping behavior. From a theoretical perspective, this aligns with Lickona's theory of character education, which emphasizes the importance of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The salam-sapa activity functions as a medium for repeated moral action, reinforcing values such as respect, politeness, and discipline. This finding is further strengthened by the perspective of the vice principal, who provides a broader institutional view regarding the role of the program. The vice principal emphasizes that salam-sapa is not merely a routine activity but a strategic effort to build emotional bonds and a sense of belonging within the school community:

"In the past, there was no greeting activity, and the relationship between teachers, students, and parents felt distant. Now, this activity creates a sense of family. Teachers

²⁶Interview with Religious Supervisor, 2024.

are seen as second parents, and students feel closer to them. This is not only classroom learning but also character education embedded in daily interactions."²⁷

This perspective supports the concept of social learning theory proposed by Bandura, which highlights the role of modeling and interaction in shaping behavior. Teachers, through daily greetings and interactions, act as role models whose behavior is observed and imitated by students. In addition, the habituation of Qur'an recitation before learning activities has undergone significant transformation. Previously, the activity was conducted as a routine without clear outcomes. However, after the introduction of structured guidance and learning materials, the program began to show tangible results:

*"Now the Qur'an recitation is not just ceremonial. Students memorize Asmaul Husna and several surahs. Their behavior becomes calmer, more disciplined, and more respectful. The Qur'an influences not only their knowledge but also their attitude."*²⁸

This finding supports the notion that religious practices can serve as a medium for internalizing moral values. The repetitive nature of Qur'an recitation contributes to the development of spiritual awareness and emotional regulation. This aligns with previous studies suggesting that spiritual practices enhance students' self-control and moral behavior. Furthermore, the implementation of congregational Dhuhr prayer has significantly improved following the renovation of school facilities and increased teacher involvement:

*"After the mosque renovation, all students can perform Dhuhr prayer together, and no male students remain outside during prayer time. This program has improved students' discipline in performing prayers."*²⁹

This demonstrates that environmental factors, such as infrastructure and institutional support, play a vital role in facilitating religious practices. According to ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner), the environment significantly influences individual behavior. In this case, the school environment acts as a supportive system that encourages the practice of religious values. However, despite these positive outcomes, the findings also indicate that the implementation is not yet fully optimal. Some students still exhibit inconsistent behavior, suggesting that habituation programs alone are insufficient without strong internal motivation and continuous reinforcement.

²⁷Interview with Vice Principal, 2024.

²⁸Interview with Religious Supervisor, 2024.

²⁹Interview with Religious Supervisor, 2024.

B. Students' Practice of Religious Attitudes through the implementation of holistic Islamic education

The second major finding of this study concerns how students practice religious attitudes as a result of Islamic Religious Education learning actualization. The data indicate that students begin to internalize and apply religious values in both school and home environments, although the level of implementation varies among individuals. The impact of the salam-sapa program is clearly reflected in students' daily interactions. Students demonstrate improved politeness, respect for teachers, and appropriate communication behavior. One student described this experience as follows:

*"When I participate in the greeting activity, I feel happy because teachers welcome us warmly. It makes me respect them more. At home, I also greet my parents politely and speak more respectfully."*³⁰

This statement illustrates the transfer of learning from school to home, indicating that habituation in the school environment can influence behavior beyond the classroom. This finding is consistent with the theory of behavioral internalization, where repeated actions eventually become habits and personal values. Another student emphasized the role of the program in shaping social behavior:

*"The greeting activity helps me understand how to behave properly. I can apply it not only at school but also when interacting with others in my community."*³¹

This supports the argument that character education must be contextual and applicable to real-life situations. The integration of religious values into daily interactions enhances their relevance and sustainability. Similarly, the Qur'an recitation program contributes to the development of students' cognitive and affective domains. Students report improved reading skills and increased motivation to engage in religious practices:

*"Before performing Qur'an recitation, I prepare by memorizing at home. Now I can read more fluently and feel more confident. I also practice reading at home regularly."*³²

This finding indicates that structured religious activities not only enhance technical skills but also foster intrinsic motivation. According to self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation plays

³⁰Interview with Student, 2024.

³¹Interview with Student, 2024.

³²Interview with Student, 2025.

a key role in sustaining behavior over time. In terms of congregational prayer, students demonstrate increased awareness of their religious obligations:

“After getting used to praying at school, I feel uncomfortable if I miss prayer at home. It becomes something important for me.”³³

This reflects the successful transition from cognitive understanding to affective commitment and psychomotor practice. Students no longer view prayer as an obligation imposed by external authority but as an internalized necessity. However, the findings also reveal disparities in students' responses. Some students remain inconsistent in practicing religious behaviors. As noted by a teacher:

“School contributes to character formation, but it is not the only factor. Family and environment play a significant role. Some students show improvement, while others do not.”³⁴

This highlights the complexity of character formation, which is influenced by multiple interacting factors. The school can provide a structured environment, but its effectiveness depends on reinforcement from family and social contexts.

C. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the implementation of holistic Islamic education

The third major finding identifies various supporting and inhibiting factors influencing the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education learning actualization. One of the most significant supporting factors is strong leadership. The principal's role in organizing and enforcing programs is critical:

“When leadership is firm and provides clear direction, it creates a positive impact on teachers and the entire school system.”³⁵

This finding aligns with transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring and guiding organizational change. Teacher involvement is another key factor:

“All teachers must participate in guiding students. Character is formed through continuous reminders and consistent supervision.”³⁶

³³Interview with Student, 2024.

³⁴Interview with Teacher, 2024.

³⁵Interview with Religious Supervisor, 2024.

³⁶Interview with Islamic Religious Education Teacher, 2024.

This supports the concept of a whole-school approach to character education, where all members of the school community share responsibility. Adequate facilities also contribute to program success:

“Without proper facilities, such as a mosque, the implementation of religious programs would not be effective.”³⁷

On the other hand, several inhibiting factors were identified. Family background is one of the most significant challenges:

“Some students come from broken homes or lack parental supervision. This affects their behavior and discipline.”³⁸

Peer influence also plays a role:

“Students are influenced by their friends. Negative peer groups can hinder character development.”³⁹

Additionally, the digital era presents new challenges:

“Students are exposed to social media and online games, which can reduce discipline and introduce negative behaviors.”⁴⁰

Another critical issue is inconsistency among teachers:

“Not all teachers enforce rules consistently, which affects the effectiveness of the program.”⁴¹

These findings indicate that the success of Islamic Religious Education learning actualization depends on synergy among leadership, teachers, families, and the broader environment.

³⁷Interview with Principal, 2024.

³⁸Interview with Counseling Teacher, 2024.

³⁹Interview with Teacher, 2024.

⁴⁰Interview with Counseling Teacher, 2024.

⁴¹Interview with School Staff, 2024.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that the actualization of Islamic Religious Education learning through structured habituation programs plays a significant role in shaping students' religious attitudes.⁴² The findings indicate that activities such as greeting practices, Qur'an recitation, and congregational prayer are not merely routine practices but function as effective pedagogical strategies. These programs contribute to bridging the gap between cognitive understanding and real-life behavior. Students who initially only understood religious concepts theoretically gradually began to practice them in daily life. This transformation reflects the success of integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in learning. Such integration is essential in achieving holistic education outcomes.⁴³ Therefore, Islamic Religious Education learning must be designed not only as knowledge transmission but also as value internalization.

The findings support Lickona's theory of character education, which emphasizes the importance of moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. In this study, students demonstrate moral knowing through their understanding of religious teachings. Moral feeling is reflected in their emotional responses, such as feeling guilty when neglecting prayer. Meanwhile, moral action is evident in their participation in religious practices, such as performing congregational prayers and greeting teachers respectfully.⁴⁴ This alignment shows that habituation programs effectively operationalize theoretical frameworks into practice. Moreover, repeated exposure to religious activities strengthens students' internalization of values. This suggests that character education requires consistency and repetition. Without continuous practice, moral values may remain superficial and fail to influence behavior.

Furthermore, the results align with Bandura's social learning theory, which highlights the importance of observation and modeling in behavior formation. Teachers in MTsN 8 Cirebon act as role models who demonstrate appropriate religious behavior. Through daily interactions, students observe and imitate these behaviors, leading to gradual behavioral change. The greeting program, for instance, allows students to directly experience respectful communication.⁴⁵ This process reinforces learning through imitation and reinforcement. It also emphasizes the importance of teacher consistency in modeling behavior. When teachers consistently demonstrate good character, students are more likely to internalize those values.

⁴²K. Nisak, 'Implementation of Experiential Learning Method in Islamic Religious Education Learning to Improve Students' Religious Attitudes at MTs Nurul Wathan Pungkat', *ETNOPEDAGOGI: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan* (2025), doi:10.62945/etnopedagogi.v2i1.620.

⁴³A. Mahendra and R. Riyanto, 'Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Pembentukan Karakter Religius Peserta Didik di SMPIT Ar Rahmah Pacitan', *ALSYS* (2025), doi:10.58578/alsys.v5i3.5546.

⁴⁴Y. H. Fitriyan and H. Salim, 'Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Menanamkan Nilai-Nilai Religius Pada Siswa SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Gatak Program Khusus', *Cetta: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 8.2 (2025), doi:10.37329/cetta.v8i2.4150.

⁴⁵D. Dahuri and W. Wantini, 'Learning Islamic Religious Education Based on Ta'dib Perspective of Islamic Education Psychology at Muhammadiyah Pakel Elementary School', *Journal of Islamic Education and Ethics* (2023), doi:10.18196/jiee.v1i2.9.

The study also highlights the importance of environmental factors, as explained in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. The school environment serves as a microsystem that directly influences students' development.⁴⁶ Structured programs, supportive facilities, and consistent supervision create a conducive environment for character formation. The renovation of the mosque, for example, significantly improved students' participation in congregational prayer. This indicates that physical infrastructure plays a role in facilitating religious practices. Additionally, the involvement of all teachers strengthens the learning environment.⁴⁷ A supportive environment encourages students to engage in positive behaviors. Therefore, character education must consider both social and physical contexts.

Despite these positive developments, students did not respond to the religious habituation programs in the same way. Some students demonstrated relatively consistent changes in discipline, respectful behavior, Qur'an recitation, and prayer practices, whereas others continued to require reminders or showed less stable behavioral changes. The findings suggest that this variation cannot be explained solely by students' participation in school programs. Students who received stronger reinforcement from their families, experienced supportive peer relationships, and encountered consistent expectations from teachers appeared more likely to sustain religious practices.⁴⁸ In contrast, students with limited parental supervision, less supportive peer environments, or inconsistent reinforcement across school and home contexts tended to demonstrate less stable internalization of religious values. Exposure to digital distractions may further complicate this process by competing with the routines and behavioral expectations promoted by the school. These variations indicate that structured habituation can initiate and reinforce religious practices, but its influence depends on the interaction between students' individual motivation and the social environments in which those practices are maintained.

Another important finding is the influence of family background on students' religious attitudes. Students from supportive family environments tend to demonstrate more consistent behavior.⁴⁹ In contrast, those from less supportive backgrounds show slower or inconsistent development. This indicates that character education cannot rely solely on school-based programs. The role of parents and family environment is equally important in reinforcing values. This finding supports previous research emphasizing the importance of home-school collaboration. Without such collaboration, the impact of school programs may be limited. Therefore, schools should actively involve parents in character education initiatives.

⁴⁶A. A. K. Rahmatullah et al., 'Peluang dan Tantangan Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Membentuk Karakter Religius Siswa di SMPN Cipendeuy Bandung Barat', *Jurnal Dirosah Islamiyah* (2025), doi:10.47467/jdi.v7i2.9456.

⁴⁷R. Naumi, S. Suriana, and U. Nazila, 'Transformation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning through an Emotional Approach', *ISTIFHAM: Journal of Islamic Studies* (2025), doi:10.71039/istifham.v3i1.96.

⁴⁸M. Q. Abror and D. Noviani, 'The Role of Islamic Education in Building Digital Wellbeing and Social Media Ethics among Muslim Youth', *West Science Islamic Studies* (2025), doi:10.58812/wsiss.v3i04.2303.

⁴⁹S. R. A. Fitri et al., 'Problem-Based Islamic Religious Education (PBL) Learning to Strengthen Students' Moderate Attitudes and National Insight', *International Journal of Islamic Educational Research* (2025), doi:10.61132/ijier.v2i3.401.

Peer influence also emerges as a significant factor affecting students' behavior. Students are often influenced by their social circles, which can either support or hinder character development. Positive peer groups encourage adherence to religious practices, while negative influences may lead to undesirable behavior. This finding highlights the importance of social interaction in shaping attitudes. It also suggests that schools should create positive peer environments.⁵⁰ Group-based activities and peer mentoring programs can be effective strategies. By promoting positive peer interactions, schools can enhance the effectiveness of character education. This approach aligns with social constructivist perspectives on learning.

The study identifies challenges posed by the digital era. Students' exposure to social media and online games can negatively affect their discipline and behavior. Digital distractions reduce students' focus on religious practices and academic activities.⁵¹ Furthermore, exposure to inappropriate content may influence their attitudes and language. This finding reflects the broader challenges faced by modern education systems. It also emphasizes the need for digital literacy and ethical guidance. Schools must integrate digital awareness into character education programs. By doing so, students can learn to navigate digital environments responsibly.

The study also reveals the importance of consistency among teachers in implementing programs. Inconsistent enforcement of rules reduces the effectiveness of habituation activities.⁵² When some teachers enforce discipline while others do not, students receive mixed signals. This inconsistency can weaken the internalization of values. Therefore, a unified approach among teachers is essential. All educators must share a common commitment to character education. Regular coordination and professional development can support this goal. Consistency ensures that students receive clear and reinforced messages about expected behavior.

This study contributes to the understanding of holistic Islamic education by demonstrating the importance of integrating multiple dimensions of learning. The findings show that effective character education requires synergy between structured programs, teacher involvement, leadership, and environmental support. This holistic approach enhances the sustainability of behavioral change. It also highlights the need for continuous improvement and adaptation. Educational institutions must respond to evolving challenges, including social and technological changes. By adopting a comprehensive strategy, schools can better prepare students to become morally and spiritually grounded individuals. Thus, the study reinforces the importance of holistic and integrated approaches in religious education.

⁵⁰M. Khoir, K. Saiban, and M. Mustofa, 'Implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Learning in the Formation of Religious Character and Social Concern Attitudes', *EDU-RELIGIA: Jurnal Keagamaan Dan Pembelajarannya*, 6.1 (2023), doi:10.52166/edu-religia.v6i1.4138.

⁵¹F. A. S. Kusuma and N. L. Inayati, 'The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teacher in Improving the Character and Islamic Behavior of Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Surakarta', *IJGIE (International Journal of Graduate of Islamic Education)*, 4.1 (2023), doi:10.37567/ijgie.v4i1.2183.

⁵²K. Muthrofin, H. Ikmal, and W. Wahyudi, 'The Implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Shaping the Profile of Rahmatan lil alamin Students in a Madrasah', *EDUCATIO: Journal of Education* (2025), doi:10.29138/educatio.v8i2.1182.

The findings should also be interpreted within the contextual boundaries of this study. As a qualitative case study conducted in a single madrasah, the findings reflect the institutional culture, religious programs, leadership practices, student characteristics, and social environment of MTsN 8 Cirebon and therefore should not be generalized directly to other Islamic schools or educational settings. In addition, the study was conducted within a specific period, meaning that it captured students' religious attitudes and school practices at a particular stage rather than tracing their development over an extended period. Consequently, the study cannot determine whether the observed behavioral changes will remain stable after students leave the structured school environment or when institutional reinforcement is reduced. The reliance on interviews, observations, and school documentation also means that the findings represent contextually situated interpretations rather than measurements of long-term behavioral change. Future research could address these limitations by involving multiple madrasahs, conducting longitudinal observations, and examining how school-based religious practices interact with family, peer, and digital environments over time.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of holistic Islamic education at MTsN 8 Cirebon contributes to the formation of students' religious attitudes through structured habituation practices, particularly greeting activities, Qur'an recitation before lessons, and congregational Dhuhr prayer. These practices support the development of discipline, respectful interaction, religious awareness, and the application of religious values in students' daily lives. However, the internalization of these values does not occur uniformly among all students. Students' consistency in practicing religious values is influenced by the interaction between school-based habituation, teacher modeling, family reinforcement, peer relationships, and exposure to the digital environment. This indicates that religious attitude formation should be understood not merely as an outcome of classroom instruction, but as a broader process in which school, family, peers, and social environments jointly shape students' religious practices.

This study, however, has several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single madrasah, so the findings reflect the specific institutional culture, leadership practices, religious programs, and student characteristics of MTsN 8 Cirebon and should not be directly generalized to other educational settings. Second, the study was conducted within a limited time period, which means that it captured students' religious attitudes at a particular stage and did not examine whether the observed behavioral changes were sustained over the long term. Third, the study relied primarily on interviews, observations, and documentation, so the findings are based on context-specific qualitative interpretations rather than longitudinal measurement of behavioral change. Future research is therefore recommended to involve multiple madrasahs with different institutional characteristics, use longitudinal designs to examine the sustainability of religious attitudes over time, and explore more deeply how family involvement, peer interaction, teacher consistency, and

digital environments influence the internalization of religious values. Further studies may also combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between holistic Islamic education and students' religious attitudes.

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